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Security In Asia: A Common Concern

Zhambyn Batmunh — CC General Secretary, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party; Chairman, Great People's Hural Presidium

GREAT historical developments and changes have taken place in our epoch in Asia and the Pacific region, where most of the world's people live. It was a majority left out of historical progress, but in the early twentieth century it ceased to play a passive role.[1] Under the influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the peoples began to storm the colonial bastion of the imperialist powers in the region, which collapsed as a result of the rout of the forces of fascism and militarism in World War II and the powerful onslaught of the national liberation movement. The dozens of newly independent states strove to overcome the legacy of the past in a brief historical period.

The peoples of the newly liberated countries of Asia and the Pacific, big and small, have enriched the world with their diverse and original experience in their fight for freedom, independence and social progress, and have achieved tangible changes in economic and social development. But these states still have greatly differing economic development levels and political, social, cultural and religious institutions and traditions, a situation which requires a realistic approach to their specific conditions.

The socialist states of Asia are a growing force. Their efforts to overcome their difficulties and trials produced by external and internal factors have demonstrated the viability of the ideas of scientific socialism in the struggle for national and social gains. These countries have worked for purposeful and balanced development of the economy and living and cultural standards, and for a peaceful international situation. The policy of

Zhambyn Batmunh (b. 1926) has been a member of the MPRP since 1948; from 1951 to 1973 he was a lecturer, a pro-rector of the Higher Party School under the MPRP CC, and rector of the Mongolian State University. In 1973 he was department head at the MPRP CC; in 1971, he was elected CC alternate member, in 1974 CC member and a member of the CC Political Bureau. From 1974 to 1984, he was chairman of the Council of Ministers, and since 1984, has been CC General Secretary and Chairman of the Presidium of Mongolia's Great People's Hural.

the Soviet Union and the other socialist states, with its abiding concern for general security and stronger positions for the forces of peace and national liberation in the Asian-Pacific region and throughout the world, is in step with the historical processes. It is based on Lenin's far-sighted view, who wrote: "The period of the awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, so as not to be simply objects of enrichment of others. The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, the need for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind."[2]

Despite their distinctions, the Asian-Pacific states have gained valuable experience in building bilateral and multilateral relations on the basis of good-neighbourhood, cooperation and mutual security. They have produced such important political and juridical principles of relations between states with different social systems, as Pancha sheel, the five principles of peaceful coexistence, and the ten principles of the Bandung Conference. The conception of non-alignment emerged on our continent, where it took its first steps. It became the basis for the influential movement which now involves more than 100 countries, and which has an important positive role in the international arena.

The arrangement and balance of political forces on the Asian continent, as on the whole globe, have undergone profound changes over the last few decades in favour of the forces of peace, democracy and socialism, a reality which the reactionary circles of the United States and other imperialist powers refuse to recognise to this day. As soon as World War II ended, they took a bellicose attitude and conducted a policy of confrontation from strength with respect to the socialist countries and of suppression of national liberation movements, including outright armed intervention. In consequence, the peoples of Asia have suffered many sharp and often extremely dangerous armed conflicts.

Up to now nuclear weapons have been used twice: both times by the United States in Asia. The A-bombings incinerated hundreds of thousands of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The overt armed aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were an extreme manifestation of the imperialist strength policy. The world knows of the brutal methods that were used in the course of both aggressions.

Imperialism suffered one defeat after another in the face of the Asian people's courageous resistance. It was forced to accept an armistice in Korea in 1953, the Geneva Conference on Indochina in 1954, and the 1973 Paris Accords on Vietnam. The Vietnamese people's victory and the formation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, together with the triumph of the peoples' revolutions in Laos and Kampuchea, were events of outstanding importance. They did much to stabilise the military-political situation in Southeast Asia.

The growing independence of the Asian countries in solving international problems and ensuring their own security, and the emergence and development of the non-aligned movement dealt a crushing blow at the bloc policy of imperialism. Its military-political alliances, CENTO and

SEATO, fell apart one by one. The imperialist policy of discrimination against some sovereign states, including the Mongolian People's Republic, collapsed, and they have long since taken their rightful place in the United Nations.

Thus, neither the numerous moves by the imperialist states, led by the United States, nor their armed gambles managed to halt the advance of the forces of progress and liberation in the Asian-Pacific region, and that forced Washington to seek new ways of attaining its strategic objectives. That is evidenced by the adoption in the mid-1970s of the New Pacific Doctrine by the United States, which regards the whole region as a sphere of its 'vital interests'. Strengthening the US military presence, allegedly to ensure a stable balance of forces in the region, became its prime objective.

Partnership with Japan and close ties with the Seoul regime are key elements of the doctrine. The fact that dozens of US military bases, manned by large armed contingents, are now located on the Japanese islands and in South Korea is a matter of profound concern for the peoples of the Asian and Pacific region. US warships with nuclear weapons on board keep entering ports in the two countries, while US nuclear-armed aircraft are either temporarily or permanently deployed on their soil.

Japan is being intensively rearmed in breach of the Japanese Constitution, which renounces war as a means of settling international issues and the build-up of any type of armed forces. The country's conversion into a US nuclear bridgehead is in contradiction of the commitment not to have, make, or import nuclear weapons on its territory.

The United States has kept building up its military bases and armaments in the south of the Korean Peninsula. The Reagan administration's recent decision to deploy US ground-based short-range missiles in South Korea was yet another dangerous step in stockpiling nuclear-missile arsenals, which pose a threat to all the countries in the region.

US reactionary circles have been knocking together the militaristic Washington-Tokyo-Seoul axis as the core of an 'Eastern front' in the fight against the socialist countries and the forces of national liberation and progress. The United States has been trying to enlarge the vast ring of its military bases round Asia, which runs from the Persian Gulf to Micronesia, by building up new bridgeheads and strongpoints for its rapid deployment force, which is a force for aggresssion and intervention.

The attempt by US militarism to involve Asian-Pacific countries in Reagan's SDI poses an especial threat to security and stability in the region. For that purpose, the United States has not only stepped up the construction of 'star wars'-related installations at the approaches to our continent, but wants Japan to take part in technological projects under the SDI programme. Claims by US propaganda that SDI would make nuclear weapons 'meaningless and obsolete' and that it would be a gain for Asian security are a malicious attempt to deceive public opinion.

The Western powers, the United States in the first place, have been giving many less developed countries in Asia and the Pacific what they call military aid, which amounts to the sale of weapons and start-up of their production so as to involve these countries in the arms race. That is having a ruinous effect on the economy of the newly independent nations and

diverting a great part of their scant resources from the solution of burning economic and social problems. US military aid is being used for direct political pressure on LDC governments so as to draw them into the sphere of US great-power schemes to turn the ASEAN, for instance — regional economic and political alliance — into a military alliance.

It is a part of the neoglobalist policy of imperialism, which was proclaimed by President Reagan, to inflate an atmosphere of mutual mistrust in the region, to provoke diverse territorial and border disputes, and to fan conflicts. This policy is exemplified by the undeclared war against Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

The prime cause of the growing tensions and divisions in the Asian-Pacific region is, therefore, perfectly obvious. It is now an arena of acute and sharpening contradictions both between the two opposite systems — the socialist and the capitalist — and between the neocolonialist policy and peoples' will for independence and progress. *Big Stick attempts by imperialist reaction to resolve these contradictions, neoglobalist ambitions and the urge for domination based on military might explain why our region has become one of the most explosive in the world.* Imperialism has tried to keep the region within its sphere of influence with the use of both the old methods of colonial brigandism and the subtler methods of neocolonialist oppression and plunder, and has ignored the legitimate interests and aspirations of its peoples.

The mounting instability in this vast and important region is also connected with the contradictory political, military and economic interests of the imperialist powers, such as the ever-more acute rivalry between US, Japanese and West European monopolies in the region.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have countered the imperialist policy of aggression and mounting tension with their *policy of détente, stronger peace and security for the peoples of our region.*

The fraternal socialist countries' relations with the non-socialist countries are based on mutual respect, equality, peaceful coexistence and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The spirit of the new political thinking pervades the Soviet Union's recent initiatives for a general and complex solution to the problems of détente and disarmament, a more vigorous collective quest for ways of defusing situations of conflict, and developing mutually advantageous cooperation between all the countries of the Asian-Pacific region.

In the present international situation, which is marked by growing mass awareness of the need for peace for all nations and peoples, the socialist countries have actively sought *new and non-standard approaches to the security of individual countries and regional and global security.* The new thinking on these issues is exemplified by the USSR's foreign policy strategy as formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, and the initiatives on disarmament within the framework of this strategy. The Soviet programme for a nuclear-free world through the liquidation of all weapons of mass destruction by the end of the century is *the key to solving the basic problems of international politics,* and it was most fully reflected in the July 1986 Vladivostok speech by CPSU CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, when he elaborated various ideas on the development of

peaceful cooperation between countries in the region. The idea of joining their efforts to seek ways to security and stability and cooperation has met with wide support by public opinion and states in the region.

The Delhi Declaration on the Principles of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World signed by the leaders of two great countries — India and the Soviet Union — was the next major step after Vladivostok in consolidating the regional and global peace process. The propositions formulated in the document, which are of worldwide significance, provide the moral and political basis for a lasting peace on our globe. The Delhi Declaration stressed that fear and suspicion must give way to mutual understanding and trust, and that the 'equilibrium of fear' in politics should give way to a comprehensive international security system.

Mikhail Gorbachov's statement of February 28, 1987, contained an important Soviet initiative on removing medium-range missiles from Europe over the next five years, with the number of this class of missiles reduced in the Asian part of the Soviet Union down to 100 warheads within the same period, provided the United States retains the same number of medium-range missile warheads on its national territory. This proposal is, therefore, of cardinal significance not only for European security, but also for security in the Asian-Pacific region and the whole world. We whole-heartedly approve and support that initiative, and the new ideas on disarmament which Mikhail Gorbachov spelled out in his April speech in Prague.

Let us recall that the Soviet Union has expressed its readiness to provide contractual guarantees that it will not use nuclear weapons against nuclear-free-status countries. A similar stand has been taken by China, which has followed the USSR in committing itself not to use nuclear weapons first, and has come out against the militarisation of space, and for a ban on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

We also believe that the Soviet proposals on ending all nuclear testing in the Pacific, reducing the activity of navies in the region, above all the ships armed with nuclear weapons, and radical cuts in armed forces and conventional armaments in our region are also most timely. Implementation of these intitiatives would stimulate the elaboration and implementation of additional measures of trust in the military sphere which are so necessary in Asia and the adjacent oceans.

In our view, the USSR's proposal to convene a conference of all the Pacific Ocean countries, similar to the Helsinki Conference in Europe, is also informed by the new and complex approach to the realities. Sceptics and those who oppose the idea claim that Europe's experience cannot be applied to our region because it is geographically far-flung, because of the national prejudices and religious strife between its peoples and the existence of a tight knot of other difficult problems. But let us recall that the road to the Helsinki Conference was not well-paved at all. However, those who took part in it succeeded in advancing along that road and overcoming the difficulties springing from different social systems, political orientations, ideological and religious convictions, and membership of opposite military blocs.

Borrowing from that experience does not, of course, mean mechanically

transferring the Helsinki scheme to Asian soil. The point is to make purposeful and creative use of the key elements of European détente which have stood the test of practice, the principal right of the peoples, the right to decide on their own future, respect for national independence and sovereignty, inviolability of borders, and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful settlement of regional conflicts and disputes, and development of equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation. Let us bear in mind that many of these provisions are already contained in the Pancha sheel and Bandung principles.

They could be used, for instance, for a political settlement of the situation in Southeast Asia. Mongolia has consistently supported the programme for turning it into a region of peace, good neighbourhood and cooperation, which was proposed by Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. Their approach is principled and flexible, and shows an urge for reasonable compromise. The three countries of Indochina have agreed that all the Vietnamese volunteers are to be withdrawn from Kampuchea by 1990. They want a political dialogue for a fair solution of the Kampuchean problem, naturally without the participation of the blood-covered Pol Pot clique. This can be done only on the basis of recognition of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, a reality of international life.

The regular consultations between the USSR and China on normalising their relations are of great significance for improving the political atmosphere on the Asian continent. Our stand on Mongolian-Chinese relations is concrete and clear-cut. We have always conducted a consistent course aimed to develop ties with China on the basis of the generally recognised principles of good neighbourhood. Such ties would meet the interests of the Mongolian and the Chinese people, and of peace and socialism. The same is true of Vietnamese-Chinese relations. Vietnam has long proposed negotiations with China — at any time, at any level — reasonably regarding these as an important factor in stabilising the situation in Southeast Asia.

Elimination of the long-standing and dangerous hotbeds of tension, such as that in the south of the Korean Peninsula, is an organic element of the efforts to ensure regional security. We have always voiced solidarity and complete support for the proposals of DPRK to turn the peninsula into an area of peace through a withdrawal of the US forces and armaments, notably nuclear weapons, and a replacement of the armistice agreement with a peace treaty and a wide-ranging dialogue between the North and the South. That would help to create a favourable situation for the unification of Korea on a peaceful and democratic basis.

International public opinion is ever more aware of the true state of things in Afghanistan, whose people have got down to progressive transformations and have actively supported the Afghan leadership's policy of national reconciliation. The Afghans have good ground to regard the policy as the only true way of ending the fratricidal war, which is being fanned by external forces. The withdrawal from the country of six Soviet regiments, the agreement on the deadlines for the phased return of the temporarily remaining Soviet units, and the measures for expanding the social basis of the April Revolution are telling evidence of the urge on the

part of the USSR and the DRA to have a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Mongolia has been doing much to strengthen peace and security, mutual understanding and cooperation in the region. A concrete expression of these efforts was its 1981 proposal for a convention on mutual non-aggression and non-resort to force in interstate relations. We called for a regional conference to work out the provisions of a convention and other related issues by the countries concerned, an idea which was supported by the fraternal socialist countries, many peaceable states, and by public opinion, and which is still on the agenda.

The Soviet and Mongolian governments displayed good will and a desire to promote détente in Asia when they agreed on the withdrawal from Mongolia of a sizeable part of the Soviet troops temporarily stationed in the area. That has been done.

India, a recognised leader of the non-aligned movement, has been making a tangible contribution to seeking ways for improving the situation on the Asian continent and in the Indian Ocean area. It has consistently conducted a policy of reducing tensions, developing good neighbour relations with the countries of the region, and seeking the implementation of the 1971 UN Declaration on turning the Indian Ocean into an area of peace.

More and more states in the region have supported the idea of non-nuclear zones in the face of the growing militaristic preparations by imperialism; 13 countries in the South Pacific have concluded a treaty — the Rarotonga Treaty — declaring the area free from nuclear weapons. Its protocols have been signed by the Soviet Union and China. ASEAN members have agreed to work out a conception for establishing a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia. There is a spreading Japanese public movement for removing US nuclear bases from the country and declaring the prefectures and cities nuclear-weapon-free areas. *In this way, the constructive initiatives and efforts of the socialist and other peace-loving states to ensure security are translated into practice.*

The interests of peaceful development require mutually advantageous cooperation, ruling out any economic, commercial scientific and technical discrimination between all the countries in the region, and restructuring of the existing system of international economic relations on fair and democratic principles. Asia and the oceans around it have great and still untapped economic resources and natural wealth, which can be rationally used to advance the peoples of our region and mankind as a whole. The socialist states have been doing much to solve this problem.

The Soviet Union's proposal for extending cooperation on the development of the productive forces, training of personnel, use of new sources of energy, exchanges of scientific and technical information, steps for environmental protection and rational use of natural resources, and efforts to overcome the effects of natural disasters has been seen in the region as a valuable initiative to improve the international situation and ensure economic security. Any of these problems bears on these countries' vital interests which need to be combined, instead of being contrasted with each other. Effective solution of these problems is most important and

implies serious collective efforts.

Contacts and ties in humanitarian areas — culture, sport, tourist travel, and others -- would also help to strengthen mutual understanding, trust and accord between the peoples of our region.

The Asian-Pacific region is now going through a period of revival, which has a vast potential for progress. Its role in world politics and economy has been steadily growing, and *it can and must be peaceful, constructive and creative.* No other course of development can be allowed, for the military threat has been exacerbated to the utmost.

Asia now has an especial need of political settlement of its problems and a halt to military preparations and the arms race. Ensuring security on the continent on the basis of a well-considered and generally acceptable conception is a long-term task. The earlier the peoples of the region get down to its fulfilment, the sooner peace and prosperity will be established on the vast expanses of Asia and the Pacific. That is the task which needs to be tackled step by step, in a movement from the simple to the complex. That is why we attach such importance to the idea put forward at the Soviet-Indian talks of *establishing step by step an Asian security system by normalising the political situation, and creating an atmosphere of trust and cooperation on bilateral and multilateral interstate level.* An international conference could have an important role to play in this matter. All of that also requires joint efforts by the public peace forces, which have been most active in the region over the past few years.

Numerous national and international acts in support of the idea of Asian security have been staged, including action by broad public opinion, members of parliament, and realistically-minded political leaders. *That being so, the Communists in the Asian-Pacific region countries feel the need to exchange views on how to make their actions more potent.* Mongolia has met the wish of a number of fraternal parties in acting as coordinator for a consultative meeting of representatives of communist and workers' parties in Ulan Bator in July of this year to discuss the problems with which they are concerned.

We shall do everything we can to make the meeting — and it is open to all the Communists of the region — a successful one and a valuable contribution to the strengthening of peace, security and good neighbour cooperation.

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 30, p.160.
[2] Ibid.

Cracks In The Racist Power Bloc

Joe Slovo — General Secretary,
South African Communist Party (SACP)

THE forces ranged against our liberation front are still strong, having at their disposal considerable resources and the support of powerful allies within the imperialist camp. This reality obliges us to continue to set our sights on a protracted struggle. At the same time it is clear that the situation has within it the seeds of a very sudden transformation. Why do we believe this to be the position?

Although the process is not yet complete, clear signs have emerged in the last two-and-a-half years that there is developing in our country the kind of nationwide crisis affecting both the exploiters and the exploited which, according to Lenin's classical formulation, sets the stage for a major social transformation.

In the first place it is important to note that two psychological barriers of great importance have been permanently breached and these breaches have a great impact on the struggle equation in our country.

On the side of the people the feeling of impotence inculcated by over 350 years of colonial domination has been very severely eroded. *The people are now convinced that however long it may take, race rule can be destroyed* and they are prepared to sacrifice life to bring this about. This new mood is, in important respects, connected with two factors: the inspirational impact on the emerging political forces of the activities of the armed wing of the liberation movement, and the confidence generated by the successes of the Southern African liberation process right on our country's borders.

Conversely, on the side of our ruling class and its support constituency in the white community, another important psychological barrier has been breached. In the face of years of uninterrupted upsurge and resistance, confidence in the permanent survival of race rule has been very badly eroded, triggering off fragmentation, defections, in-fighting and other symptoms of *the beginnings of political disintegration of the previously relatively monolithic racist power bloc.*

In general, South Africa's economic and political crisis has reached endemic proportions. Since the Soweto uprising of 1976 there has been a

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Joe Slovo was born in Lithuania in 1926. His parents brought him to South Africa at the age of nine. He became politically active at 16, when he led a strike at a wholesale trade company. During World War II Joe Slovo served with the Sixth Armoured Division of the South African Army and took part in Allied operations in Italy. Majoring in law, he was active in the youth organisation of the Communist Party in his student years and then in the party itself. When it was banned in 1950, Joe Slovo joined the comrades who worked to rebuild the party underground, and has been a member of the SACP Central Committee since 1953. He acted as defence attorney at many well-known political trials and, at the notorious trial of 1956-1961, as both one of the 156 defendants and a counsel for the defence. He was repeatedly arrested for his revolutionary activities. Joe Slovo was among the founders of Umkhonto We Sizwe ('Spear of the Nation'), the armed wing of the African National Congress. A leading expert on military and political strategy and tactics, he is the author of *South Africa: No Middle Road.* He was elected SACP National Chairman in 1984, a member of the ANC National Executive Committee in 1985, and SACP General Secretary in 1986.

steady decline in every single department of the economy. Between 1964-1975 the annual rate of growth of the economy was five per cent. Between 1981-1986 it has been reduced to an average of one per cent per annum. Unemployment has passed the four million mark. The inflow of foreign capital has virtually dried up, setting the stage for continuing stagnation. Giant multi-nationals like General Motors, IBM, Coca Cola, Kodak International, Barclays Bank and many others have been forced through a combination of political pressure and economic wisdom to announce that they are 'pulling out'. In some cases it is clear that backdoor arrangements have been made to ensure a continued stake in the apartheid economy. But even where the measures are limited they have a significant impact in the boardrooms of potential Western investors.

South Africa's manufacturing sector has a reasonable capacity to meet trade isolation by import substitution. But it is not adequately equipped for this in the capital goods sector, ninety-five per cent of whose needs has to be imported. The virtual drying up in the flow of foreign investors' capital and the non-availability of large-scale loans will increasingly deprive the economy of the required resources to maintain and develop the needs of this sector.

There is general agreement (even by the government's economic pundits) that most of these problems are closely connected with the political upsurge. But there is yet another factor with longer-term implications, viz., the changing relation between racism and profit which affects key sectors of the ruling power bloc. Apartheid and its inherited social framework has, in certain key sectors, begun to act as a brake on the development of the productive forces. South Africa is poised to move into a higher technological level of production and this advance is hampered by the shortage of skilled and semi-skilled labour resources brought about by race barriers. In addition, for political reasons, South African exporters have only limited access to their natural markets in our African continent. To this must be added the astronomical cost of defence, and the subsidies which have to be found to maintain and defend the puppet administrations in the so-called 'bantustan homelands'.

As always, it is the black working majority which takes the main brunt of crisis conditions. But the current recession (the longest and most serious in our history) is also beginning to make inroads into living standards of the white community in general and, more particularly, its working class sector. White worker unemployment (which has been statistically insignificant in the last fifty years) has begun to rise perceptibly and there are initial signs of the emergence of poverty conditions on the fringes of white society. A combination of a hard-pressed ruling class and growing disaffection within its main political support base — the white ethnic community — has important consequences.

The newly-formed openly fascist organisations (like the AWB — 'Afrikaner Resistance Movement') find a fertile recruiting ground from white workers who fear that even the very limited reform process (forced on the racist regime) and deteriorating economic conditions, are making inroads into their privileged status. But at the same time prospects are beginning to shape (however dimly) of loosening somewhat the white

workers' historic embrace of the ruling class in return for privileges which have for so long separated them from their black class brothers. Desertions, some of them on the left, culminated in the recent (December 1986) dissolution of the white-dominated Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA), previously the biggest and most influential trade union federation. This event underscores the new fluidity within white organised labour and a search for direction which requires an input, more especially by our party.

Growing numbers among the white middle class are becoming aware that, in the long run, a defence of the status quo is not feasible and will lead to sharper and more violent conflict. Significant numbers are deserting the extreme racist white laager and, in some cases, acting in defiance of the regime's laws. White youth have launched a campaign to oppose conscription and many of the leaders of this campaign have been detained during the current state of emergency. Students at the white universities are beginning to express themselves more openly in favour of many of the important platforms of the liberation movement. Stellenbosch University — the very high church of apartheid ideology — has witnessed student activities which would have been inconceivable some years ago: demands for the release of Mandela and the dispatch of a student delegation to engage in talks with the ANC in Lusaka in defiance of the regime's wishes. And, above all, many more whites than in the past are actually entering the ranks of our liberation movement and its armed wing.

The previously monolithic wall of white solidarity is also developing cracks at the level of the ruling class. We have already noted that apartheid is, in important respects, frustrating economic growth and isolating key sectors of the economic power bloc from their vital international life-blood. But in seeking solutions to these problems the bourgeoisie face an historic dilemma of their own making. The massive exploitation of cheap black labour in labour-intensive production was always the foundation for the generation of their super-profits. The rationalisation of this objective at the level of the superstructure spawned the practice and ideology of race and national domination which antedates by centuries its more 'scientific' variant in contemporary apartheid. This ideology (in its different variants) has been deeply embedded into the minds of the white community by a State apparatus representing dominant bourgeois interests. Ideology continues to have a momentum of its own long past the point when its economic foundations have become eroded. It is not surprising therefore that a community which has been saturated with race ideology to help maintain bourgeois supemacy, should now become an obstacle in attempts by the very same bourgeoisie to move away from those aspects of race domination which no longer serve them.

In the result, those among the bourgeoisie who are reform-orientated have no mass political constituency and, for the moment, find themselves in a political wilderness.

The relationship of the ruling class with imperialism is also in a state of uncertainty. The West has begun to lose faith in Botha's capacity to save South Africa as an important strategic bastion of capitalism and Western military alignments. On the other hand they stand in great fear of the most

powerful alternative to the Botha regime — the liberation front led by the African National Congress. The search for a middle force of the Muzorewa[1] variety has so far met with little success. Buthelezi, the KwaZulu tribal chief, who was a possible candidate, has lost all credibility as a viable national leader because of his support for the regime on many vital issues.

The policy of encouraging the emergence of a bigger black middle class with an economic stake in the status quo has not yet thrown up a significant 'middle force' with any kind of mass following. The regime's inability to mobilise black middle class collaboration on a major scale is very closely connected with the status of this class. Although some previously forbidden zones of economic activity have, in the recent period, been opened up for blacks, they continue to share most of the major disabilities suffered by the nationally-dominated majority. A black millionaire — and there are a few — has less political, social and economic rights than an unemployed white worker. All this helps to explain the approach of the main organ of black business — NAFCOC (National Federal Chamber of Commerce) — which engaged in a friendly exchange with the ANC leadership and whose President (Motsuenyane) recently told the world media, "We do not at all fear an ANC government".

Another important aspect of the crisis facing the regime is the almost total failure of its much publicised reform initiatives, leaving it without a visible strategy except for the escalation of brute force against the people. The regime itself no longer believes that the bantustans (the fragmentation of the country into so-called independent ethnic 'homelands') can serve as a solution to the present crisis.

Lately even some of the bantustan leaders have been making overtures to the ANC. The 1984 Tri-cameral parliament which attempted to co-opt Indians and Coloureds into a white-dominated parliamentary structure met with an overwhelming boycott and has since sunk into virtual oblivion. All attempts to impose forms of third class urban municipal representation on blacks have collapsed. Indeed, these and other reform initiatives, far from diverting the people's energies, have tended to become catalysts for heightened mass upsurge.

Externally, the regime's diplomatic offensive in our subcontinent has landed on the rocks. The Southern African states refused to be tempted by schemes such as the Constellation of Southern African States and the Pretoria-based Development Banks. Neither were most of them sucked into Inkomati-type agreements which, as experience has shown, are used by the racists to diminish the level of support for our liberation struggle while continuing to destabilise their neighbours. But Pretoria is discovering that there are limitations to a policy based solely on bullying tactics and naked aggression. Despite the fact that the newly independent states of Southern Africa face serious hardships, there is a growing realisation among them that, in the long term, *their survival as sovereign entities can only be assured by a people's victory in South Africa.*

The failure of the internal reform process and the external diplomatic offensive, and the resort to naked force as the main instrument of policy both inside the country and on its borders, is the measure of the deepening

crisis. It has become abundantly clear in the recent period that the racist regime and its supporters no longer have the confidence that they can continue to rule in the old way. But the absence of a cohesive political strategy for emerging from the crisis serves to deepen divisions and fragmentations at the top — a process which has a vital relevance for our immediate tactical approaches.

In the camp of the oppressed majority there is clearly a growing conviction that *it is impossible to continue living in the old way*. This is evidenced by the fact that our country has experienced a virtually uninterrupted state of ferment and upsurge since the middle of 1984. This ferment has generated an unprecedented spurt of organised mass activity and has also shown itself in spontaneous and semi-spontaneous eruptions.

The most important ingredient of this development is *the emergence at national, regional and local level of a variety of forms of people's organisations as vital contingents of the liberation process*. The United Democratic Front (UDF) has an affiliation of over seven hundred community, trade union and other organisations with a total membership of over two million. The birth and growth of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) has added a new dimension to the mass organised strength of workers' power.

The dramatic growth of the black trade union movement is underlined by the fact that whereas fifteen years ago black workers constituted less than 10 per cent of all organised labour, it has now reached 65.7 per cent and continues to grow. The granting of legal status to black trade unions has clearly failed in its original objective of separating them from the liberation process. During 1986, in response to calls by COSATU (supported by the UDF and the community organisations) millions of workers downed tools in two general politica! strikes on May 1 and June 16 in support of some of the most basic slogans of the liberation movement.

There is yet another phenomenon of exceptional importance, i.e., the proliferation at grassroots level of embryonic organs of people's power — street committees, comrades' committees, people's courts, etc. It is a process which resembles the mass creativity which gave birth to the Soviets, early in the century, in the struggle against Tsarism. In addition, among the youth and sections of the workers there have emerged combat formations and people's defence committees which have engaged in organised armed activity against the enemy forces which occupy the black ghettoes. These structures constitute a promising potential for the growth of the people's army.

The call to make the country ungovernable has had a resounding response in the urban black ghettoes. The regime still has the power to surround, to occupy and to suppress large-scale street manifestations. But in the overwhelming majority of these areas, civil administration is dead; the authorities are unable to collect rents and collaborators and isolated policemen face continuous harassment from the communities. The detention of over twenty thousand top ranking and middle level people's leaders during the present state of emergency (proclaimed in June 1986) has failed to dampen the people's morale or their militancy. They remain defiant and ready to press home the offensive. Tactics of struggle are

responding to the changing conditions and forms of organisation better suited to the growing repression are developed. New layers of popular leadership underground are continually emerging to fill the gaps created by enemy action.

The spurt in grassroots organisation is one of the most encouraging features of the ferment. But a subjective factor which is of seminal importance is *the existence of a revolutionary movement whose leadership is accepted by the masses and which has the strength and capacity to guide the build-up towards victory*. How does our revolutionary alliance measure up to this challenge?

There is no doubt that the African National Congress, as head of our liberation alliance, enjoys the trust and confidence of the overwhelming majority of the oppressed. Both inside and outside our country the ANC is increasingly no longer being regarded as an agitational opposition but as the alternative power to the racist tyranny. The regime itself and most of its allies in the West are becoming more aware that there can be no solution of the present crisis which does not involve the ANC-led liberation front. This explains why Lusaka (the ANC Headquarters) has become a Mecca for so many pilgrims who come from South Africa from the various social sectors to exchange views on the future. These exchanges have involved some of the biggest industrial, mining and finance tycoons, representatives of middle classes and virtually every church in South Africa, students, trade unions, etc. Even the US administration (for long apartheid's main prop with its policy of constructive engagement on the side of the racists) has begun to take into account the strength of our revolutionary movement. This is illustrated by the recent meeting between the US Secretary of State Shultz and ANC President Oliver Tambo. Despite their continued description of the ANC as a terrorist organisation 'dominated' by our Communist Party and 'tied' to the Soviet Union, the State Department explained that it was meeting Tambo because a negotiated solution of the South African crisis was not possible without taking the ANC into account.

And, as much as it may irk our enemy and its Western friends, our party both as an independent workers' vanguard force and (in the words of Oliver Tambo) "one of the two fundamental pillars of the liberation alliance", has continued to grow in strength and popularity. Reaction is now aware that the ANC cannot be destroyed and it is therefore beginning to pin its hopes on divisions between what they describe as 'communists and nationalists' in the ANC.

The general survey we have made of the crisis within the ruling class, the mood among the oppressed and the level of organisation in the revolutionary camp point in the direction of a transformation. But it would be unrealistic to claim that the racist regime is already so weakened and that the liberation forces are already so poised that an immediate all-round seizure of power is on the agenda. The social raw material for such an outcome is at hand. But it still needs much fashioning and moulding.

The challenging period ahead requires a great amount of tactical finesse. A number of theoretical and practical questions need to be posed and answered with greater immediacy than ever before in our history. Let me touch on some of them.

In organisational terms the ANC-led liberation alliance contains the main contingents of the key revolutionary forces. In class terms the core of these contingents consists of urban and rural working people in alliance with other classes and strata among the national oppressed majority such as the black petty-bourgeoisie (and even the relatively small black capitalist class) whose objective interests will be served by the kind of revolutionary transformation envisaged by the liberation alliance. But the crisis and ferment which we have described has also led to the emergence of new groupings which cannot be ignored as part of the *forces for change* but which cannot necessarily be regarded as part of the *revolutionary forces*.

An important group that falls into this category is made up of that sector of the bourgeoisie whose class interests are no longer served by old style apartheid. They seek the kind of transformations which go beyond the reform limits of the present regime but which will at the same time preempt the longer term objectives of the revolutionary forces. This sector senses the inevitability of change and is beginning to seek a change involving the extension of varying forms of political democracy within the framework of capitalism and the retention by them of the ownership of all or most of the means of production. Despite these limitations, the reform-orientated bourgeoisie cannot be regarded as part of the main enemy camp. A serious revolutionary movement must work to broaden the base of opposition to the *main* enemy, implying ever-widening varieties of opposition some of which may not be motivated by revolutionary intentions. The same reasoning applies to the churches, disaffected sectors of the white middle strata, the growing liberal wing among white academics and students, and so on. It is well known that our liberation movement has encouraged an ongoing dialogue with all these forces. The question is, however, continually posed whether a negotiated solution to the crisis is possible.

No revolutionary movement is in principle opposed to negotiation with an enemy. Indeed, virtually every revolutionary struggle in the postwar period reached its climax at the negotiating table. Our approach on this question has no ambiguities. *The bottom line for engaging in serious negotiation must be an acceptance of the principle of majority rule* (one person, one vote) *in one united democratic South Africa.* Once this is accepted as a starting point, many other questions can be tossed about including legislative provision to secure the rights of the individual, the safeguarding of the diverse cultural and linguistic heritage of the ethnic entities which make up our nation, and the precise shape of the democratic institutions which will replace the apartheid tyranny.

Another vital question relates to the post-liberation economic structure. In approaching this question two imperatives must be reconciled: the need to begin bringing about changes in the relations of production in the direction of economic egalitarianism, and the need to meet the people's economic requirements and expectations. In the long term there is harmony between these two imperatives; indeed, the one is the necessary condition for the other. But enough experiences have been accumulated of disastrous great leaps forward to teach us to be wary of clumsy and overhasty pole-vaults into socialism. In our South African context there

will clearly be a place in the post-liberation stage for many levels of non-monopoly private enterprise.

But equally, a balanced process for the redistribution of wealth must begin. Liberation does not consist merely of the vote, a new anthem and a new flag. The exclusion of the majority from the political process is only one aspect of national domination whose basic roots lie in the economic sphere. Early steps would have to be implemented for the redistribution of land (one of the key foundations of national domination in our country), 87 per cent of which is presently allocated by law for white ownership.

The racist regime and its allies are going on an all-out offensive in their attempt to break the alliance between the African National Congress and our party. Increasingly, the South African Communist Party has become the spectre which is haunting Botha, his government, the US State Department and most of South Africa's Western allies. Although the assault on this alliance is growing, we are confident that it will not succeed. The unique relationship between our party and the ANC is supported by our people and visibly applauded in the streets of struggle. Our flags are being raised next to that of the ANC on most of the public occasions when the people demonstrate. Streets and schools are being named after party leaders by the people. The concept of socialism as a future way of life is being accepted by a wide spectrum of our working people and youth.

The alliance between the ANC and our party has very deep roots in our South African condition. There are no secret clauses and no hidden agenda in this alliance. The stability and closeness of the relationship and the participation of individual Communists in the leading echelons of the national, trade union and other mass movements has its roots in our party's historically-evolved style of work in relation to the mass movements. We have always respected and defended the independence, integrity and the inner democratic processes of the mass organisations. To act otherwise is to suffocate them as creative organs and to confuse manipulation with leadership.

There are no differences between our party and the ANC on the immediate objectives of achieving victory for the national democratic revolution, essentially a struggle to destroy racism and to build a united democratic South Africa based on the Freedom Charter. Nor do we differ on the immediate shape of post-apartheid society. Our party does not however hide its commitment to a socialist South Africa. Indeed, it concentrates a considerable part of its energies to spreading socialist perspectives and working class organisation. Nor do we hide our belief that the winning of democracy will facilitate an advance towards socialism. But equally, the struggle to put an end to all forms of racism is in itself a most necessary and desirable advance in the human condition and requires *an alliance covering a broad spectrum of society.*

Our alliance with the ANC coincides with this approach; it is not and should not be premised on the acceptance by the ANC or any other anti-racist force of socialism as the ultimate liberator. We have every reason to believe that in a truly democratic South Africa the advance towards real social emancipation may well be settled in debate rather than on the streets.

In the coming period we will continue to face many serious challenges not only in the theoretical field but, more importantly, in the field of revolutionary practice. The internal underground leadership, both of the party and of the national liberation movement, has to be strengthened. New ways have to be found to enable the mass legal organisations to adjust to the conditions of siege in which the country has been placed by the emergency. It is clear that room for open mass manoeuvre has been narrowed. High profile street actions are no longer the answer and other ways have to be elaborated to sustain the offensive.

Armed blows against the enemy have to be escalated. Revolutionary violence remains a most essential ingredient of political struggle. 1986 saw greater numbers of armed activities against the enemy than ever before in our history. But the narrowing of opportunities for mass legal and semi-legal opposition makes even greater demands on the armed wing of our liberation movement. One of the key tasks is to find effective ways of providing links, leadership and logistical support to the combat units that are emerging among the youth and among the workers.

In general we are also called upon to streamline the organisational framework for broadening the base of the liberation front, to help bring even greater unity to the Trade Union Movement, and to continue to develop appropriate tactical responses to the enemy's counter-offensive in a situation which remains filled with promise for revolutionary advance.

Particularly in the recent period there has developed a growing revulsion throughout the world against South Africa's race tyranny, and the prospects for its international isolation have grown immeasurably. Communist and workers' parties in every part of the world have always been in the front rank of those who have mobilised their people to ensure action by world forces against apartheid. We highly appreciate the endeavours which have reinforced our own historic commitment to fraternal internationalist solidarity with all sections of the world workers' and communist movement.

[1] The prime minister of the transitional government in Zimbabwe in 1979-1980. — *Ed.*

Your Future Lies With Democracy

Excerpts from a SACP Leaflet Addressed to White Workers

Our country is at war with itself. This is where apartheid has brought us . . .

Our rulers (and they are your rulers too, white worker) fed you with racism and promised you peace and prosperity if you joined hands with the bosses and politicians.

White worker, they asked you to forget your own experience of struggle against the mine owners and the bosses . . .

Look at South Africa today. Is this the future you wanted?

Is there the peace your heart desires? From centuries of domination and exploitation the black people have risen in revolt. Black workers are uniting in their hundreds of thousands and fighting the bosses and the apartheid state . . .

What has happened to the never-ending prosperity the ruling class promised you? For decades you closed your eyes to black poverty and black unemployment. Now the economic crisis of our country cannot be rescued by apartheid and capitalism . . .

The breadbasket that your privileged wages buy for you is shrinking. You cannot keep up your house mortgages and the insurance companies are foreclosing on your mortgages. Unemployment is beginning to stare you in the face as well. All this while the capitalists you agreed to join hands with continue to reap fat profits. That is your future along the apartheid road . . .

Are you going to tail behind those who lured you into deserting your real class interests? Is it not time that you faced the future with courage? Courage born out of a vision that you have lived a lie. Only then will you be able to set yourself free of the prison of racism and strike out boldly towards a future which will be born out of the liberation of the black man and the unity of all workers of our country. *Stand up against apartheid! Join forces with your class brothers — the black workers! . . .*

Fight side by side with the black people for a united South Africa, for a democratic South Africa based on one person one vote, for a non-racial South Africa, and for a South Africa where working men and women who are the real producers of our country's wealth shall truly enjoy the wealth they produce.[1]

[1]These excerpts from the leaflet are quoted from *The African Communist*, No. 108, First Quarter 1987, pp. 75-77. — *Ed.*

The 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution

The People's Creative Genius

Claude Renard — Vice-Chairman, Communist Party of Belgium

AS the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution approaches it would be apt to recall what was said on the occasion of its 60th and 50th anniversaries. This at once makes it clear that our vision of the revolution's epoch-making significance reflects many aspects of the evolution of

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concrete political realities. This vision developed in step with the process of change in the world, with the accumulation of diverse experience of socialist construction. Naturally, the most essential features of the October Revolution have been repeatedly analysed and commented upon, by Lenin himself in the first place, and it may seem to be superfluous to return to them once again. But the situation is in flux, constantly providing new political motivations for a re-examination. Practically every succeeding decade gave shape to a fresh approach to such an examination.

Let us consider the new elements of the life of an industrialised capitalist nation that in 1987 compel us to consider the experience of the first socialist revolution.

In the light of the present preoccupations of our working class and progressive movements it would be most useful to proceed from what Lenin said about the international significance of the October Revolution — precisely from what he said and not from the countless later popularisation writings and interpretations.

The questions that were considered by Lenin continue to hold the attention of advanced sections of the left-wing forces, remaining constantly in the focus of debates. It is therefore important to learn (or refresh in one's mind) Lenin's fundamental lessons about applying the dialectical approach. These lessons will greatly benefit all who are interested in the problems of mass movements, the struggle for peace, the role of democracy, the strategy of alliances, and the roads to and prospects for socialism.

Needless to say, one should read Lenin's works about the October Revolution in the same way that he reads what Marx and Engels wrote about the Paris Commune. In other words, one should identify the living thought in the general context which had been inevitably affected by the exigency of polemics, circumstances of the moment, and uncertainty about the future.

It is a long time, of course, since anybody felt that the experience of the Soviets should be copied in all countries for ensuring the representation of the people and a democratic embodiment of the 'special form of state power' — the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nevertheless, what Lenin wrote on this matter remains topical and theoretically important for he set the model for a concrete analysis of the dynamics of mass movements. It should be borne in mind that he saw the *Soviets as stemming from the creative genius of the revolutionary classes*. This is a guideline of Marxist thought, and it was sometimes lost to sight even in the communist movement on account of preoccupation with 'strategic' considerations carried to extremes. Confidence in the people is a scientific and not a moral or a voluntarist category as some of our activists are still inclined to believe. And the more clearly the working class or, to speak in broader terms, the progressive movement sees the significance of the people's creative genius (this has nothing in common with the cult of spontaneity) the more will it be possible to cut short the confusion, perplexity, and demoralisation generated by the crisis of the capitalist society.

The economic and financial policy of big transnational capital, the new technologies, and the capitalist reorganisation of industry, as was noted at

the 25th Congress of the CPB (April 1986), "are destroying the militant proletarian base on which organisations of the working class are traditionally relying". In turn, the changes in society's structure and the working class itself are influencing the public consciousness, political views, ideology, and way of thinking. Proponents of neoliberalism and, in some cases, of right-wing social democracy have been able to benefit from the ongoing changes. This does not mean that the influence of the left-wing forces will inescapably diminish. The important task facing them now is to regain what had been lost. The CPB points out that "the left forces are belatedly drawing political conclusions from the changes in society and the new forms of protest . . . notably by young people, against some aspects of capitalist reality. Although most of the population now links the solution of questions such as environmental protection, the quality of life, the right to creative work, to leisure and recreation with the surmounting of the capitalist system, all of this is motivated by an aspiration to 'live in some other way', to reshape society." Consequently, the lag is not only in analytical work but also relative to the 'actual movement' of the masses.

The left forces have to adapt to changes in this movement and not the other way round. It is only then that they will be in a position to facilitate successful mass actions, direct these actions into a single channel, and give them a new political coherence. Of course, one should not underrate finance capital's potential for defending its predominance, but it is also indisputable that the bourgeoisie has no miracle remedies for the inflamed social ulcers generated by capitalist pillage and extravagance. I am talking, in the first place, of the problem of unemployment, which today requires largely new solutions. For instance, how can the time lost by society on account of the enforced inactivity of the unemployed be turned into time used for promoting education and widening the outlook of people, for what Marx called the free development of the individual?

Naturally, class consciousness will undergo changes, restructuring on a new foundation and will be enriched with new components. The times we live in make it necessary to see the colossal potentialities being opened up by scientific and technological achievements for benefiting society, for individual and collective development. Moreover, it is growing ever clearer that there have to be political changes before these potentialities can be utilised. The present situation differs markedly from the situation in which the Russian Bolsheviks acted 70 years ago. But to this day the experience of the October Revolution teaches us that when we evaluate the prospects for the mass movement we should combine realism with confidence in the future.

The level of the people's consciousness is ultimately linked to their aspirations. As Marx wrote in 1844, "theory can be realised in a people only insofar as it is the realisation of the needs of that people".[1] It was his contention that "theory . . . becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses".[2] *This contention, which retains all of its significance to this day, was strikingly corroborated by the October Revolution.* Indeed, Marxist policy is simultaneously revolutionary and profoundly democratic by virtue of its stemming from the people's aspirations. Whether it is a monarchy or a 'neoliberal democracy', a society can be restructured

fundamentally only if the people themselves want that to happen. But before this occurs they have to be sure that the proposed reforms are consistent with their requirements, which, incidentally, differ greatly depending on the time and place. Hence the significance of what Lenin wrote about the complete and total development of democracy and the determining role of the masses, for example, in the work of the Soviets that, to use his words, incorporate the advantages of parliamentarianism and direct democracy.

Much has changed and continues to change daily in our ideas about the ways and means of reshaping society, but one element has remained unalterable, namely, *that every facet of the people's requirements must be taken into account.* These manifest themselves variously in the present crisis situation in Western Europe: we are seeing an aspiration for changes, signs of stagnation, efforts to remove the obstructions to progress, and departures from the progress that has been made. We believe that in our country Marxism will become, in the true sense of the word, a transformative force consistent with modern requirements provided its proponents are able, more acurately than they have hitherto been doing, to express the interests of the people in the crisis situation and embody these interests in their policy.

The people need peace, above all. The growth of anti-war feeling was one of the factors that brought about the collapse of the tsarist empire and the victory of the October Revolution. The need for peace is felt everywhere and never more acutely than today: millions of people throughout the world have realised that the insane piling up of nuclear, chemical, and other weapons is threatening humanity's very existence for the first time in history. In Belgium there is now a huge anti-missile movement which is eloquently bearing out that an idea that has become a 'material force' can open up immense prospects.

Setbacks occur on this road too, and mass actions do not always produce identical results. But the forms of alliances and the methods of struggle conceived by practice are highly important — the guarantee of future victories and transformations lies in the development of these forms and methods. For instance, the 'peace economy' concept, developed in Belgium with the participation of progressive Christian circles and providing for a fundamental reassessment of the government's policies, has its roots in the great anti-missile demonstrations of recent years.[3] This concept has much in common with the 'new model of growth' idea. The principal criterion is public benefit seen as the satisfaction of the people's requirements and the creation of the conditions for the individual's unhampered development. This can be a realistic objective only if the basic means of production and exchange are used for civilian purposes and managed democratically, in other words, if society takes them into its own hands.

The dialectical link between peace, the satisfaction of the people's requirements, democratic demands, and the prospects for advancing towards socialism was shown to the world with unprecedented clarity by the October Revolution. This link is again surfacing in the entirely different conditions of the 1980s. We can note with gratification that the great

tradition established by the Decree on Peace is today, 70 years later, being reaffirmed in the Soviet initiatives for détente and disarmament. It was noted at the 25th Congress of the CPB that the "Soviet initiatives are of inestimable value to all those who seek an alternative to the madness of 'star wars', for they prove that given the desire it is possible to build a peaceful economy worldwide, including Europe, and thereby eradicate hunger, avert the threat of ecological disasters, abolish the various forms of inequality, and halt the disgraceful waste of energy, raw materials, and scientific expertise on the arms race".

The Belgian Communists are pointing out that the Soviet Union's consistent policy, to which there has been an international response, has helped to create an atmosphere conducive for winning support for their ideas for a gradual renunciation of the policy of blocs, for non-alignment, and for the promotion of international cooperation.

It is now quite evident that existing socialism has the ability to make the most convincing contribution to settling global problems and satisfying humanity's key requirements. It will thereby, directly or indirectly, help to renew and develop Marxism's internationalist ideas, which are an indispensable and universal condition for the success of the people's struggles.

The October Revolution and the proclamation of the world's first socialist state awakened great hopes among the working people of capitalist countries, although some of these hopes were excessive. In 1917 Lenin noted perspicaciously: "Much is given to the Russian proletariat; nowhere in the world has the working class yet succeeded in developing so much revolutionary energy as in Russia. But to whom much is given, of him much is required."[4]

Indeed, much has been demanded of the USSR. *Its decisive contribution to the struggle for humanity's emancipation is evidence that the hopes generated by the October Revolution were justified.* One has only to recall the prewar five-year plans that won many active supporters among workers and progressive intellectuals in the West. Nor should one forget the enormous sacrifices made by the peoples of the Soviet Union in the war against fascism, the role played by the Soviet Union in the decolonisation processes, and the great international repercussions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU. And, lastly, we are now witnessing Soviet society's dynamic renewal, the magnitude of which was confirmed by the 27th Congress of the CPSU.

Lenin expected much from what was started by the October Revolution and there and then, hard on the heels of developments, he explained and clarified his ideas of what would follow. In March 1919 he felt that the founders of the Communist International might conceivably live to see the founding of a World Republic of Soviets. Two years later, in an article headed 'The Tax in Kind', he formulated a significant proposition: ". . . Only by a series of attempts — each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from certain inconsistencies — will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary cooperation of the proletarians of *all* countries."[5]

This extraordinary meaningful phrase (one should remember how long

ago it was written) is the key to understanding the process of the world's transformation that has been going on since 1917 and the contribution that has been made to this process by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. *In the history of humanity the October Revolution has ushered in a new period characterised by the appearance not of consummate socialism in some part of the world but of a plurality of diverse socialist undertakings inescapably bearing the stamp of* 'certain inconsistencies'. Their accumulated results and the struggle of the anti-imperialist and progressive forces are beginning to create the conditions making it possible to speak of the establishment within a relatively short span of time of the complete socialism that would obviously surpass the most developed capitalism in all areas of life.

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 183.
[2] Ibid., p. 182.
[3] In keeping with this tradition a demonstration is scheduled for October 25, 1987.
[4] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 82.
[5] Ibid., Vol. 32, p. 339.

the trade union movement today

Finding The Right Direction

Henri Krasucki — General Secretary, French General Confederation of Labour; Vice-President, World Federation of Trade Unions

OUR 20th century has been a century of extraordinary and swift changes. Socialist societies that today account for a significant proportion of the world's population have taken shape and grown strong. Colonial empires have collapsed and on their ruins the peoples that have won political

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independence are now fighting for economic independence and development, against imperialist exploitation. In this perplexing and complex world, which is full of danger and rich in experience, the class battles have reached unparalleled intensity. Powerful democratic currents are mobilising huge numbers of people for the struggle for peace, against hunger and poverty, for freedom and human rights, and for the preservation of the environment.

Acute contradictions and socio-economic problems of our day manifest themselves against this complex and changeable background. These can be addressed positively, with a sense of responsibility only if simplification, confusion, and hypocrisy are swept away.

With the present century coming to a close there has been an unprecedented rise of the level of human knowledge in all areas and of the ability to apply this knowledge to technology. This offers vast possibilities and, at the same time, makes us ponder over the wide gap between these possibilities and the reality in which many nations live.

Questions of great significance arise: Is scientific and technological progress serving the well-being and rights of the working person? Is it serving the destiny of coming generations? Is it helping the nations suffering from underdevelopment and, in some cases, hunger? Is it serving to promote and disseminate culture? Is it serving nature, its wealth, beauty, and equilibrium? Is it serving the life of our planet and the quality of this life? Is it helping human civilisation to rise to a superior level?

The answers depend on the actions of peoples, chiefly of the working class, of all working people.

In the final analysis, to place scientific achievements in the service of humanity is the top priority social aim of our epoch. This is the terrain on which trade union activity is developing in each country and on the international level.

In order to define the central direction of their activities the trade unions have to proceed from realities, the diversity of situations, and the distinctions between the socio-economic systems, and then look for what is common to the entire international trade union movement regardless of ideological differences and of divergences over concepts. This is precisely what I propose to discuss.

In capitalist countries, especially in those that constitute capitalism's industrial backbone, technological changes are taking place in a situation of unequalled crisis. This crisis has distinctive aspects in each country but, at the same time, it affects the entire capitalist system and influences the whole world, the whole structure of international economic relations.

Egged on by the crisis, employers everywhere are mounting a dangerous assault with the aim of bringing the working people's living standard down to the lowest possible level. Mass unemployment is growing and increasingly becoming permanent. The following table gives a general but convincing picture of this situation.

Jobless Rate Relative to the Total Active Population (%)

	1975	1980	1985
Canada	6.9	7.4	10.4
USA	8.3	7.0	7.1
Japan	1.9	2.0	2.6
France	4.0	6.3	10.1
FRG	3.6	3.0	8.6
Britain	4.3	6.4	13.2
16 OECD countries*	5.1	5.7	8.1

*These 16 are, in addition to the countries listed in the table, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. (See 'Déréglementation et privatisation', *L'Observateur de l'O.C.D.E., No 140, May 1986.)*

Using more or less diverse forms and methods of applying pressure, the bourgeoisie in each of the countries listed in the table is trying to persuade people that permanent insecurity, job precariousness, and living standard instability are becoming inalienable attributes of present-day life. Normal, stable, and justly remunerated work ensuring a reliable status in society is now seen as an unheard-of privilege for whose possession one is justified in renouncing everything.

The social benefits won by the working people in the course of the present century are under threat and have been seriously cut back. In some countries, not least in industrialised states, the capitalists are closing large production facilities and whole industrial regions that have been centres of trade union struggle. Such actions sometimes end up with a country losing its entire production capability and, consequently, with social disaster playing havoc with national interests. In other cases mass dismissals give industrialists total freedom to hire new workers denied all rights and receiving small wages.

So-called 'free zones' are widening, and here the word 'freedom' stands for the freedom of employers from social obligations, for freedom for unbridled exploitation. Profit-making public services are privatised and the quality of their services and the condition of their personnel are deteriorating. During the past five years, for example, some OECD countries have taken steps to end the state monopoly over the postal services and telecommunications, permitting private companies to manufacture the relevant equipment or offer services in addition to those in the existing network. In some countries they have gone so far as to separate postal services from telecommunications, allowing private firms

to compete with state enterprises. Private-sector employers are making ever wider use of the opportunities being opened for them.

Employment is declining in many industries. The following, for instance, are data on several denationalised facilities in Britain: British Aerospace — 9,000 jobs were eliminated in four years; British Telecom — 17,000 in three years; and British Airways — 15,000 in five years.

Thus, 41,000 human tragedies (the loss of a job can only be described as a tragedy) at only three facilities. But the number of such facilities runs into hundreds. As could be expected, it was rightly said at the latest congress of the European Confederation of Trade Unions[1] that an outcome of monopoly policy is the deepening of inequality, the impoverishment of large sections of the population, and innumerable conflicts. Regrettably, the same congress confined itself to noting the facts without saying what has to be done.

The policy pursued by monopolies is leading to economic losses, to an inability to modernise and structurally reorganise industry. At the same time, it inhibits growth and narrows the economic base for financing the public sector. Development providing sustained full employment and a rising living standard is vital if society is to move towards social justice based on principles of solidarity. This means compelling the government to conduct a policy consistent with this objective, a policy that is actively championed by the trade unions. They have the appropriate means for putting it into effect. The privatisation of public services runs counter to such a policy. Social progress will be blocked, unemployment will not disappear, and priority requirements will not be met if private capital looking for immediate profits is given a free hand.

The processes I have mentioned are gravely affecting the domestic situation in the capitalist countries, the character of their economy, the situation on the labour market, and the level and quality of the population's life. However, there is a broader international aspect to the assault mounted by capital on the socio-economic gains of the working people and their trade unions. Let us try to look at it from, perhaps, a somewhat unusual angle.

A very grave crisis is gripping the USA. With a state debt of 2,000 billion dollars, that country, it would seem, should have been on the road to bankruptcy. However, while it is rocking furiously, the economic ship of the USA is not going to the bottom. Why? Because by right of might the leader of the capitalist world is shifting its deficit, unemployment, and crisis to other countries that are meekly accepting all of this in spite of the fact that it conflicts with their national interests. The whole of capitalist Europe is backing down and submitting to pressure from Washington, while some countries are submitting to a larger extent than the rest, for instance, France and Britain. And not only Western Europe. Even an enterprising and flexible power like Japan has to curb its ambitions under pressure from Washington.

In the meantime, the USA and the other industrialised capitalist countries are entering into a conspiracy to compel those they call the Third World to pay for the crisis. Relative to the developing nations, present-day enlightened imperialism and its 'virtuous' institutions, particularly the

World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, are acting like the illiterate ruthless medieval money-lender Shylock from Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice.* They too want their 'pound of flesh'. Today this means buying raw materials cheaply and selling manufactured goods dearly, spurning honest transfers of technologies and conscientious cooperation, and forcing developing nations to plunge into the quagmire of the arms race and thereby waste the material and human resources so vital to them for building an independent economy of their own.

Submerged in an external debt exceeding 1,000 billion dollars, the Third World states are gasping from the effort just to service this debt. This is bringing tragic consequences for entire nations and continents.

Of course, in each country, in each case, there are more or less distinctive conditions, but the calamity is the same. Although the forms of capitalist neocolonialist exploitation change, its essence remains immutable. It is taking those countries that have adopted the option of capitalist development ever deeper into the morass of backwardness with all the attendant consequences.

This policy is a source of enormous difficulties also for the nations that have chosen the non-capitalist or, in some cases, the socialist path of economic development.

The profits made by the monopolies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America bring the working people in the industrialised countries no benefit. The barbarous pillaging of the developing nations is only deepening capitalism's general crisis.

Possessing more power than the governments of some countries, the transnational corporations are behaving as though they are playing a mammoth game of Monopoly. In order to get the maximum profits they close production facilities in their own or any other country only to build others where servile regimes ensure them cheap labour and a fiscal paradise. What is happening is a sort of internationalisation of exploitation. Without in any way alleviating the situation in backward countries, this process is exacerbating the situation in industrialised capitalist countries, pushing them towards a socio-economic decline, which is being aggravated to no little extent by the burden of the senseless arms race.

The trade unions of various countries hold differing views about the causes of this dangerous situation. Most of them believe that the root cause is the frenetic drive to get the maximum revenue from invested capital as quickly as possible. This is leading to an expansion of the volume of profitable speculative investments and a diminution of investments into production and other socially useful activity, into job-creation. This brings to a close the historical role of the bourgeoisie: to take the development of the productive forces to their present level, even at the price of inhuman exploitation, of social and national oppression. All of its present-day activity bears the hallmark of destruction, of investor parasitism.

Many in the trade unions are of the opinion that the interminable crisis is evidence of the bourgeoisie's inability to rise to the challenges of scientific breakthroughs and technological changes. Capitalism has exhausted itself as an economic and social system. Consequently, if there is to be further

progress society has to be reshaped. Some feel, however, that matters have not gone that far. But all agree that a trade union line of supporting capitalism's neoconservative policy regardless of its character, regardless of whether it accedes to the demands of the monopolies out of necessity or willingly, whether this policy is pursued in the guise of 'greater flexibility' or as a 'lesser evil', yields one and the same result — it leads into a blind alley.

What has been the outcome of the exhortations for submissiveness, the conciliatory contracts signed by trade unions with the bourgeoisie? They have accepted slashes in wages, reductions of the people's purchasing power, and cutbacks and even the abolition of social programmes, of the rights of working people. These contracts have not caused unemployment to retreat; they have not created jobs. By placing the workers and the trade unions in a weaker position, they have only made employers stronger.

The socialist countries are also affected by the consequences of the capitalist crisis: they do not live in a vacuum — the earth's atmosphere is shared by all. But this is not their crisis and they have the means of safeguarding themselves against it. That is why the processes now taking place in the socialist world merit special attention.

Despite considerable, sometimes dramatic difficulties, which are rooted in history, the socialist countries have developed with notable success and achieved outstanding progress in their economy, in education, and in society's life. But today the former methods and mechanisms of managing economic and socio-cultural processes are not or, to be more exact, no longer consistent with the requirements of the day.

This was a source of no small delight for socialism's enemies, who alleged that the nature of socialism was such that it could not be flexible and had no capacity for renewal. But recent developments are grievously disappointing them: socialism is showing the world that it has the ability to introduce changes and the will to put them into effect in the interests of the working people.

Naturally, each socialist country has its own distinctions, and each adapts itself to the new requirements in its own way. But it is noteworthy that in one way or another many are putting wide-ranging reforms into effect in economic management, promoting socialist democracy, enhancing the role of the trade unions, and giving the working people a keener sense of responsibility by widening their participation in the management of economic and public affairs.

These quests are leading to diverse decisions, but they are all consistent with the single aim of using new technology to modernise and ensure the maximum development of industry, agriculture, and other branches of the economy, of using advanced technology in such a way as to avoid unemployment, reinforce social guarantees, buttress the new society's judicial foundation, and extend the democratic rights of citizens. The trade unions of socialist countries have a responsible and active role to play in the process of renewal although, as their spokesmen have said, this is neither easy nor simple.

We, in any case many of us who live in the capitalist world, have now learned to look realistically at what is taking place in the socialist countries,

and to speak about everything openly, honestly, without animosity. Like the constructive peace initiatives of the socialist states, of the Soviet Union in the first place, the far-reaching changes now taking place there are awakening great hopes. These changes may be seen diversely and one can argue about them, but it is no longer possible to ignore what is being accomplished before our very eyes and fail to understand how this is influencing world development. The rapid acceleration in Soviet society has moved to the centre stage of international life. It has already brought and will bring still greater benefits to the USSR and the rest of the world.

One must see the reality of socialism as it exists and how it is changing. And this is exactly how one should see the role of the trade unions under socialism. Neither they themselves nor anybody else needs flattering embellishment. It is only honest and accurate information that can be most effective. It is only truly comradely, open, sincere, and equitable relations that can be consistent with common sense and the actual state of affairs.

This poses some essential questions. Are the crisis, unemployment, and the shrinking social programmes that so seriously affect the working people in capitalist countries fatally inevitable? Is it true that subdevelopment is the future lot of working people?

If that were the case it would be necessary to renounce technological progress and return to the caves. But this would be absurd.

There is a way out.

The working class and all other working people cannot link their future to that of the ruling bourgeois class, which is pushing society towards catastrophe. But in order to climb out of the diabolical web spun around the world of labour by capitalism there has to be sufficiently powerful resistance and a quest for ways of ending the crisis.

We are not afraid to declare frankly that this is raising difficult problems for all working people and their trade unions. We must look facts in the face. It is no disgrace to leave behind antiquated notions, adapt to the new realities, and more effectively vindicate our movement's existence. All aspects of trade union activity and all initiatives, contacts, and positive agreements that may be concluded are of great significance. Imaginative and bold action is needed, and nothing should be neglected.

I believe that among the forms of public activity, the *mass trade union actions of the working people are the decisive factor of struggle for change nationally and internationally*. This has been the case ever since the working class and its trade unions came into existence, and it will always be the case.

In view of the internationalisation of capitalist exploitation is it not time for a fightback by the trade unions at the relevant level?

The trade unions emerged in the last century out of the need for unity among the working people to protect their own interests, to prevent employers from inciting rivalry among workers — at first locally and then nationally. The transnationals are now fuelling such rivalry on an international scale — between the workers of different countries and even continents. For this purpose they have the judicial institutions, colossal resources and think tanks of specially trained employees.

Are the working people and their trade unions wise in delaying an

organised joint fightback on the same scale? By acting together we should have the strength to compel national law-giving organs to pass the appropriate laws that would greatly restrict the wrongdoing of the transnationals on the world scene and be in a position to give workers in different countries the means to ensure general defence and control and to negotiate with the management of these giant companies on a basis of equality. Trade unions are already now able (as the experience of the struggle shows) to coordinate their forces at the enterprises of one and the same monopoly and organise information exchanges and concerted solidarity actions. In short, there is a wide spectrum of specific initiatives that urgently need trade union support on a global scale.

That which our ancestors had been able to achieve in the nineteenth century with the small potential at their disposal, we are obliged to do in our day in every country *with account of the actual alignment of strength in the world.* Why should we fail here if we do what is necessary all together and on the appropriate scale?

The struggle to put an end to backwardness and do away with imperialist economic oppression must be conducted not only by the working people and trade unions of the developing world. Normal relations with countries fighting for development, i.e., for a new international economic order, are wanted in equal measure by all working people, including those of the industrialised capitalist states. Such is a duty of solidarity, and it is part of the struggle against unemployment. The way to this is indicated by the broad response that was received by the slogan "We refuse to pay and service the debt", by the success of the conference of Central and South American trade unions organised on the initiative of our Cuban comrades, and by other mass actions. An international meeting to develop initiatives of this kind would be timely. Contrary to appearances, it is not all that easy for the imperialists to impose their will upon nations: capitalism is vulnerable and its banking and monetary systems have been undermined to the extent permitting resistance to the modern Shylocks.

Socialism has now won considerable influence on the world economic and political scene. All the signs are that this influence will grow substantially in the future. Indeed, only blind persons can imagine that they can obstruct socialism's development by means of boycotts, blacklists, and other discriminative measures. Such actions harm their initiators in the first place. But they also adversely affect the interests of the working people of countries whose governments submissively abide by the notorious COCOM[2] constraints. It must be realised that broad economic relations with socialist countries are a major means of bridling unemployment. Such relations can create the jobs that are so vital to the working people of capitalist countries in the present crisis. Moreover, this cooperation could become a major contribution to relaxing international tension.

The new situation demands appropriate adaptation on the part of the trade union movement. Historically the trade unions were formed by the workers, whose numerical strength, experience, and militancy are today a leading social force. But the evolution of societies, forms of labour, and machinery and technologies has given a new significance and dimension to

the role of white-collar workers, engineers, technicians, and managerial personnel. Their road to organisation and collective struggle side by side with the workers is a thorny one. Nevertheless, as wage workers they likewise feel the lash of exploitation and likewise face unemployment and a precarious social status.

A key task of the national and international trade union movement is to set up, in alliance with these sections of working people, militant trade unions that would seek to meet their needs and draw all of them into the battles being fought for their common interests. In other words, *the trade unions have to become organisations of all working people, of each specific group, i.e., trade unions conforming to the new conditions and imperatives of the day.*

Of course, the ideological distinctions and the differing conceptions about the development of the trade union movement are a legacy of the past and constitute a present-day reality. It would be hypocritical to deny this, and discussions of these matters are natural and necessary. But should it be considered that unity among the trade unions is unachievable? The foundation of such unity is not ideology but the common interests of the working people nationally and internationally.

In besieged Byzantium persons who claimed to be sages argued about the sex of angels. Meanwhile, defeat was already looking them in the face. And Byzantium fell.

In many countries the existence of trade unions, regardless of their ideology, is in peril. In this situation the World Federation of Trade Unions says to all trade unions and their leaders, irrespective of their political views: Do not follow the example of the Byzantine sages. Instead of going down together with our controversies let us join forces and win. *The time has come to decide and act. We are ready.*

The world is changing in the direction of progress despite the forces that cling to the past. We ascribe ourselves to those who are committed unreservedly to the battle for changes. However difficult the struggle may be, we are conducting it with faith in victory, with the belief that the future belongs to the working people.

[1] Set up in 1973 with the objective of putting an end to organisational fragmentation and uniting the Western European trade unions. Actually, this is not proving easy to accomplish because the ECTU leadership pursues a policy of social partnership and abstains from cooperating with trade unions affiliated to the WFTU. — *Ed.*

[2] This committee was set up in 1949 on US initiative as virtually a NATO sidekick. Ostensibly formed to coordinate East-West trade policy, its actual purpose is to enforce discrimination in trade with socialist countries by limiting exports on the pretext that many export items have a 'strategic value'. — *Ed.*

We Refuse To Wait

Jorgen Madsen — CC Executive Committee member, Communist Party of Denmark

EFFECTIVENESS of action is one of the main problems for the peace forces at large, and it springs from life itself. More and more people refuse to live with nuclear weapons, and want them to be reduced and completely eliminated in a secure and non-nuclear world. How is the will of the popular masses to be translated into concrete political decisions ruling out the prospect of a nuclear war? Let us take my country.

The Danish people have solid traditions of fighting against war and militarism. Now and again in the course of history its ruling circles have involved Denmark in gambles and tried to bend it to the interests of the major imperialist powers, but the indicative fact is that that has always generated active popular resistance.

Learning the Lessons of the Past

When Hitler Germany occupied the country in 1940, the government faithfully collaborated with the occupation forces until it was swept away by strikes in 1943. It was the Resistance Movement, led by the Freedom Council, which assured Denmark of a place among the allied nations. Six years later, when it joined NATO after reaction's powerful anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign, there was also grave discontent among the people.

That is when the Danish peace movement began to take shape. In the early 1950s, it supported the calls by the early international congresses of the peace forces and organised the collection of signatures to demands for disarmament. Broad anti-war action helped to make the ruling Social Democratic Party refuse to sign a treaty on the deployment of foreign troops on the country's territory in 1953, and to prevent the siting of foreign nuclear weapons and troops on our soil in the 1960s. Despite the slanderous attacks against the Communists, the peace movement, in which they took an active part, met with support in many cities from a number of social democratic leaders and working class organisations. Mass action — the Holbeach-Copenhagen atom marches — were especially important in that period.

The Peace and Security Cooperation Committee has been the leading organisation in the anti-war movement in Denmark since the 1970s. It was set up after a large public delegation from our country took part in the 1973 World Congress of Peace Forces in Moscow. The Peace Centre, established in 1977 on the initiative of the Cooperation Committee, has become a permanent coordination body.

The Danish peace movement developed diverse forms of cooperation between the various forces and exerted powerful pressure on the

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authorities when NATO decided on the deployment of new US missiles in Western Europe in December 1979. Despite external pressure, the government in our country was forced to take a special stand and to postpone its final decision for six months.

When pondering these lessons, one clearly sees that efforts on the national level are not enough. True, there are no US missiles or nuclear weapons in Denmark, but we cannot ignore the fact that they are sited near our borders.

The militaristic forces have also been learning their lessons and using any pretext to try to discredit the anti-war movement. A wild campaign was mounted against the fighters for peace 'for abetting the Communists' over the events in Afghanistan, and its organisers managed to split away the United Nations Association, the Danish Youth Council, and the Quakers from the Peace and Security Cooperation Committee, and also to get Gert Petersen, Chairman of the Socialist People's Party, to refuse to take part in its work.

The peace movement in Denmark was subjected to fresh attacks when the Reagan administration took office in the United States and launched its line of confrontation and sharpening of international tensions under the banner of anti-communism. But despite its losses, the Cooperation Committee proved its viability and skill in acting effectively even in the difficult conditions. It has staged a number of significant events with broad public participation, including signature drives, and has started an exceptionally important debate on Danish security policy in the nuclear-missile age; 85,000 signatures were canvassed by the Cooperation Committee under the call to 'Safeguard Denmark from Annihilation!'; three major nationwide conferences against the threat of war were held, and they called for nuclear-free zones.

Other public forces have also become more active, especially the Nordic Peace Conference, which was held in Alborg in May 1981, and which did much to involve the trade unions in the anti-war struggle.

Substantive Shift

The Nordic Peace Conference was attended by 1,300 trade union delegates, so inaugurating much more active and organised union participation in the struggle for peace. The delegates reached the conclusion that the trade unions, the most massive public organisations, could add new strength to the struggle.

Why did that not happen earlier? Why was there evidence in Denmark in the past of no more than a passing interest in anti-war action even among the most progressive trade unions?

The explanation is suggested by Lenin's idea that war is a terrible thing, but it is a terribly *profitable* thing. The working class has always been used as a supplier of cannon-fodder for the war-makers. It is the working class that has to bear the brunt of the arms race on which the militarists wax rich. But the working people's comprehension of the actual state of things is not a simple process at all. Let us recall that at the start of World War I, military appropriations were approved by 'labour' votes. To this very day, there is still a lack of clarity among many workers — in Denmark, at any

rate — about who represents the forces of war, and who the forces of peace, about the effects of the arms race and the way it infringes the people's vital interests.

One trade union leader declared at Alborg: "We working people want peace. That is why I am ashamed that some leaders of the Danish trade union movement have been demanding more and more millions for military purposes in order to provide jobs for workers." He cited the following example: the newspaper of the Metalworker's Union carried a joyous banner headline announcing that the US F-16 plane would "give jobs to thousands of Danes for eight years".

The Nordic Peace Conference was a reflection of important changes in the attitudes of the unionised working class movement. It called on all trade unions in the Nordic countries to work for ending "the mad arms race, which threatens to destroy everything the working class movement has created by the labour of many generations". The delegates sent a message to the governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, demanding that they should hold negotiations as soon as possible to declare Nordic Europe a nuclear-free zone, with its international status guaranteed by treaty with the participation of the nuclear powers and the United Nations.

An appeal from the Danish trade union delegates was published in the country after the Alborg conference, a document that is highly noteworthy in content and tone. It says, in particular: "*Most of the population of the European North want it to be declared a nuclear-free zone as a contribution to relaxing international tensions. The official response is that the matter must be discussed by the great powers or by other militarily strong states. There is a need to find out what they think. We refuse to wait! If the politicians refuse to sit down at the negotiation table and to move ahead, others will have to do it for them.*"

The Danish ruling circles have naturally continued to wait, and the trade union movement began to act on its own. Thus, in the autumn of 1981, Denmark's major General Workers' Union held a large conference on 'International Détente and Peace', which came out in support of the demand for a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe, and against any increase in national military spending. It simultaneously decided to allocate half a million kroner for an explanatory campaign among the working people in favour of peace.

The spread of anti-war attitudes within the working class movement has also had an effect on the Danish Social Democrats. In the spring of 1981, Party Chairman Anker Jorgensen declared that he no longer wished "to concern himself with a Nordic nuclear-free zone", but within a few months the annual conference of the Social Democratic Party passed a resolution to bend every effort to prevent "nuclear weapons from appearing on Danish soil".

The trade union movement has earnestly joined in the fight for peace, despite the passive attitude of the leadership of Denmark's Central Trade Union Federation, and of most of the sectoral unions. Numerous committees in defence of peace have now been formed and persons responsible for such work elected at grassroots working people's

organisations in industry. Under pressure from below, peace and détente are issues on the agenda of sectoral union conferences, general meetings and conferences of workers.

The Trade Union Movement for Peace was founded in 1982 on the initiative of several trade unions and their local organisations, and the Trade Union Programme of Action for Peace worked out. It contains several demands on Denmark's security policy, while setting trade unions tasks for further advancing their anti-war effort. It ties in national security with the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe, a contribution by Denmark to resisting the US 'star wars' plans, the removal of US missiles from Western Europe, a ban on chemical weapons, etc. The programme calls for educating workers in the spirit of peace, and stresses the importance of objective presentation of war and peace issues by the news media, and greater international solidarity among the working people in the struggle against the danger of war.

The programme was elaborated and amplified at a representative conference convened in Copenhagen in the summer of 1985 by trade unions of various affiliations, including the International Centre of the Working Class Movement, which is affiliated to the Social Democratic Party. Its outcome was that the trade union movement won recognition from the 'traditional' trade unions or, to be more precise, it now commands such positions in the localities that it can no longer be ignored.

That is an encouraging fact for all the peace forces in the country. *After all, broad trade union participation in the peace movement multiplies its potentialities for influencing political circles, while cooperation with other partners in the anti-war struggle enhances the union's role and authority in the society, and strengthens their positions in resisting the policy of big business, and in defending the working people's rights.*

Real and Imaginary Problems

How far the peace movement can be trusted is an issue that keeps coming up in the trade union movement from time to time. Why is that so?

When the bourgeois press attacks peace fighters, its main charge, with innumerable and fanciful twists, comes down to the anti-war movement allegedly being a tool of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, a fairly primitive line of argument. For instance: Communist X is on the leadership of the Committee for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and so it is suggested that the committee itself is a covert communist outfit. If the Communists actively support the Copenhagen-Paris peace march, it is then nothing but another clever move in favour of the USSR.

The slanderous inventions go hand in hand with the way the 'free press' presents various international developments, thereby creating a definite image of the 'enemy'. Now and again, the bourgeois news media are, of course, so hamfisted that they produce the opposite effect. Besides, the Soviet peace initiatives are knocking the ground from under the feet of those who oppose the peace movement. But a lie repeated again and again does have an effect on many. What is more, the peace forces are at a disadvantage, for the slanderers have unlimited access to the news media.

How far the trade unions can trust the peace movement is a question that tends to disappear whenever they strive to get at the truth and to understand what the USSR wants. There is some experience in doing so.

Following the Nordic Peace Conference, a trade union delegation went to the Soviet Union to set forth its stand on disarmament, nuclear-free zones, and so on. It was received at a high level, and had many useful conversations which convinced its members that the USSR stands not only for negotiations, notably on nuclear-free zones, but also for incorporating such zones in international-law documents.

After this, 40 women from the Nordic countries, including trade union activists from Denmark, proposed the staging of Peace March 81 from Copenhagen to Paris. In order to clarify their attitude to war and peace issues, the participants in the march addressed the leaders of the USSR and the United States. The Soviet response was prompt, and came in the form of a letter expressing Moscow's readiness to start constructive negotiations on disarmament at any time. It described Peace March 81 as "a concrete expression of the European peoples' growing protest against the arms race".

Reagan replied in his own peculiar way. Just before the march reached Paris and on the anniversary of the atom bombing of Hiroshima, he gave orders for yet another nuclear weapons test in the Nevada desert, and also announced that the neutron bomb was being put into production.

In 1982, the Trade Union Movement for Peace continued its efforts to clarify the positions of the 'superpowers', and invited a group of political leaders, and representatives of trade unions and peace movements from the United States and the USSR for an East-West meeting in Denmark. There was some scepticisim as to how the meeting would proceed, but in the course of many conversations in Copenhagen and other cities cordial relations were established among its participants. The Danes, for their part, were given a clear notion both of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy, and of the hard conditions in which peace movement activists have to work in the United States.

This success was taken a step further at a 'star wars' seminar in 1985, with the participation of trade union leaders from the United States, USSR, GDR, FRG, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, who issued a unanimous address condemning Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative. Once again, Soviet and US representatives held joint discussions with trade union organisations and peace committees in Denmark. Such measures deal a heavy blow at the anti-communist and anti-Soviet stereotypes used by bourgeois propaganda and help many people 'to see the light'.

The question of mutual trust is also surmounted through joint action by the trade unions and the peace movement. The most important of these was, undoubtedly, the Copenhagen World Congress to mark the International Year of Peace.[1] It took much effort to organise, for it was the first such congress held in a capitalist country for many years, ever since the first Congress of Peace Forces in Paris in 1949. The Trade Union Movement for Peace did much of the preparatory work. It set the aim of raising 300,000 kroner throughout the country to fund the congress, but the

amount was significantly oversubscribed. The interest in the peace meeting turned out to be so great that each trade union had to be limited to sending only one delegate.

Despite the broad support for the congress at home and abroad, the Danish Social Democrats still decided to have nothing to do with it on the allegation that it was too one-sided, an approach which cut across the interests of the trade union and anti-war movements. But they found it hard to keep arguing on these lines. Members of other parties and organisations on the preparatory committee of the congress emphasised that the congress could in fact be broadened by the Social Democrats taking part and working on it, so as to get more social democratic parties abroad to take part. What is more, throughout the period of its preparation they had a seat reserved for them on the committee. But the social democratic leadership regrettably maintained its old stand.

Nevertheless, despite the mistrust for the congress, they and the Central Trade Union Federation leadership failed to stay away from it altogether. The delegates were welcomed by the burgomaster of Copenhagen, a Social Democrat; the chairman of the city's United Trade Union Organisation, another Social Democrat, addressed a trade union forum held within the framework of the congress, while Hardy Hansen, chairman of Denmark's major trade union and a member of the federation leadership, gave one of the introductory reports.

The working people's voice rang loud and clear at the Copenhagen World Congress. The final document of the trade union forum clearly conveyed the *general view that it was no longer right to confine oneself to issuing resolutions on common standpoints, and that it was time to take the next step: to get down to joint action. It is now obvious, the document said, that the struggle for the working people's vital interests is closely bound up with the struggle for peace and disarmament. In this context, the trade union movement has a special task before it: to put an end to the myth being actively spread about by the advocates of the arms race that disarmament would have disastrous consequences for the workers' living standards and jobs.*

Denmark has a relatively small volume of arms production and the intentions to expand it have come up against vigorous popular resistance. Problems arise when, for instance, the crisis in world shipbuilding leads to the closure of shipbuilding yards and massive unemployment in the country. The working people are then told that use could be made of the redundant capacities, and the available skilled labour. Denmark's membership of NATO allegedly induces us to modernise, say, the national armoured forces. If that appears to be inescapable, why not do the job ourselves, instead of wasting our money on foreign military hardware?

People are being simultaneously lured by the prospect of developing arms manufacture, which could allegedly assure the country of the latest know-how and technology, and so help to raise living standards. The latest instance of this comes from the US 'star wars' programme, with many West European, including Danish, companies vying with each other for a slice of SDI, despite its grave threat to peace.

Our party is mindful of all these aspects and seeks to consolidate and

develop cooperation among all the participants in the peace movement, and to joint efforts with the trade union's anti-war activity. *The Communists are actively involved in all the acts and initiatives against the country's further involvement in the arms race, in support for disarmament, and for Denmark's independence and withdrawal from bloc policy. The Communist Party keeps stressing that the role of NATO's forward bridgehead and strategic 'prop' in the Baltic cuts across the national interest.*

The Communists are active in the ranks of the peace fighters not for the benefit of some foreign power, but to give Denmark a fitting place among states promoting détente, disarmament and disbandment of the military blocs. Our goal is peace and security for all. We openly welcome the relevant steps taken by the USSR and other socialist countries.

The Soviet proposals for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe, a ban on chemical weapons, cutbacks in conventional armed forces, and others have given fresh hope to the peoples, to the peace movements, the trade unions and the Danish Communists. The US administration's intentions and acts are in sharp contrast: it has stubbornly gone on with its 'star wars' programme, decided to resume the manufacture of chemical weapons, and to build up strategic armaments. The record shows ever more distinctly the yawning gulf between the interests of the forces of peace and the forces of war.

In the light of the experience of past anti-war battles, and inspired by the growth and activity of the peace movement, with trade union participation, the Communists of Denmark will continue to be reliable fellow-fighters for all those who respond with deeds to the key demand of our day: secure peace and mankind's future.

[1] For details see Anker Schjerning, 'After Reykjavik and Copenhagen', *WMR*, No. 1, 1987. — *Ed.*

Lessons of the Australian Experience

Peter Robson — member of the Executive, Australian Council of Trade Unions

THE present Labour Government,[1] elected in 1983, started with an expansionary economic programme. The idea was to expand the economy by four to five per cent per year so as to create jobs and reduce unemployment which at that time was running at about 11.5 per cent. That was an agreed programme with the trade unions which, for their part, agreed to restrain wages. The agreement also embraced health care programmes and other measures.

What has happened is that the government changed course one year ago and is now adopting the so-called economic rationalist approach — the approach that opposes intervention by the state. It has completely deregulated the financial market. The international market now controls our currency exchange rate, and the currency has been devalued by about 40 per cent in relation to the US dollar, and by 60 per cent in relation to the yen. All this has caused a great deal of uncertainty in the economy.

Urging Workers to Tighten Their Belts

Australia is not a rich country, but it is not a poor country either. It had a strong manufacturing sector that has been tremendously eroded. And our export sector which was based somewhat on manufacturing but more on food and coal exports is in a pretty dire situation because of the policies of our competitors who are dumping food products in our traditional markets. Australia's foreign trade position has been weakened, and our foreign debt has increased dramatically.[2] On top of all that, there has been some talk of the IMF intervening.

This has put the Labour Government in a position where they are having to adopt very tough economic measures which are working more against workers than against capital. The government has called upon the workers to take real wage cuts. Over the last two years real wages have been cut by 7 per cent. Now the government is saying that it wants further wage restraint — an average wage rise of around 6 per cent would be set against an inflation rate of around 8 per cent. Unemployment is still running high at around 8.3 per cent. Proposed budgetary measures also significantly reduced social spending. The interest rates are important in Australia because large numbers of workers own their own homes, but they have large mortgages which they are paying off at high interest rates. In short, the situation for the working class in Australia has deteriorated. Although the incomes of the privileged groups have remained unchallenged, workers' standards of living have dropped quite dramatically.

There is a strong reaction by the working class against these policies. The agreement with the Labour Government which formed the policy base for the unions is now nearly, if not completely, in tatters. This has brought for the first time the unions and the Labour Government into direct opposition. It is a very serious situation. The union movement is now reorienting itself to face the situation. A demand emerging from unions is that action be taken against capital — especially multinational capital, but local capital as well — and on questions of prices and investment policy.

The focus of the trade union movement is not against the Labour Government. While it is critical of the attitude taken by cabinet in favouring business and requiring only workers to tighten their belts, the trade unions realise that the only alternative to the present government would be the right wing. If Labour were thrown out of power at the next parliamentary elections, we would have a conservative government like that of Reagan or Thatcher — anti-union, anti-working class, seeking to change all the labour laws, seeking to privatise the public sector.

This is a clear contradiction for the union movement. On the one hand,

the unions have close links with the government — close funding links, close personal associations. On the other hand, the trade unions have to represent their members interests independently of the government.

It is true that one has to accept economic difficulties because they will not miraculously go away. But everybody sees some groups doing very well: doctors' and lawyers' fees are going up, there is no check on them. Corporate profits are rising. And the workers are saying: "How long? If our economy is in such sorry shape, how can it be that these people are doing fine while the Labour Government is asking us workers to further tighten our belts?" The workers' demand is to make capital share the burden of the economic difficulties. The unions are saying to the government: "Enough is enough! Our members want to be sure that they get a fair deal, and they are ready to go ahead anyway."

The Australian case initiated in 1983 — The Accord between the Labour Government and the unions — is sometimes termed as an experiment in reaching a social truce or 'social partnership'. Some even treat the Australian case in terms of the Swedish situation. But our case is quite different. In Australia, labour has not been able to come to a common approach with capital concerning questions of wages or economic development. In fact, it is nearly as far away as ever. The forces of capital are split at the moment in Australia. On the one hand you have the very conservative forces — we call them the 'new right'. And then there are those who want to try and do a deal with the trade union movement, to pursue some sort of ongoing understanding with the unions. At the moment those two forces in capital are in great conflict. Certainly there is no accommodation between the labour movement and capital. The Accord, the contract between the unions and the government, is now in great jeopardy mainly because the Labour Government has walked away from some of its obligations, particularly in respect to wages.

The Scientific and Technological Revolution and the Taylor System

The union movement in Australia is rapidly coming to grips with modern technology, and that is a salient development. If you look back, ten years ago there was among some unions a Luddite approach to new technology. They opposed it because it was breaking down old, traditional work practices. Now, increasingly, the attitude of the unions is not to oppose new technology but to seek to negotiate and, if needed, to dispute the way the employer wants this technology to be introduced. The organisation of work is central to this question. The employers are seeking to introduce products of the scientific and technological revolution by 'Taylorist' methods, and the unions are increasingly moving to use new technology for people, for enhancing work and improving it, for broadening tasks and giving people a better job. So we are not opposing it, but we want it to be used to improve the lot of the workers.

The other thing is that there is now a strong realisation in our country that for Australia to survive in the 1990s as a reasonably affluent economy, we need new technology. One of the great problems at the moment is that in the manufacturing sector and in the service sector, our technology is old. Meanwhile, some countries of Southeast Asia — South Korea, Taiwan and

others — are developing new technology and even outstripping the Japanese in some cases. The new manufacturing states of Asia are now able to compete easily both in price and in quality. And the advanced Western countries have now woken up to the fact that they have to re-establish their manufacturing base and, in certain markets, improve their quality too — otherwise they will be in a terrible state. And Australia is like that.

This obviously has an impact on the nature of the labour movement. The traditional base of the working class was in manufacturing industry. Now the blue-collar trades — like waterside workers, etc. — are shrinking in numbers. However, to offset this, there is strong unionisation in the service sector. Hotels, shops and the public sector are strongly unionised. Militancy is developing among these new unions. They are using different forms of struggle.

The Australian working class is changing. There are still plenty of people who would say that the 'ideal' worker is a fitter, a building worker, etc. Some groups say that they are the 'only real working class'. In my view, that is a very short-sighted analysis. There are new forces, new unions coming into action — you cannot get away from that. The working class is broadening to cover the service sector and the public sector.

Fortunately, we are all united in one big trade union organisation, the Australian Council of Trade Unions. We have something like 55 per cent of the entire workforce unionised. And we have a tradition of militant struggle in Australia, even among the unions led by right-wing people. That tradition is there. We are confident that the union movement will remain virile and strong: a greater upsurge can be imagined if a very conservative government coming into power would try to change the labour laws. The forces which are following the 'new right' are already advocating dramatic changes in the rights of workers — for instance, changes relating to the right to organise, or changes allowing civil court action against workers on strike. That would be a major challenge for the union movement.

The internationalisation of manufacturing and the increasing role of the multinationals are very much felt in Australia. For example, our motor vehicle industry is now increasingly becoming a sort of part of the world car plant. We import a lot into Australia, but we also manufacture stuff for all over the world, including engines and spare parts for cars. The desire of the multinational corporations to transfer their production from Australia to the free-trade zones of Southeast Asia or to Hong Kong has a great adverse effect on our economy, on employment and on investment practices.

Do the trade unions have any alternatives to that? I do not think that so far they have shown a coherent enough approach to that question or made enough practical steps to take it on. In this context, one can speak about the role of the Pacific Forum, an international trade union initiative. For instance, it can help in the cross-fertilisation between New Zealand and Australia and the developing countries in the region — and above all between their trade union movements.

There is a great deal of concern that American unions are using external money to try and influence and dominate the islands of our area and their

trade unions. This kind of infiltration can be very destructive for the trade union movement because in places like the Solomon Islands the unions are by far the best-organised social force and have tremendous influence in elections. So the stakes are quite high. The Pacific trade-union community should be regarded as an independent entity which will have none of American or any other super-power influence.

Working Together for a Nuclear-Free Status

The peoples of the South Pacific — the working class at least — are united around the question of nuclear disarmament and the nuclear-free zone in the area. A regional trade union conference was held in Auckland in May 1986, and it called for efforts to promote the observance of the Treaty on the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone,[3] urged working people to take action against nuclear tests, and reaffirmed solidarity with the national liberation struggle.[4] The peace and nuclear disarmament movement in Australia is a community-wide movement. The trade unions are a part of it, but also churches, community groups and, of course, peace groups and many young people. It is probably the biggest single community movement in Australia. It covers all society, the bourgeoisie included, and is very effective. For instance, in the beginning of this year 130,000 people in Sydney and over 100,000 in Melbourne marched for peace. You could see hundreds of placards calling for a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific.

We see the French nuclear testing in Mururoa Atoll as quite outrageous, and the same applies to the destruction of the *Rainbow Warrior* in New Zealand and the subsequent French moves to cover it up. Many people are asking, quite justly, what right France has to come and test its weapons in a peaceful place more than ten thousand miles away from its shores. More people are saying that if we can make our area nuclear-free, that might well be an example to be emulated in other parts of the world.

These are the signs of the Australians' growing consciousness. Most in the labour movement are committed to the peace struggle. Peace marches in Australia and other countries of the region are community based and include the labour movement.[5]

[1] This government was formed following the victory of the Australian Labour Party at the mid-term general parliamentary elections in March 1983. The ALP consolidated its majority at the next mid-term elections in December 1984. — *Ed.*

[2] In 1986 our foreign debt became bigger than Argentina's, growing from 18 to 60 billion US dollars in five years. — *Ed.*

[3] This instrument, known as the Rarotonga Treaty, was approved at the 16th session of the South Pacific Forum (Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji, Western Samoa and the Solomon Islands) in August 1985 and entered into force in late 1986. The treaty prohibits the development, use and testing of nuclear weapons and the dumping of radioactive waste in the region. The Soviet Union was the first of the nuclear powers to sign the protocols to the treaty on December 15, 1986, followed by the People's Republic of China in February 1987. The United States and France have declared that they will not accede to it. — *Ed.*

[4] The conference was attended by about 100 delegates from different countries — ranging from Australia, New Zealand and Japan to small island states such as Kiribati, which has a population of no more than 60,000. — *Ed.*

[5] Some 300,000 people took part in these marches held in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and other cities in April 1987. The demonstrators demanded observance of the nuclear-free zone regime, removal of US military technological bases from Australian soil, a ban on calls of ships carrying nuclear weapons at Australian ports, an end to uranium exports to France, and conversion of military spending to social needs. — *Ed.*

the party

Grassroots Experience
Think And Act In A New Way

BY the time the 13th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party was convened in April 1986, the BCP numbered more than 932,000 Communists and 28,806 grassroots organisations. As it was noted at the congress, these organisations are the driving political force mobilising the masses for the implementation of party decisions in all major sectors of socialist construction.

The following articles are about the way BCP grassroots organisations are living today.

EVERYTHING IS DECIDED AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

I talked with **Dimitr Dimitrov,** bureau secretary of the BCP organisaiton at the Plovdiv Institute of Horticulture, in his office of deputy director. A leading researcher, he has been head of the party bureau for more than six years now, so his competence is not questioned.

But perhaps this combination of administrative and party functions gives rise to additional difficulties?

I wouldn't say so. Actually, we are quite an unusual collective. Of the total staff of 450, researchers make up about one-third. They have a higher education and some, even academic degrees. The rest are in the auxiliary services, mostly in the experimental production infrastructure which, around Plovdiv alone, comprises 320 hectares of arable land. This category of employees includes people with a secondary and even an elementary education.

One out of every five staff members is a Communist. They constitute a powerful force. But it is not easy to mobilise it, to channel the interests and efforts of researchers and workers into a common mainstream. Members of the party bureau, above all the secretary, must know what motivates each, what is of concern to people with such different levels of expertise and knowledge. And so my post of deputy director helps, not hampers, me in this respect. True, you must be able to switch promptly from the

managerial to the political role, otherwise misunderstandings may arise. This means that you've got to keep a constant watch over the way you act.

Of course, one cannot go it alone. We are lucky to have a strong bureau which helps a lot. The bureau includes researchers, a team leader from the experimental farm, and representatives of auxiliary services. The important thing is that they all enjoy prestige, display initiative and, generally, are sociable people who want to and can bear the burden of important party assignments, who are ready to work in their own time to take care of these tasks. But they, too, would not be able to cope with guiding the activities of a large and diverse collective and with their jobs if they did not rely on the grassroots support within party groups.

Our record demonstrates that good work by the grassroots organisation depends on good work by its constituent groups. There are ten such groups at the institute, six to seventeen Communists in each. On the purely practical plane, they are very efficient. They are small, mobile and can discuss and solve an urgent question within minutes, without wasting time on long meetings. The members are also united by similar jobs and considerable expertise. When they gather together, they dispense with platitudes and speak only to the point at issue. This is true not only of their professional or occupational matters: a political or ideological discussion in such a close-knit group must necessarily be straightforward, informative and informal.

Any major party project covering the whole institute begins at the level of these groups. They are the channels for the day-to-day contacts with the staff without which party leadership remains a dead letter. We had an all-institute meeting to discuss the quality of research. All preliminary analysis was taken care of by the groups beforehand, and quite competently. Drawbacks were identified and ways of correcting them proposed. A comparison of the viewpoints and conclusions expressed in the groups enabled the meeting to jointly identify the main thrust of future work without going into too much detail.

Another lesson we have learned is that party work cannot be effective without constant and comprehensive monitoring. We monitor the work of the managerial staff, up to and including the director (who, incidentally, reports regularly to the party bureau), of party group leaders and of the Communists active in the trade union and the Young Communist League branch. Above all, we monitor the implementation of our own resolutions and plans. When we assigned different tasks within the party bureau, monitoring was singled out as a major field and entrusted to one of the comrades.

We began our talk with forms of party work and discussed some of them. What could you say about the efforts of the grassroots party organisation and the objectives it pursues today, a year after the 13th Congress of the BCP?

The objectives we are pursuing are those which are outlined at the supreme party forum and which underlie all efforts of Bulgaria's Communists. Today we must work in a new way and think in a new way. I am stressing

the latter because party work is decisive in the sphere of consciousness, of a creative quest for innovative approaches.

Briefly, the novelty of the situation, as I see it, is that in addition to the demand for intensification of the economy, a task set several years in the past, the 13th Congress of the BCP called for thorough retooling and for using the latest advances of science and technology. Applied to us, this means that from protracted studies, although often effective, we are to switch to the latest methods of developing, testing and producing radically new horticultural varieties and highly efficient systems of machinery and labour organisation in our field. Today we are not simply dealing with selection, introduction of chemicals or mechanisation, but with genetics, automation, computers, environmentally safe biological plant protection and the like.

It is the job of the institute to tackle these tasks, and this is what we are doing. Some may wonder what the party organisation has to do with all this. But without a restructuring of the human factor there will be no genuine breakthrough in research, technology or production. Take our seed factory which uses an advanced method of cell cultivation to accelerate the development of new strains. The factory was established quickly. Able young people were hired, but they had to be trained and guided. It was suggested that several Communists from the research sections be transferred to the factory. People who had grown used to their old jobs did not realise right away that the transfer was a necessity and even an honour. The party organisation helped them grasp the situation.

Or take another example. We have an advanced technology section. Previously, farms bought an experimental model of a machine, say, for mechanised harvesting of cherries or other horticultural crops, but then it was often sent back because it did not prove efficient enough. We concluded that it was necessary to develop sets of machines instead of introducing a single model, and we acted accordingly. We scored a success, although the outcome could have been different. Progress always involves a risk, but it must be a reasonable risk because, after all, we work on a self-supporting basis and have financial accountability. And it is difficult to take up a project like that without support from the party.

As you see, a grassroots organisation should take care not only of monitoring things or promoting a sense of responsibility in all, both Communists and non-Communists. In a collective such as ours, it is important to create a climate of cordiality, boldness, and creative quest for new approaches and solutions. That is the very essence of party work.

Dimitr Dimitrov interviewed by
Vladimir Shelepin, *WMR* staff member
Plovdiv-Prague

Style of Work Under Discussion

A Review of *Rabotnichesko delo*

LAST autumn *Rabotnichesko delo*, the newspaper published by the BCP Central Committee, launched a discussion of the work of grassroots organisations and their secretaries, and of relations between the rank and file and higher party bodies, managers of enterprises and other managerial executive staff.

The tone of the discussion was set in an editorial which said that "since we are striving to change the style and methods of work and of political guidance and economic management — and society must go through such a change at the new stage in its development — and since we want to lose no time in practically applying advances of science and technology, in opening the door to and paving the way for the scientific and technological revolution, change should begin with the grassroots organisation, the party bureau and its secretary".

There was massive a response to the editorial. People who have sent letters to the editorial office stress that much greater demands are now made on the secretary of a grassroots party organisation. He or she must be familiar with the smallest economic and technological details in order to competently organise monitoring and assist the management, and have enough expertise to assume the post of director if necessary. Over and above all that, the secretary must be at home in the distinctive aspects of party work and in trade union and Young Communist League matters. The party secretary has to study a great deal of technological and organisational documentation, let alone cope with the complex and delicate task of studying the people and their relations, including occupational and family conflicts.

S. Petkov, party secretary at the refrigeration equipment factory in Tyrgovishte, writes that "when someone claims that he easily combines different occupational and civic duties, it taxes my credulity". Sometimes it is in fact impossible physically, particularly if the secretary is busy on the shop floor: after the switch to the workteam method of labour organisation, the time one spends on party matters must be made up for after hours. And the amount of this time is considerable: a *Rabotnichesko delo* survey shows that it is about an hour a day.

But the party secretary is a human being, as are all his or her colleagues. The secretary has to go shopping, take the kid to kindergarten or school, call at this or that office, do household chores (many secretaries are women, and they must take care of the cooking, washing and the like) and so on and so forth.

S. Petkov notes that usually, this shortage of time affects the way the secretary develops as an individual. Over the years he or she has been in charge of the party organisation, the secretary fails to submit a single economic improvement proposal, although this used to be usual practice with him or her in the past.

But the Communists who have aired their views in the newspaper

themselves suggest a constructive way out. Those who decided to check their own record and began to keep a diary arrive at conclusions that are similar to those made by **M. Tsvetanov**: "By the end of the month I was surprised to find out that not simply minutes but whole hours were wasted or spent irrationally." The aforementioned poll demonstrates that 80 per cent of the time a secretary spends on his or her direct party duties gets lost due to poor organisation and countless meetings.

All secretaries taking part in the discussion agree that their work can be organised much more rationally if the style of work is changed. One need not discuss the same problem simultaneously at the managerial level, in the party organisation, trade union and YCL branch, the way it is done now. Instead, an open meeting among those concerned would be much more useful. Only those whose presence is an absolute must should be summoned to meetings at higher managerial levels. The paperwork must be cut drastically. Many Communists believe that meetings and conferences often last too long because of poor organisation.

A frugal attitude to time depends above all on those in charge, including secretaries of grassroots organisations. The example they set, and the way they organise their work and deal with various matters promptly and precisely are very important. But it is the party committees at a higher level that shape, to a large degree, the necessary style of work.

Rabotnichesko delo readers stress the need to get rid of certain untenable traditions in personnel policy. Hero of Socialist Labour **G.Madolev** recalls that when he held a top executive post, a functionary of the city's party committee called on him and suggested that they discuss the candidacy of the future party secretary. "I refused categorically to do this between us two. He was amazed and said, 'But the secretary will be there to help you, and you have a bigger stake than anyone else in having the right man at your side.'" Madolev believes that this practice is harmful because it downgrades the role of the party activists and subordinates the grassroots party organisation to the management.

Participants in the discussion also criticised those members of BCP city and community committees who, when visiting this or that factory or office make a beeline for the director's office without stopping at the party committee room. That happens quite frequently. If necessary, the party secretary is invited to join the director and the visitor and receive instructions or be reprimanded. Communists cannot accept this way of 'enhancing' the prestige of a party leader. They also reject the dubious approach to assessing his or her efficiency by checking the fulfilment of the plan and the economic performance record and concluding that if these are good, so is party work. But, writes **G. Kolev,** we know of cases when good economic results were achieved through violations of legal and ethical norms, and the secretary was forced to keep silent about it.

The generally adopted form of reports to party meetings does nothing to help an objective assessment of the work performed by a grassroots party organisation and its leader. Usually, a report of this kind begins with a wordy description of economic achievements and tasks. The organisational and ideological role of the party is mentioned toward the end, when there is little time left. The participants in the discussion maintain that this

should be reversed: an analysis of party activities and of the style of work adopted by the leaders should precede a review of fulfilment of economic plans. This is the only way to ascertain whether the Communists are indeed in the front ranks of their collective.

Particularly sharp remarks were made in the discussion of relations between party secretaries and economic managers. "The director has real power," G. Kolev notes. "He approves promotions and bonuses, and he metes out punishment. The party secretary is not in a position to match that. Furthermore, since he is a wage or salary earner, his income depends on the director to a considerable extent. This can pose a dilemma before even the most principled of secretaries."

The discussion in *Rabotnichesko delo* shows that many Communists are concerned over the status the economic manager and the party secretary have in the collective. Only two letters said that "a director should be treated as a director" or expressed a similar view. The others, while recognising the director's central role, emphasise that he must feel that the party organisation, its bureau and its secretary are monitoring all his work. But this is hardly furthered by the unwritten rule that the top executive usually speaks last at party election meetings. He sums up the situation and outlines tasks for the future, although the BCP Rules state that he should report on his own performance to the Communists.

D. Zhelev notes that a top executive obsessed with careerism and personal gain begins by trying to weaken the grassroots party organisation and to blunt public response and concern because only this kind of atmosphere would help him to get what he wants. He will fawn on the higher-ups to earn praise. But should the party secretary express his principled disapproval, he is often deposed and replaced with a more pliant person.

The authors of letters to the newspaper all say that the Communists should firmly rebuff all attempts to violate either the principles of the party or the nation's laws. Style of work makes the individual, and it makes the grassroots organisation too. It is not easy to change this style.

Having opened a frank and open discussion, *Rabotnichesko delo* is making its contribution to the reorganisation of party work and to greater democracy within the party.

P. Blagoeva

Making the Most of Video

Vitor Neto — Central Committee alternate member, Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)

IT is now common knowledge in Portugal that the PCP releases its own video products. This has been reported many times by the bourgeois press and — obviously, for commercial reasons — by the company from which the party bought the latest video equipment. Before I talk about the way our video department got started, I think it is worth explaining why we decided that we really needed one.

Day in and day out powerful mass media — television, radio and several leading newspapers which are controlled by the government, the right-wingers and other reactionaries — methodically brainwash our people, manipulating public opinion to further their own political interests. State-run television, formally regarded as a public trust, is in fact controlled by the right-wing forces which exploit it for anti-communist purposes and do everything to discriminate against our party.

This has prompted the PCP, which works not only to uphold but also to advance the cause of the April 1974 Revolution, to reflect on how it could bring its ideas, positions and proposals to the people. We ourselves are convinced that the policy of our party is right. But that is not enough: we should project our conviction to the masses.

A few words about how the PCP understands propaganda work. We believe that political activity is the foremost weapon here. Revolutionary propaganda tasks cannot be tackled with the help of technical means alone, no matter how sophisticated. While appreciating their importance and the ability to use them skilfully, one ought to face facts: today, the PCP cannot compete with the bourgeoisie in mass information. That is why *day-to-day political work of the Communists remains the principal form of our propaganda.* If members and organisations of the party are passive, no amount of propaganda, whatever channels are used, will help.

The PCP conducts a broad variety of propaganda work, including the production of posters, pamphlets, books and periodicals. Nationwide propaganda days are organised regularly. Usually, all party members are involved in these efforts. The Central Committee encourages grassroots party organisations to produce their own propaganda items because those that come from Lisbon cannot meet all requirements. People living in different areas and communities often encounter different problems, the work of grassroots party organisations has its own distinctive features, and besides, different people have different educational backgrounds. We therefore believe it very important for our organisations to shape their propaganda work with due regard for their tasks and specific conditions of struggle.

Vitor Neto (b.1944), a journalist, joined the PCP in 1964 and has been an alternate member of the Central Committee since 1979. He is in charge of the propaganda sector in the CC PCP information and propaganda department.

Furthermore, *the PCP maintains that every single means of propaganda should be put to work.* None of them is obsolete, each has its relevance. The 'trick' is to know where and in what way each should be used. Everything must come into play — films, videotapes, slides, newspapers, exhibitions, pamphlets, murals and so on and so forth. This integral approach is at the heart of the party's attitude to propaganda work. I am stressing this on purpose because today one sometimes hears that video is a 'cure-all'. But that is an illusion. Video is very important, but it must not be used to the detriment of other forms of propaganda, including traditional ones, let alone weaken the political activity of party organisations.

Attractive and accessible, audiovisual means are spreading rapidly and becoming increasingly popular, particularly with young people. It is a fact that today, many young Portuguese prefer television, video and radio to books and newspapers. One can, of course, condemn and try to combat this trend, but it is a reality and must be taken into account.

Our first attempt to introduce videotapes into propaganda work dates back to 1976, when the equipment produced only black-and-white images and, by today's standards, offered few opportunities. It was used on a very moderate scale.

In recent years we have taken up videotaping again, not only because of its obvious propaganda advantages but also due to the specific need of producing our own television programmes. Under the Constitution the PCP, like other political parties, has a right to appear on radio and television. The time allotted us on television is limited to some 60 minutes a year. We prepare our programmes ourselves for five to six ten minute slots. That is tough work, because we should cover many things, put across the truth about PCP policy and explain our stand on topical problems — all this within ten minutes.

At first we used film to prepare television programmes, but then switched to video cassettes because filming became too difficult. It requires special studios, professional personnel, different sets of equipment and film archives — and all this brings no financial return because we do not film for commercial purposes.

These were the problems that arose in film production, but we still attach close attention to the showing of films. The PCP still maintains its film pool which we try to replenish with new pictures. That is, the party does not give up films in its work with the masses, because films do have their advantages. In many areas, particularly in the countryside, films have much greater appeal than videotapes which are aimed more at urban audiences with their higher technological level.

In early 1986 the idea of a programme called 'Contraponto' (Counterpoint) was born. This regular programme of political news on video cassettes covers the domestic scene and salient national and international issues, explaining the position of the PCP. Its mission is to counter the inventions of bourgeois propaganda with truthful information and to report on developments in the fields of culture and sports. Our programmes pay special attention to the class struggle because this is one of the issues deliberately suppressed by the right-wing-controlled mass media. 'Contraponto' enables us to provide information to many of our

comrades who are unable to learn about class battles in various parts of the country from other sources.

The first issue of 'Contraponto' cassettes was released in April 1986, followed by others at intervals of about four weeks. Some clips are recorded from television, and others we mostly shoot ourselves and narrate our own commentary. All this is then edited and arranged together. Each programme averages 40 minutes, but we are thinking about cutting this length. The record shows that viewers turn away from tapes of drawn-out lectures or broad political panoramas. People are interested in topical issues covered in short, lively bursts.

Virtually all major party organisations have acquired video cassette recorders. Every issue of 'Contraponto' is released in 60 to 70 copies. But the actual scope of circulation is much broader: copies are often made locally, and the total figure is impossible to calculate. Party organisations can return cassettes after viewing, to have new programmes recorded. In this case the 'customer' pays only for the taping itself.

A three-hour cassette features a 40-minute news programme, and the rest of the 'payload' is devoted to a film or music show. We are also searching for new forms of presentation. Last year, the summer issue of 'Contraponto' had a smaller portion of political items but included many songs of outstanding Portuguese singers recorded at traditional festivals of different regional organisations of the PCP.

We also plan to produce video cassette tapes of Portuguese and foreign feature films, specifically from the socialist countries. We can either interpret them into Portuguese or provide subtitles. A great deal remains to be done in this sphere. The plan is to quickly enlarge our selection of video cassettes by adding more full-length feature, science, entertainment, historical and sports films and cartoons in order to meet different interests.

Other plans include the use of video equipment for the political and ideological education of our activists. Video schools can be organised locally, using cassettes as the principal medium of instruction. The fact that the comrades will be able to study where they live, without travelling to attend the PCP's central courses, is an additional advantage.

The party bought its video equipment almost two years ago. Since then we have accomplished perhaps ten times as much as we originally planned. I repeat, video opens up great opportunities, but it also calls for a professional approach and proper organisation. This raises the issue of personnel training.

Political responsibility for 'Contraponto' rests with the information and propaganda department of the PCP Central Committee which defines the main thrust of every issue. The guidelines are implemented by a group of Communist technicians and journalists. We have a small staff of technically trained personnel — mostly young who have acquired some skills and experience working with us. On the other hand — and that is a great asset — we have a lot of trained professionals willing to help: producers, cameramen and light and sound engineers. Not all of them are PCP members, but all are ready to help us with our video programmes in their spare time. For example, several crews worked with four video cameras at the latest festival of *Avante!* in September 1986. In exceptional cases, when

political activity is at its highest — as during election campaigns — we meet our needs by concluding temporary contracts with various video professionals because all party members are fully immersed in the political struggle.

We are working to train our own experts, recruiting those young Communists who show an interest in this line of work, display a creative approach and are capable of generating new ideas.

It is clear now that our video operation should be expanded. More orders are coming in from party organisations, and many of them want to produce their own programmes. That is perfectly understandable: party actions in various parts of the country are so numerous that we simply cannot cover them all.

Our video work and particularly the 'Contraponto' programmes are a completely new undertaking. Much is yet to be finalised. And so we keep searching for better forms of work and for more effective contracts with grassroots organisations. Still, we can already sum up the first results.

Those party organisations which use this form of propaganda enthusiastically and vigorously have made quite noticeable progress. As soon as it gets dark, our programmes are shown right in the streets, and they gather many viewers. We also use these occasions to distribute our propaganda publications. Some public places whose owners have communist sympathies also play 'Contraponto' programmes. Naturally, information programmes are often shown at PCP centres during lunchbreaks or in the evenings, before a meeting. These shows frequently become a prelude to a discussion.

However, our experience also displays a negative aspect. There are objective difficulties, cases of an insufficiently vigorous attitude, a shortage of qualified personnel and sometimes simply an obsession with routine matters. All this stands in the way of using video with proper effectiveness. As a propaganda tool, video calls for a degree of mobilisation of manpower and for relevant efforts to be exerted by party organisations. If there is confusion, if no one has been put in charge, if people are not notified that a show is planned, or if the equipment is not ready, a video cassette can gather dust on a shelf as uselessly as a poster or a newspaper.

In other words, *nothing gets done by itself. There is no single ultimate propaganda weapon. In each case the human factor, the organisation, and political efforts aimed at the masses play the decisive role,* and the return is tremendous. Our experience shows that as a modern form of the Communists' politcal and ideological struggle, video is very promising.

Annals of Courage

Twenty Years in Prison

The Filipino Communist *Jose Lava* spent twenty years of his life in jail, but the long prison term failed to break his spirit. Immediately upon his release in 1970, secured by Philippine and international

public pressure on the government, he plunged into active party work. How did he manage to survive this ordeal? What helped him to prevail, to preserve his identity and his ideals? We put these and other questions to Comrade Lava, who currently represents his party on *WMR*.

I WILL always remember the fateful day of October 18, 1950. That was when the authorities seized a large group of Communists in Manila, including some leaders of our party. In the course of the trial which lasted until May 1951 and was based on trumped-up charges,[1] six CPP members were sentenced to death; for several comrades, myself included, the verdict was life imprisonment, and the rest were sentenced to various prison terms.

At first I did not believe that I would remain in prison for more than twelve years (the maximum penalty for simple rebellion). I was hoping that the political situation in the country would change, that the sentence would be reviewed and the correct penalty imposed. However, years passed, but the only things that changed were the prison cells and the faces of the guards and of my fellow inmates.

We spent the greater part of the first five years of imprisonment on death row. There was also solitary confinement during which we were deprived of all reading matter and could leave the cells only for brief walks, and meetings with relatives or lawyers. Due to an outbreak of gang warfare in the death row we were transferred to the prison chapel for several months into which 250 inmates were packed like sardines. We had to sleep on the floor with hardly enough space left for walking.

Intelligence officers kept imprisoned Communists under constant surveillance and repeatedly tested our fortitude. Once, after a period of very strict confinement in a military jail, several comrades, myself included, were taken out of the prison blindfolded. It was a long and silent drive to an undisclosed destination. As it turned out, it was yet another interrogation, although conducted in the manner of an almost friendly talk with an intelligence officer posing as an historian. From me, he wanted to hear my version of an internal party controversy, involving forms and methods of struggle. I indignantly refused this transparent attempt to get my 'cooperation' for splitting purposes.

I was subjected to experiments in which psychotropic drugs were used. The aim was to test their effect on human behaviour. I could not tell whether it was day or night, I was semi-conscious all the time. When I began to recover my senses, another injection was administered. And then they told me I was losing my mind. I asked my wife to take this matter up with the President and she did, but was ignored.

As far as I know, only one CPP member succumbed to enemy pressures after spending several years in jail — one of those sentenced to death. The others successfully resisted such pressures. From my very first days in prison, it never occurred to me to appeal for pardon: this step could have been interpreted as a sign of weakness, of readiness to trade my convictions for release.

Attempts were also made to sway us through our families. No attempts

were made to approach my two older brothers who were not directly involved in the revolutionary struggle but were known for anti-imperialist convictions and their socialist sympathies. The authorities tried to act through my mother. A family acquaintance was induced to talk her into persuading me and my younger brother, at that time General Secretary of the CPP CC, to give up our convictions. But my mother said: "Whatever my sons may be doing must be good because I trust them fully. All I can do is hope and pray for their health and safety."

There were also outright provocations we had to withstand. Intelligence officers once staged a real show. They said they found a note at my cell door reading, "Comrade Lava, everything is ready." They wanted to use this forgery to accuse me of preparing an escape. But the scheme fell through. A prison security officer was assigned to investigate the case, and he proved to be an honest man. After questioning me several times, he realised that I had nothing to do with the incident, and he duly recorded his conclusion. I regret to say that he paid for his integrity: he himself was framed and beaten severely during interrogation sessions. Later we learned that the officer had died.

Our jailers tried to demoralise us by playing on the difficulties in the development of the international communist movement. For example, after the 20th Congress of the CPSU which denounced the personality cult period and its abuses, an intelligence officer brought me a copy of *U.S. News and World Report* with anti-communist coverage of the congress and asked for my opinion. I replied that first of all I doubted the authenticity of the magazine's version and added that at any rate this information could not undermine the commitment of Communists to socialism, just as it was impossible to deny that, led by the CPSU, the heroic Soviet people and their armed forces played the decisive role in the defeat of Hitler fascism.

Virtually from the very first days of our imprisonment, our group was visited by Catholic priests and nuns. They tried vainly to shake our atheist convictions. From the early 1960s, brothers of the Catholic De Lassalle University made frequent visits to some of our leading comrades. I was included in two such visits. The aim was to split our group with the help of Maoist propaganda. They were looking for people who displayed a degree of ideological immaturity and lacked adequate practical experience. Very few were swayed. Most Communists remained steadfast.

I think that what helped me to survive my 20 years in prison was above all the readiness to face harsh trials and my faith in the ideals which prompted me to join the Communist Party. I became a Communist in 1937, when the CPP had been working underground for five years. From the very outset I had a fair grasp of the risks and sacrifices the life of a party member entailed.

I deliberately spoke about this to my future wife in the course of my courtship. I am proud to say that she understood me and that she showed great perseverance and fortitude during the long years I spent in prison and even before I was arrested. She had to raise our three children virtually on her own, and she rebuffed all the attempts of the enemy to influence me through her.

Reflecting on the fate of my comrades and loved ones who made similar

sacrifices, I would say that we became Communists precisely because we reacted particularly acutely to the foreign and domestic oppression our country and our people suffered from. I think that the traditions of the Philippine national liberation movement, which had begun with the struggle against Spanish colonial rule in the late nineteenth century, also played a part. My parents brought us up in the spirit of these traditions. I knew since I was a kid that my uncle fought in the war against the colonial rulers and was killed in the battle of San Rafael at the age of 18. Our parents fostered in us, in my brothers and sisters, a love of our country, compassion for the poor and the oppressed, commitment to justice, and a yearning for knowledge and truth.

Filipino Communists were tempered in the crucible of Japanese occupation and the subsequent armed struggle for liberation against US neocolonialism. The Japanese invaders declared that the Communist Party was their first and foremost enemy and began a veritable hunt after its leadership. Many dedicated comrades were killed at that time, including Crisanto Evangelista, founder of the CPP. Once, after a clandestine meeting of the Political Bureau which I attended, I narrowly escaped arrest and maybe even death. Death was only a step behind clandestine Communist Activists, and we got used to the constant threat to our lives. And when the agents of a reactionary pro-American regime seized us in 1950, I felt some fear but was prepared for the worst.

Upon arrival in the prison, before we were tried, we were all placed in different cells to isolate us from one another. At once, without any prior agreement, we began to sing the Internationale and then chanted 'Down With US imperialism and its puppets' and 'Long live the CPP and HMB'.[2] Other prisoners and even some guards and employees later told us that this mass singing and chanting of slogans had a profound impact on them: if people behave like this in jail, then they must be confident of the justice of their cause and of final victory.

Another thing which helped up to preserve our fighting spirit and faith in our eventual release was the fact that throughout our 20-year-long imprisonment we conducted party work. It was done in different forms, depending on the strictness of the confinement.

Our first step was to organise study meetings. The studies continued even when we were placed in different cells. Then the leading party organ in the prison began to hold regular meetings. Naturally, this would have been impossible if we had failed to establish friendly relations with some of the guards. Some came from areas where the CPP traditionally had a strong influence and where the people were sympathetic to the party. Others simply responded to the decent and humane way in which we treated them. When we decided to hold a meeting, they opened the doors of our cells and we gathered in one of them. At the first sign of alarm we rushed back to our own cells, to give the guards time to lock the doors. We did our best never to let down our friends among the guards.

Here I must say that there were also other Communists who had been arrested earlier. They had an organisation of their own, were on good terms with many prison employees, and soon established contact with us. For our part, we found a way to reach those party members who were

arrested later and were confined in the part of the prison reserved for the 'Rebellion group' (as distinguished from our group called 'Politburo group'). That was no easy task: the administration of the prison was doing its best to keep contacts among political prisoners to a minimum. Nevertheless, the search for some avenue of contact went on. We asked the guards we trusted to give a message or pass a note to our comrades. We used every opportunity to talk to them during visiting time for families and other relatives.

The difficult thing about our situation was that we had virtually no contact with the party leadership. The prison authorities searched thoroughly everything political prisoners received, even home-made food. That is why from the very beginning we decided not to compromise our families and asked them to convey the necessary messages to us only verbally, during visits.

Sometimes, however, we managed to circumvent the jailers. For example, there was a strict order that newspapers or periodicals should reach political prisoners only via the military counter-intelligence officers who either censored them heavily or deliberately delayed them. However, relatives and friends wrapped, say, fried fish or patties in the latest newspapers. The guards did not pay any attention to the oil-stained wrappings, and we received the information we needed so badly.

With the advent of a new, nationalistic President in 1957, the regime of incarceration applied to Communists became somewhat more relaxed, and we were able to organise a party school in the prison.

The understanding, helpfulness, firmness and self-control we showed made other inmates respect us. The prestige of the Communists was enhanced by the fact that they kept raising with the prison authorities the question of better conditions for all prisoners, of more frequent visits by relatives, of access to newspapers and books. We tried to treat prisoners from the underworld with equanimity and understanding, not to offend them or provoke hostility. We invariably said 'no' to all attempts to extort money from us to buy liquor with, but we never refused to give advice and we helped to draw up petitions for reductions of prison terms. We were able to bring about reconciliation between prisoners from rival gangs and to minimise senseless bloodshed.

We also managed to get on well with a large group of Japanese prisoners of war who were confined together with us at the beginning.

I think the authorities did this for a purpose: they thought that the Japanese would be hostile towards Communists for their active role in the resistance movement. The objective was to intimidate us, to exert additional psychological pressure on us. But we defeated this scheme. As soon as our two groups were mixed, we explained that we had fought the Japanese militarists but never identified them with the Japanese people. On the whole, we maintained normal relations with the prisoners of war. We even prompted some of them to become interested in Marxism-Leninism because we told them about the ideas and purposes of our struggle.

Although isolated from the outside world, we did learn that the Communist Party remained active despite the blows dealt to it. Gradually,

the CPP re-established mass worker, peasant and youth organisations. Democratic forces gained strength. In 1968, a broad campaign for the release of political prisoners was launched, supported by international public opinion. Increased pressure was brought to bear on the government and on the Supreme Court which finally reviewed and reduced our sentences.

January 6, 1970 was another memorable date for me. That was when we walked out of the gate of the prison where we had spent almost 20 years. Our release was extensively covered in the press. Not only relatives and friends but also correspondents of many newspapers met us at the gate. One of them asked me what I thought and felt in these first moments of freedom. "I entered prison as a Communist, and I am leaving prison still a Communist," I replied. I could not put it any other way.

[1] The Communists were charged with rebellion aggravated by murder, arson, kidnapping, robbery, etc., not provided for in the Penal Code which penalises only simple rebellion.
[2] Initials of the Philippine name for the Communist-led National Liberation Army. – *Ed.*
[3] This group included both those who engaged in direct armed struggle and leaders of the CPP-led 'Congress of Labour Organisations' (CLO).

INFORMATION

The Communist Movement Today

Potential For Cooperation

MIKHAIL Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, paid an official visit of friendship to Czechoslovakia from April 9 to 11, 1987 at the invitation of the CPCz Central Committee. Mikhail Gorbachov held talks with Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee, and met with other Czechoslovak leaders.

Profound satisfaction was expressed with the state of CPSU-CPCz relations which are rooted in a community of views and actions in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism. The acccords reached at summit level in 1985 and the subsequent contacts of the General Secretaries and of other leaders of the two parties have had a positive impact on the strengthening of the allies' ties and on the elaboration of concerted positions on key issues of socialist construction, the international working class and communist movement and the world situation.

The joint Soviet-Czechoslovak communique on the results of the visit notes, inter-alia, that the leaders of the CPSU and the CPCz are aware of the need to enhance the potential for political cooperation and to broaden and increase the effectiveness of inter-party ties at all levels, from the central bodies to grassroots organisations.

The communique states that the CPSU and the CPCz firmly and

consistently advocate joint action by all communist and workers' parties and progressive and democratic forces for social advancement, disarmament and peace.

Fighting The Nuclear Threat Together

Wojciech Jaruzelski, First Secretary of the PUWP Central Committee and Chairman of the PPR State Council, and Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee and Chairman of the PRB State Council, have held talks in Warsaw to discuss further development and strengthening of Polish-Bulgarian cooperation. They reiterated the resolve of their parties and countries to work vigorously for a radical reduction and complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Exchanging Views in Havana

At a meeting between Fidel Castro, First Secretary of the CPC Central Committee and Chairman of Cuba's State Council and Council of Ministers, and Athos Fava, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Argentina, who was in Havana on a visit, topical international issues, primarily those concerning Latin America, were discussed. The two sides exchanged their views on the severe economic crisis in the developing countries. Fidel Castro and Athos Fava analysed the development of relations between the communist parties of Cuba and Argentina.

Breaking New Ground

General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey Haydar Kutlu recently visited France at the invitation of the French Communist Party to meet with FCP General Secretary Georges Marchais. It was the first such visit to France by a CPT delegation.

A *l'Humanité* report stresses that the talks were held in a fraternal and cordial atmosphere. The two party leaders compared notes on the situation in France and Turkey and their parties' efforts to end the current crisis, to promote democracy, social progress, peace and socialism.

Georges Marchais reasserted consistent FCP solidarity with the Communists and all progressives in Turkey in their drive to restore democracy there and legalise the Communist Party. He noted that the FCP considered it vital to defend the legitimate rights of Turkish immigrants in France.

For Independence and Democracy

A delegation of the Dominican Communist Party led by its General Secretary Narciso Isa Conde has visited Port-au-Prince and met with leaders of the United Party of Haitian Communists, including its CC General Secretary Rene Theodore.

The sides exchanged their views on the situation in their countries and expressed their mutual solidarity in the struggle for genuine independence and greater democracy.

Common views were put forward on all issues under discussion. Both parties came out in favour of promoting bilateral ties between them.

In Brief

BRAZIL
The Brazilian Communist Party has come out in support of the government's decision to suspend foreign debt servicing. A statement published in *Voz da Unidade*, the central organ of the party, stresses that the decision is in the national interest. The BCP notes that the foreign debt should not be serviced at the expense of economic development or of plunging the Brazilian people into poverty.

COLOMBIA
The Central Committee of the Colombian Communist Party has held a plenary meeting to discuss preparations for the elections to local government bodies to be held in 1988. The meeting emphasised the need to step up the CPC's propaganda and canvassing work and to strengthen the party's ties with other left political organisations during the election campaign.

ITALY
The Italian Communist Party held a nationwide conference on the mass media from March 12 to 14. A broad preparatory campaign was mounted prior to the conference. Dozens of meetings and discussions were held in many cities; taking part were not only Communists but also journalists of different political views. The ICP conducted a public opinion poll which showed that for various reasons, most Italians were dissatisfied with the nation's mass media.

LAOS
This year, members of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party are being issued party cards for the first time. In this connection members of grassroots organisations reported on their work to their comrades. The professional skills and the political qualities of party members were assessed, and some were expelled. As of March 1987, the LPRP membership diminished from 47,000 to 40,000.

MEXICO
The Third Congress of the United Socialist Party (March 1987) approved the proposal advanced by the leadership of the USP and of four other political organisations — the Mexican Working People's Party, the Revolutionary Patriotic Party, the People's Revolutionary Movement and the Communist Left Unity — on their merger into a single mass left party so as to step up the struggle of the Mexican people for democracy and socialism and to defend the country's national sovereignty.

ROMANIA
The RCP has informed that its membership totals 3,640,000 men and women belonging to more than 70,000 grassroots party organisations. The workers account for 65 per cent of the total, the peasants for 15 per cent,

and intellectuals and representatives of other social groups for 20 per cent. In 1986, more than 120,000 people joined the party, some 80 per cent of them coming from the Romanian Young Communist League. Women make up one-half of the new members.

TUNISIA

The Tunisian Communist Party has released a communique setting the date of the Ninth Congress of the TCP. The forum, the first held legally in years, is to convene from June 12 to 14, 1987.

UNITED STATES

A plenary meeting of the CPUSA Central Committee has discussed preparations for the party's 24th Convention slated to be held in Chicago in mid-August 1987 and approved a draft of the main political resolution of the convention.

Documents

TO OBSERVE PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

THE Commission on Discipline of the Communist Party of China has published a document calling on all party members to scrupulously observe professional ethics. Under the CPC Rules, party members should be in the forefront of economic efforts, studies and social activities and should vigorously uphold the new, socialist code of conduct and the communist moral code.

Professional ethics helps to improve society's psychological climate, discipline and style of party work. It requires a selfless and conscious practice in the service of the people, honesty, modesty, integrity, commitment to the cause, vigorous efforts at the workplace and strict observance of the law. The document cautions officials against corruption and abuse of their posts and positions.

Party organisations are to concentrate on matters of communist education alongside improvements in the style of work. All organisations are to apply themselves to the promotion of the highest moral standards among party members, enhance the monitoring of compliance with the party Rules and call to account those who violate party discipline.

A CALL TO UNITY OF ACTION

The Communist Party of Chile has released in Santiago de Chile a document entitled 'The Political Solution. Proposals of the Communist Party'. It calls on all opposition forces in the nation to pool their efforts in the struggle to restore democracy.

The Chileans, the document says, do not and will not submit to fascism. The masses are becoming aware of the need for joint action: there is growing understanding, and joint initiatives are emerging. These are

beginnings of a struggle which can spread far and wide. Political leaders should back the grassroots urge for joint action.

Some quarters are trying to blame the Communists for the current split of the opposition. This campaign is orchestrated above all by imperialism and the dictatorship which seek to put forward the false alternative of Marxism or anti-Marxism because they fear the people's choice between dictatorship and democracy. They accuse the Communist Party of terrorism, militarism and extremism. These slanderous allegations are feeding on anti-communist prejudice, that 'Trojan horse' of the dictatorship in the camp of the opposition.

In spite of these inventions, the Communist Party has been and will be doing its utmost to promote understanding among the democratic forces. In the wake of the coup it advanced the slogan of joint anti-facist action to restore democracy and has pursued this policy unswervingly ever since. The Communists made mistakes too, but never have they bowed down before tyranny. They have worked tirelessly to further the struggle against the dictatorship; they have rejected appeasement and the illusion that fascism could be 'democratised'. That is the essence of the 'right to rebellion' slogan which the Communist Party has adopted and is implementing through various forms of struggle.

The document stresses that the party stands ready to harmonise its objectives and the strategy and methods of action with all democratic forces. Proceeding from the objective requirements of the current stage, each participant of the united front should assume concrete obligations with regard to these needs and orient individual activities to the common political goals identified. This is necessary at least for a certain period after which, as jointly decided, all parties could restore their autonomy and act in accordance with their own strategies.

Some reject an alliance with the Communists and the People's Democratic Movement[1]. The CPC believes that this stance objectively plays into the hands of the dictatorship. But since this attitude is a fact, our party is prepared to look for other organisational forms of unity. Specifically, we propose the establishment of a group of political and civic activists representing the interests of the opposition, enjoying prestige, and able to enhance the understanding that has been reached. The 'Proposals' call for support of the National Civic Assembly[2] so as to promote joint mass action.

The document states that the Communists will never resort to armed action if the people can express their will freely. The CPC is certain that if all opposition forces agree on the creation of a powerful mass movement of self-defence against the fascist reign of terror and ensure united action, they will be able to convince the military that it is a crime to support the regime's anti-popular policy by force of arms. Thereafter a transition from dictatorship to democracy will become possible.

The Communist Party of Chile advocates a political solution of the problem and a pluralistic, real, broad and advanced democracy. It strives for the eradication of fascism, for the implementation of the people's demands, for the democratisation of the government and of public institutions, above all the judiciary and the armed forces, and for

far-reaching economic and social changes aimed at ending the sway of the oligarchy and foreign capital. The CPC does not expect all citizens to share its concept of advanced democracy, let alone to accept its ultimate goal of socialism and does not make unity conditional on such acceptance. The Communists are ready to support all that meets the interests of the nation, including a regime less progressively oriented if this is what the majority of the people want.

[1] This coalition of left opposition political organisations was formed in September 1983 and includes the CPC. – *Ed.*
[2] The coordinating centre of mass civic organisations. Established in 1986. – *Ed.*

exchange of views, discussion

The Economic Crisis: The Communist Response

An international symposium was held in Prague on the subject: 'General Crisis of Capitalism: the Increasing Economic and Financial Instability and the Communist Response'.

The opening speech was delivered by **Sergei Tsukassov,** *WMR* Executive Secretary. Papers were presented by **Victor Perlo** (Communist Party of the United States of America), **Emil Bjarnason** (Communist Party of Canada), **Hans Giersiepen** (German Communist Party), **Stanislav Menshikov** (USSR), **Ferenc Gozdag** (Hungarian People's Republic), and **Ivan Korolev** (USSR). The particpants in the discussion were: **Jose Maria Lanao** (Communist Party of Argentina), **David Moraes** (Communist Party of Bolivia), **Antonio Ribeira Granja** (Brazilian Communist Party), **Bert Ramelson** (Communist Party of Great Britain), **Unni Krishnan** (Communist Party of India), **William Somerset** (Communist Party of Ireland), **Alvaro Oviedo** (Colombian Communist Party), **Francisco Gamboa** (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica), **Rafic Samhoun** (Lebanese Communist Party), **Mustafa Azzaoui** (Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco), **Hugo Campos** (Paraguayan Communist Party), **Semou Pathe Gueye** (Senegal Party of Independence and Labour), **Ali Ahmed el Tayeb** (Sudanese Communist Party), **Jose Lava** (PKP —

Communist Party of the Philippines), **Orel Viciani** (Communist Party of Chile), **Vusizwe Seme** (South African Communist Party).

The following is a summation of the discussion.

OUR times are providing compelling evidence that the general crisis of the capitalist system continues to deepen. Today capitalism differs markedly from what it was like in the early and even in the middle of the twentieth century. The conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production has been brought into bolder relief by the scientific and technological revolution. We are seeing an exacerbation of the entire spectrum of social problems and of the crisis of political institutions and culture. Pressure from reaction is growing more discernible and authoritarian tendencies are on the march.

The symposium focused mainly on capitalism's growing economic and financial instability, which is significantly aggravating the conflict between labour and capital, the rivalry between the imperialist powers, and the contradictions between the transnationals and the nation-state form of society's political organisation. Crisis processes in the economy and in finances are affecting imperialism's relations with developing nations and compounding the global problems on whose settlement the future of human civilisation depends.

Another Cyclical Crisis?

The economic situation in the principal centres of the capitalist world is characterised by an intertwining of early stages of a new production decline, chiefly in the USA and Japan, with the continued structural crisis in all industrialised capitalist nations. In the USA industrial output peaked in January 1986 and remained at virtually the same level until the beginning of 1987. In Japan industrial output fell by 0.4 per cent in 1986 for the first time in 11 years. In the FRG and France industrial production has slowed down significantly.

Is this a pause in the general economic growth that began in 1983 or is it an indication of a new cyclical crisis on an international scale? In the opinion of **Victor Perlo**, **Francisco Gamboa**, and **Stanislav Menshikov** it is fair to say that a cyclical crisis is in its first stage. Key indications of such crises are the diminution of investments in fixed capital. Such investments decreased in the USA and Japan in 1986, and a further fall is expected. There are signs of overproduction of consumer durables, notably of cars. But there has as yet been no general downturn of industrial production, and the GNP of industrialised capitalist countries has continued to show an annual growth rate of 2-2.5 per cent.

Victor Perlo examined some distinctive features of the present phase of the economic cycle in the USA. The federal debt of over 2,000 billion dollars is resulting in a huge interest drain, and this is absorbing capital which might otherwise be used for some productive purposes. The corporate debt has also increased greatly. Financial danger afflicts many banks, the enterprises of the 'oil belt', the 'farming belt', and the steel and

other industrial concerns of the main heavy industry centres. The prices of many stocks have increased to a point where the situation in stock markets has become very vulnerable.

There are counteracting factors that are delaying the recession, for instance, the sharp rise in military investment. While decidedly destabilising the economy in the long run, its immediate impact is to partially offset the decline in civilian capital investment and to that extent could delay an overall decline in production. The Reagan administration is doing everything it can to stimulate the economy through lower discount rates and huge tax cuts for the capitalist class.

In the FRG economy, said **Hans Giersiepen**, the situation presents a pattern of glaring contradictions. Throughout 1986 there were on average 2,200,000 officially registered jobless. Even the Federal Labour Department considers that another 1,200,000 jobless have not been taken into account. One million young people have neither jobs nor training opportunities. There is a spreading phenomenon, which the trade unions have called the new poverty: it has hit 6,000,000 persons.

The economic situation has been somewhat alleviated by the drastic fall in the prices of imported raw materials, notably oil. The FRG's oil imports have grown in physical terms, while the purchasing price has dropped by more than half. For the first time in the postwar period real wages rose somewhat in 1986: this is unquestionably due to the trade unions. But it should be remembered that in the previous six years the population's real incomes fell by over 6.5 per cent, and this shortfall has still to be made good.

Bert Ramelson saw mass unemployment and inadequate investment as the outstanding features of the crisis in Britain. Many people, he said, are surprised to learn that in Britain the living standard is now the lowest in Western Europe. One-third of the active population — 8,000,000 persons — are now classed as poor.

As regards investments, their volume relative to the British GNP is smaller than in any other major capitalist country. Hence the sluggish economic growth, averaging 1.5 per cent annually. De-industrialisation, the disappearancce of entire industries, is the most serious problem. For the first time in the history of its capitalist development Britain has a negative balance of trade in manufactured goods.

Francisco Gamboa drew attention to the uncertainty among bourgeois economists and financial advisers. In particular, there is now more danger of sharp fluctuations in the price of stocks on account of the enormous speed and scale of computerised stock market operations. Euphoria alternates with mass panic. The attempts to coordinate and balance the economy of three major imperialist centres have not yielded the expected results. In the new period that has commenced the crisis may be very profound.

Speakers noted that elements of a cyclical nature are compounding the long structural crisis and the stagnation of some basic industries in the leading capitalist centres.

In specifying the concept of the international structural crisis, **Victor Perlo** singled out its main features: marked slowdown in industrial

production; weakening and decline of traditional basic industries; glaring imbalances in international trade and payments; financial frenzy and speculative excesses; new forms of plundering developing countries and the intractable international debt crisis; the decline trend of the real wages and living standards of the working class along with the unprecedented enrichment of the élite capitalists and their military and bureaucratic cohorts; acute financial and deep economic crises in some countries; and last, but far from least, the militarisation of the economy.

In the FRG, noted **Hans Giersiepen**, steel, shipbuilding, and the construction industry are in a protracted crisis. In these branches production capacities are being reduced, workers are being laid off *en masse,* and productive capital is being destroyed. In 1974 steel employed 334,000 workers, but now its workforce is almost 40 per cent smaller, numbering only 207,000. At least another 15,000 jobs are to be eliminated within the next two years. The big shipbuilding facilities plan to cut their production capacities by 30 per cent; of the present 40,000 jobs at least 10,000 are to be eliminated. The fate of entire industrial regions is linked to steel and shipbuilding.

In the Canadian economy, said **Emil Bjarnason,** the structural crisis is expressed by the secular decline of the general rate of profit. A factor counteracting this tendency is inflation, which represents a redivision of incomes by the state in favour of the capitalists. This limits the total demand in the economy and negatively affects the growth rate of production. The average rate of unemployment rose from 4 per cent in the 1950s and 5 per cent in the 1960s, to 9 per cent in the early 1980s. Today it stands at 10-11 per cent.

Militarisation and the Assault on Labour

The seminar dwelt at length on militarisation and its economic consequences: crisis of state finances, record budget deficits, and astronomical state debts. While the overall economic growth is decelerating, the military-industrial complex is bringing mounting pressure to bear in order to get a further increase in military spending and the adoption of long-term programmes to keep the armaments business prosperous for decades in advance. This tendency is most strikingly illustrated by the 'star wars' programme.

It was noted at the seminar that lately there have been clear indications that growing military expenditures destabilise the economic situation. Record budget deficits are leading to shrinking investments. Heavy military spending has hurt the competitiveness of capitalist countries in the world's markets, brought unemployment, and deepened the structural crisis.

The ongoing crisis, it was noted at the symposium, is the first-ever to fully witness the *dominant position of transnational monopoly capital.* While fostering the internationalisation of production the transnationals have, in some cases, achieved highest levels of productivity and are retooling production on a scale inconceivable on a national basis. Further, to ensure global profits they often ignore the requirements and proportions

of the national economies, close factories on a massive scale, and eliminate hundreds of thousands of highly productive jobs. The monopoly assault on the working people is buttressed by the reactionary policies of the bourgeois state, particularly its neoconservative policies. The 'austerity economy' recipe is bringing down wages, cutting back trade union rights, and truncating social programmes while simultaneously increasing military spending and reducing the income taxes of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Victor Perlo cited statistics to show how steeply labour exploitation is climbing in the USA. The surplus value rate, which was 150 per cent in 1950, went up to 211 per cent in 1970 and to 302 per cent in 1984. In some cases profit rates reached record levels. Real wages, according to official data, have gone down 14 per cent since 1972, and 20 per cent or more where adjustments were made. Social benefits, which had to some extent offset the high direct rate of labour exploitation, have been pared down. At all stages of the business cycle the unemployment rate has risen to levels formerly associated with depressions.

In the 1970s, noted **Emil Bjarnason**, the attempts that were made in Canada to cope with inflation by wage controls cut the purchasing power of the workers, reduced total demand and increased unemployment. The situation deteriorated further when the conservative government gave the green light to monetarism. High interest rates hindered investment and led to much higher unemployment.

William Somerset noted that major industrial losses have been inflicted by the withdrawal of transnational subsidiaries by Telectron, Ford, Dunlop, and Atari in Ireland and by Michelin, Imperial Chemical Industries, Courtaulds, and others in Northern Ireland. Many local ancilliary companies which had become dependent on them were destroyed. In Ireland unemployment stands at 18 per cent in the Republic and at 23 per cent in the North. These figures mask the large degree of part-time and short-term work, which is the lot of women and young people. Many young people have never worked and emigration is the latest solution cynically advocated by the English minister responsible.

On account of the crisis, said **Hans Giersiepen**, the condition of the working class in the FRG has undergone a qualitative change. The bulk of the population lacks job security, more and more people are being laid off and losing their skills. Mention may be made of two special targets of the attacks on working people's rights. The first is the law to 'facilitate employment' that came into force in 1985. Its keystone is the large-scale introduction of short-term labour contracts with less legislative protection for workers. The other is Article 116, which denies unemployment benefits to locked out trade union members. Its purpose is to exhaust the trade union strike funds and limit the possibilities for strikes.

Bert Ramelson spoke of the anti-labour tactics employed by the Tories in Britain. The Thatcher government claims the lower inflation rate as one of its main achievements. But in Britain prices are rising faster than in other industrialised capitalist countries. Although unemployment is widespread, real wages are growing. There are several factors behind this contradiction. The British working class is highly organised and has long-standing traditions of militancy. Employers know that workers will fight against

infringements of their rights, and of wage levels. But when they protest against closure or mass lay-offs the workers are at a disadvantage. The British ruling class has found that it is simpler to concentrate on boosting labour productivity, reducing the number of jobs, and making concessions to workers still in employment.

Interdependence Between the Centres and the Periphery

It was stressed at the symposium that if the crisis of capitalism is to be properly analysed it is necessary to identify the mechanism of instability not only in the imperialist centres but also in the capitalist economy as a whole, and to uncover the relationship between crisis processes in industrialised countries and in the periphery.

Solutions of two kinds are used by the ruling class to counter instability in industrialised capitalist countries today, said **Semou Pathe Gueye**. In the first place, they try to mobilise internal resources. When this encounters obstacles production facilities are transferred to Third World nations. By increasing the exploitation of developing nations capitalism is able to make concessions in the centres. But this policy sardonically named the 'development of underdevelopment' by a Latin American economist, likewise encounters obstacles generated by the crisis of neocolonialism. Whether it is exports of capital, goods, or know-how, or bringing more political pressure to bear with the object of providing capital with safer conditions — these main elements of the system of exploiting the Third World now function with growing difficulty. Moreover, any change in the situation inevitably affects policy in the centres of imperialism.

The effects of the structural and cyclical crises, said **Orel Viciani,** are piling up on the crisis of the mechanisms of dependence, of imperialist rule and plunder. The capital drain, the drastic deterioration of trade terms, and the unbearably acute external debt problem create an explosive situation practically everywhere.

The crisis has forced the transnationals to reinvigorate their search for new markets and spheres of influence, transferring to Third World nations labour-intensive and environment-contaminating industries. Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan are used as showcases and springboards for further expansion. Moreover, the crisis has prompted the realisation that for the capitalist centres the 'new industrialising nations' are additional competitors rather than potentially large markets. That is why capital is now moving to the largest and most densely populated countries, for instance India. This tendency is opening a new area of conflict.

The negative impact of crisis processes, said **Unni Krishnan,** manifests itself also in the general fall of raw material and fuel prices since the beginning of the 1980s. A considerable redistribution of revenues is taking place in the capitalist world market in favour of industrialised countries and growing super-profits are coming from developing nations, which are acutely feeling the stiffening protectionism in the capitalist centres. The unfavourable export situation for the developing countries is forcing up the balance of payments deficit of most of these countries.

There is now a dramatic situation in the world oil market, where prices have plummeted disastrously. This problem was addressed by **Rafic Samhoun**. As well as stemming from the operation of objective factors (economic crisis, switch to fuel-effective technology), the present downturn of oil prices has been caused by the policies of US imperialism, which is influencing the situation in OPEC countries by using its strong positions in Saudi Arabia. For a number of years the latter country has been virtually flooding the world market with oil. The OPEC price-formation structure collapsed as a result. The fall of oil prices by 50-66 per cent in 1986 aggravated the debt crisis in Mexico, Venezuela, Nigeria, and some other nations. As the world's biggest oil importer, the USA has derived no little benefit from this situation. Moreover, in Washington they hoped that the falling oil prices would create additional problems for Soviet foreign trade and the Soviet economy. But when oil prices dropped below the profitability level of oil production in the USA itself, the Washington administration called for 'restoring price stability'. This partially explains why in the latter half of last year Saudi Arabia suddenly made a turnaround, cutting back its own oil output in agreement with other OPEC countries and slightly pushing up prices.

The new situation in the world economy is due also to the crisis of the US dollar. Capitalism's monetary system, said **Ivan Korolev,** enables the leading imperialist powers and their monopolies to dominate the world markets. A hallmark of this system is its excessive dependence on the USA. Washington has increased the scale on which it is using its currency to promote its neoglobalist policies and escalate the arms race.

The significant decline of the dollar exchange rate in 1985-1987 was linked to a slowdown of the American economy's increment rate and to the USA's efforts to export more and import less. The fall of the dollar exacerbated inter-imperialist rivalry, had a sharply negative effect on the competitiveness of the FRG, Japan, and some other countries, and aggravated their economic situation.

What impact did the downturn in the dollar rate have on developing nations? On the one hand, the growth of their external debt has seemingly been slowed down. But since the prices of Third World exports are usually set in US dollars, the fall of the dollar's exchange rate reduces the real purchasing power of these exports, i.e., it exacerbates the external debt crisis in the long run.

In most cases, **Alvaro Oviedo** noted, the national currencies are dropping together with the dollar or even faster. For instance, in the period from 1982 to 1986 Colombia's external debt grew from 9,000 to 13,000 million dollars, i.e., by 44 per cent, but since in this same period the peso's value fell by threefold relative to the dollar, the debt, expressed in Colombian currency, increased 4.4-fold.

Francisco Gamboa, Unni Krishnan, Emil Bjarnason, and **Jose Lava** noted the highly contradictory character of the US dollar's relationship with the currencies of developing nations. Furthermore, through its monetary policy the USA is making money at the expense of other industrialised countries. Manipulations with the dollar have been used as a source for funding the arms race, including the 'star wars' programme. But

the fact that the USA itself has a colossal trade and payments balance deficit may, with time, cause it to lose its predominant positions in the capitalist world with the resultant intensification of capitalism's financial crisis.

Depression and Disparities in the Third World

Signs of a world depression are seen in the aggravation of the already complex economic problems of developing nations. **Jose Maria Lanao** noted that in these countries the cyclical crises create not only serious short-run difficulties but foster a deepening of the structural crisis.

Argentina is now in a dramatic economic decline. During the past 15 years the per capita GNP showed practically no upward movement. In 1984 industrial output was 10 per cent below the level of 1974. More than one-fourth of the Argentine people are living below the poverty line. The jobless rate is running at 13 per cent. On account of the enormous external debt, the funds needed for national economic development are migrating to the international centres of finance capital.

Alvaro Oviedo drew attention to the glaring disparities in the economic situation in various Latin American states. Output has decreased in Argentina, Bolivia, and Venezuela; it has exceeded the median rate in Brazil; while in all the others it is moderate. For instance, the economic recovery in Colombia is contradictory. Some industries are in crisis. Unemployment has reached 15 per cent, the highest rate ever recorded in that nation. The rise of coffee prices in 1986 increased the revenue from exports, but 40 per cent of this increase was used almost entirely to service the foreign debt. Since the close of 1986 coffee prices began to fall again, and this is a severe blow to the economy.

In Central American countries, said **Francisco Gamboa** economic activity is sustained mainly by loans and handouts from the USA. In exchange for this Washington is using the territory of these countries and demanding their involvement in the attacks on Nicaragua. With the exception of Nicaragua, whose difficulties are of a totally different nature, all the other governments in the region frankly acknowledge that they cannot cope with the problems generated by the economic crisis.

Far from all Latin American nations are taking a passive stand towards the crisis. **Antonio Ribeira Granja** spoke about the situation in Brazil. In 1985 the dictatorship fell and the new President committed himself to carrying out a programme that was widely approved by democratic forces. Its prime objective is to eradicate the effects of the external debt and of the nation's subservience to US imperialist interests. The Brazilian government has stated on many occasions that it was not prepared to repay its foreign debt by making hunger and poverty more widespread, impinging upon democracy, and hurting economic development.

In keeping with the Cruzado plan a decree banning bank speculation and establishing firm prices on consumer goods was passed early last year. A halt in inflation helped to increase output — the GDP rose by more than 8 per cent. However, together with right-wing elements, big business sought to disorganise the economy and create artificial shortages of goods. It

urged the bourgeoisie to embark upon 'civil disobedience'. Meanwhile, pressure was brought to bear by the IMF, which demanded the repayment of the nation's external debt. At the close of last year the President had no option to succumbing to pressure and adopting the Cruzado-2 plan, which returned the country to the former situation. The prices of consumer goods doubled, and the national currency speedily lost ground. The 'offsetting' 20 per cent wage rise did not satisfy the working class movement and a fightback commenced against inflation. A struggle unfolded to uphold the people's interests and halt the repayment of the external debt, which had reached 110 billion dollars.

The economic policy of many Latin American states is still determined mainly by external forces. For instance, the Estenssoro government in Bolivia, said **David Moraes,** articulates the interests of the dependent financial oligarchy and those of imperialism in accordance with a scenario composed by the IMF and US economic advisers. This policy calls for an overall restructuring of the economy, for adapting it to the capitalist crisis and the imperialist division of labour. Repayment of the external debt and the attempts to dismantle the public sector are adversely affecting mining and other industries. Mass layoffs and the slashing of wages are drastically bringing down the working people's already low living standards.

The International Monetary Fund, said **Hugo Campos,** protects the interests of world banks that continue to pillage our countries. In Paraguay, this activity has aggravated the economic crisis: industrial facilities are operating at only half their capacity, agricultural output has diminished sharply, and unemployment is reaching 23 per cent. The external debt is so large that it cannot be repaid.

Regarding the situation in Chile, **Orel Viciani** spoke of the catastrophic consequences of the economic policy shaped by foreign monopolies and obediently put into effect by the Pinochet tyranny. The unprecedented imperialist robbery and the high parasitical living of the local oligarchy are the direct cause of the most devastating crisis in the nation's history. The foreign debt has risen to 23 billion dollars and the payments to service it have exceeded the revenue from exports in 1985. From 90 to 160 per cent (according to various sources) of the annual GDP has been funnelled out of Chile in the period since the dictatorship seized power. In the past four years 5 million dollars have been remitted to foreign banks. Transnational capital appropriates to itself even social insurance funds and makes practically no investments that may benefit the economy in any way.

The crisis is seriously affecting African countries as well. The fall in the prices of raw materials and oil, said **Semou Pathe Gueye,** has inflamed the condition of all states located south of the Sahara. These are mostly agrarian countries; the price of agricultural products has fallen in the world markets together with the decline of the dollar while their external debt is not diminishing. For countries like Nigeria the oil price decline has had a double negative effect. During the oil boom of the 1970s Nigeria found itself heavily dependent on food imports. Today, with decreasing oil revenues Nigeria is finding it ever harder to feed its population. This example pinpoints a major problem for Africa: large foreign debt combined with widespread hunger.

Ali Ahmed el Tayeb spoke of the negative influence that imperialism is exercising on the Sudanese economy, noting that its present development is linked directly to the terms of the credit granted by the IMF. Under these terms Sudan had to suspend building large projects for two years, concentrate its agriculture on export crops, reduce the subsidies on many consumer goods, and privatise nationalised enterprises. Moreover, 46 per cent of the export revenues were earmarked for the repayment of the foreign debt. This policy has sharply worsened the economic situation.

In Morocco, too, said **Mustafa Azzaoui,** the 'austerity economy' being imposed by the IMF and the World Bank is the cause of the decreasing budget expenditures, the shrinking subsidies for consumer goods, the freezing of wages, the declining purchasing power of the population, and the diminishing investments in industry. Many enterprises are laying off labour and going over to partial employment. Income and indirect taxes are growing. The foreign trade deficit has risen steeply.

Transnationals have lately begun a more visible penetration of the Indian economy as well, said **Unni Krishnan.** The government has permitted indiscriminate liberalisation of imports. About 2,000 contracts have been signed with US, British, West German, Italian, and other transnationals. All of this is acccompanied by attacks against the state sector of the economy and attempts to dismantle it.

Thus, in a crisis situation imperialism is stepping up its efforts to resolve its internal conflicts at the expense of Third World countries. The attempt to weaken these countries economically is part of neocolonialism's globalist strategy.

Tasks of the Communists

The symposium discussed the priority tasks of the Communists fighting against the economic crisis and its consequences. Speakers emphasised that a way out of the crisis could not be found without a day-to-day struggle for vital economic demands, a growth of the resistance to the assaults by the reactionary forces, and sustained battles for fundamental reforms and changes.

The key problem is to preserve and increase jobs. Campaigns have been started for legislation protecting working people from lockouts and layoffs. More and more of the industrial facilities threatened with closure are being occupied by workers. In industrialised countries a growing body of opinion is demanding a shorter working week with no wage cuts, an increase in government spending on social programmes, education, health services, the modernisation of the infrastructure, and the creation of jobs in civilian industries. Actions in support of these demands are combined with actions aimed at ending discrimination and exploitation in international economic relations, curbing the operations of the transnationals, preserving peace, and halting the arms race. "Every economic struggle," Lenin wrote, "necessarily becomes a political struggle," and it is the duty of the Communists to "combine the one with the other into a *single class struggle of the proletariat*".[1]

Victor Perlo gave an account of the growing resistance of the US working

class to the offensive by big business. Lately there have been major strike struggles. Telephone workers won a partial victory in a protracted strike. U.S.X. workers locked out by the giant steel company received considerable assistance from other unions in the USA and a large contribution from steelworkers in the FRG and the GDR. This strike lasted for six months — from August 1986 to early February 1987. The local organisations of the Communist Party helped to organise pickets and committees of unemployed, participating in the work of the trade unions in collecting cash and food donations for the workers, keeping the latter informed through their press, and doing explanatory work among the population in the location of the closed factories. The steelworkers won some concessions on pensions and insurance and the agreement of the corporation to pay an allowance to those who lost their jobs. Although a wage decrease was accepted, most of the jobs that the U.S.X. sought to abolish were saved.

Such partial victories, of which there have been quite a few, are offsetting the effects of the crisis on the working people to only a limited extent. But militancy and the determination to resist the attacks of capital are growing stronger in the course of this struggle. Another outcome of this changing mood of the US working class is, as Gus Hall put it, that the doors are opening for wider Communist participation in the day-to-day struggles of the trade unions at grassroots level and on the level of the leadership. This is contributing to the turn of the working class movement towards more energetic economic and political actions. An example is the AFL-CIO decision to set up a standing committee to support strikers and foster working class solidarity. It is especially important that workers are beginning to see the relationship between the attacks on them by the transnationals and the aggressive foreign policy of US imperialism. A very advanced resolution calling for disarmament, against the military budget and 'star wars' programme was adopted at the October 1986 conference of the Department of Industrial Unions of the AFL-CIO. Trade unions are now playing a more independent role in political campaigns.

A 'Jobs for All' appeal, said **Hans Giersiepen,** was adopted by the Eighth Congress of the German Communist Party. It suggests appropriating 100 billion marks for a state job-creation programme within the next two years; introducing a 35-hour working week for all without cutting wages or the number of jobs; increasing the people's purchasing power and the local market demand by raising wages, pensions, and social benefits; and adopting laws forbidding mass dismissals or the transfer of production facilities to foreign territory. It underscores the need to curtail armaments production and convert the armaments industry to the manufacture of civilian, socially-useful commodities.

Mass protests and solidarity actions, chiefly against the closure of factories and demanding the preservation of existing jobs and the creation of new ones, are organised with the active participation of the German Communists. For instance, in 1984 the Metalworkers Union headed a 45-day strike calling for a 35-hour working week. As a result the working week was shortened to 38.5 hours and about 100,000 jobs were preserved. Another example is the workers' actions, supported by people belonging to

the middle classes, that helped to prevent the closure of a factory of the ARBED Saarstahl concern. In January and March of this year there were massive demonstrations in all cities that have steel plants. More than 65,000 people took part in these demonstrations in Hattingen and Oberhausen. In solidarity with these actions many shopkeepers closed their enterprises, priests ordered church bells to be tolled, and schoolteachers refused to conduct classes in the schools. Practically all the Communists take part in these demonstrations, championing workers' interests as members of factory councils or their representatives, setting up information stands and factory newspapers, organising material aid for demonstrators and pickets, and contributing to everything that the party calls the 'infrastructural solidarity struggle'.

The Canadian Communists, said **Emil Bjarnason,** have proposed a multi-billion dollar programme for diversifying industries, nationalising key sectors of the economy, especially the subsidiaries of US corporations, and establishing democratic control over the nation's energy resources. They feel that government investment planning is necessary to put an end to the Canadian industry's technological backwardness.

Having in mind a ripened rapport between national trade unions at factory levels of the transnational companies and their fellows abroad in the other countries of operation, **William Somerset** said that the task of bridling the transnationals should be tackled on a long-term basis. Since the jobless do not always get adequate attention from the trade unions it is necessary for them to set up organisations of unemployed people. Unemployment centres that help people who have lost their jobs to receive unemployment benefits and learn new trades have been set up in Belfast and some other cities with encouragement from the Communists. Moreover, the Communists conduct explanatory and other work among the population where unemployment is particularly high, take part in demonstrations demanding an increase of employment, and facilitate joint solidarity actions of unemployed people with the trade unions, as was the case during the recent strike by the National Communications Union.

In India, **Unni Krishnan** noted, the reversal of the present economic policy would be needed to make the struggle against transnationals effective. In the first place, there should be stronger resistance to the massive attacks on the public sector, the liberalisation of imports, and indiscriminate and often repetitive imports of foreign technologies. In order to achieve this the Indian Communists are striving to forge a coalition of all social forces capable of directing economic policy towards strengthening independent development. This means the left and democratic forces conducting a common struggle together with the trade unions (including those affiliated to the ruling party), patriotic scientists and civil servants, and sections of the bourgeoisie, especially the petty and middle bourgeoisie, which is suffering severe losses on account of the liberalisation of imports and thereby facing bankruptcy and ruin.

In Latin American countries, said **Jose Maria Lanao,** the crisis does not boil down only to problems of technology and a shortage of advanced industrial facilities. Backwardness in the development of the productive forces is not the cause but only a manifestation of the crisis. The only way

to surmount this backwardness is to introduce deep-going changes in the relations of production and free the national economy and policy-making from domination by monopolies and the landowning oligarchy. This is precisely what the Communists are advocating. **Alvaro Oviedo** noted that on the scale of Latin America there is now a tendency towards greater coordination of the struggle for a just settlement of the foreign debt and of the problems of markets, export prices, and other specific aspects of a new international economic order. This concerns not only the working class movement. There is a need for interaction by the Communists with various political parties, the formation of alliances and the working out of common postures and common actions with forces upholding national interests. Opportunities are opening up for bringing joint pressure to bear on the government, developing a national stand on acute economic issues, and achieving greater state-to-state interaction. This pressure is yielding results. Latin American coffee-exporting nations held a conference in Nicaragua not long ago. Another instance is the meeting of countries of the regional common market to consider the external debt problem. There has been a wide response to Brazil's refusal to pay an interest to private creditors. Even the Ecuadoran government, which is known for its close links to the USA, has followed the example of Brazil.

Ferenc Gozdag spoke of the attitudes of the Social Democrats. He noted that the protracted structural crisis had undermined the foundations of the former social democratic economic policy that was largely based on Keynesian and 'welfare state' recipes. Hence the certain reappraisal of strategy and the quest for a new reformist alternative to structural changes and crisis. In this context it is vital to consider what prompted some socialist parties to reject the demands for full employment, the appeal for more so-called industrial democracy and a 'new partnership' between the working class movement and capital.

Major changes have taken place in attitudes towards international politics, where most social democratic parties have relinquished their cold war positions and moved closer to recognising the need to halt the arms race. In its Lima Manifesto the Socialist International mapped out a programme for assisting the world economy to recovery by allocating 100 billion dollars to promote the economic growth of developing nations, reform the international financial system, and curb the arbitrary operations of the transnationals. Meanwhile, social democratic parties are seeking to develop ways of protecting the interests of West European capital in developing countries. They support the participation of their respective countries in NATO.

In fact, **Alvaro Oviedo** said, the actual practices of the socialist parties are often in conflict with their policy statements. **Semou Pathe Gueye** drew attention to the fact that the Social Democrats are using the crisis of the 'welfare state' as an excuse for halting some state functions in the social sphere.

Bert Ramelson said that Britain's ruling circles were mounting a dangerous assault on the public sector of the British economy. Furthermore, he noted that the Labour Party was beginning to adopt new concepts, in fact renouncing its nationalisation programme and becoming

increasingly inclined to encourage partnership between workers, private industry, and the transnationals. The ideological impact of the deliberate actions being taken by the Tories to discredit public property and laud so-called people's capitalism should not be underestimated.

Taken as a whole, it was said at the symposium, *the crisis processes in the capitalist economy are a factor contributing to the growth of a broad opposition to conservative and reactionary governments.* However, it must be remembered that the crisis may also lead to a deterioration of the political situation, to greater activity on the part of militarist and other reactionary forces, to further attacks by them on the rights of the working people, and to an escalation of the arms race and the organisation of military adventures. It is aggravating contradictions within the capitalist system and globally, and making vigilance imperative on the part of the forces of peace, democracy, and socialism.

[1] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 4, p. 213.

THE LABOUR OF THE FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF LABOUR

A Reply to Those Who Misinterpret Marx's Ideas

Ernst Wimmer — Political Bureau member, Central Committee, Communist Party of Austria (CPA)

A RATHER sharp debate on the social role of labour is under way in industrialised capitalist countries. The basic question can be summed up as follows: 'Does labour have a future?' This question sounds both frivolous and cynical. Unsolved problems abound in industrially developed capitalist nations, ranging from health care, education and adequate and affordable housing to environmental protection and the elimination of new poverty, to say nothing of conditions for culture-oriented and meaningful leisure. All this will call for vast labour expenditures over a long period of time.

Nevertheless, this question is by no means academic and should not be dismissed as an esoteric exercise in speculation. It does reflect, albeit in a distorted form, extremely important problems of reality which affect masses of people. These problems are often debated heatedly in the new social movements. Not too long ago, industrial robots were treated as a fantasy. But things that used to be imaginary are now becoming feasible thanks to the scientific and technological revolution and to the advent of new labour-saving technologies: *a time is coming when social wealth in technologically advanced countries will no longer depend largely on direct — I repeat, direct — labour.*

The working class movement has always interpreted social emancipation to imply the attainment of two goals — first, the dismantling of the system of hired slave labour, that is, of capitalism and, second, the reduction of the socially needed working hours through greater labour productivity, so as to promote social well-being and turn labour from the principal means of livelihood into a natural and compelling urge.

Greater labour productivity as such does not improve society. This is confirmed by mass unemployment, new poverty, various manifestations of moral and social disintegration, corruption and degradation, the growing crime rate and the curtailment of democracy in capitalist countries. As the CPA Programme stresses, technology and science by themselves never determine the goals they serve: "The scientific and technological revolution by no means leads to a 'similarity' between social systems; on the contrary, it enhances their mutual opposition. Under capitalism, it aggravates contradictions to an absurd degree dangerous to life itself."[1] Now that the adoption of our programme is several years in the past, not only countries severely hit by mass unemployment but also Austria can hear talk about the frightening prospect of a 'society of two-thirds', that is, a society in which unemployed outcasts make up at least one-third of the work force (if not more). *Greater labour productivity brutally exacerbates social problems in all countries where the foremost goal of the working class movement — emancipation from capitalism — has not been achieved yet and where profit still reigns supreme, 'regulating' relations among people.*

Assurances that we will live in a world without labour are obviously designed to again announce the demise of the working class, the 'gravedigger of capitalism'. Let us take the example of *Where Does the Road Lead?*, a book by the Polish-born philosopher Adam Schaff[2]. He describes his work as a "study in socio-political futurology covering the next twenty to thirty years". The remarkable thing about the book is that the author cites Marx to justify the well-known technocratic credo: a scientific and technological revolution makes a social revolution redundant. What does Schaff forecast? First, the 'disappearance of labour', of the worker, and consequently of the working class. This is what he proceeds from in his attempt to predict the future of capital.

Schaff holds that 'limited capitalism' is the most likely form society will develop into. What does the term mean? A combination of 'residual capitalists' and 'neocapitalists', that is, 'information capitalists'! According to Schaff, the concept of 'property' is becoming increasingly relative under the impact of informatics, a new social force which is allegedly replacing property. The author also links the process of property becoming ever more 'relative' with the redistribution of incomes. He thus loses sight of the relations of ownership *as the basis and the regulatory force of the process of production.* A similar approach is also common to anti-Marxists of all other hues. They always treat the issue of property as a minor question relegated to the periphery of social relations. For example, the close interconnection between the economic and the political power of the monopolies, something that is clear from the activities of the giant transnationals, is presented as a 'separate case' which has no discernible impact on their social concepts. The old theory that the role of property is diminishing is

essentially refuted by the very development of science and technology this theory cites. The corporations which embody the highest concentration of capital use scientific and technological progress as a weapon in the struggle for spheres of economic and political influence, in strengthening relations of property and intensifying exploitation.

In examining the social consequences of the 'second industrial revolution', Schaff turns technology into a scapegoat. He ascribes the growth of unemployment to the introduction of industrial robots, not to capitalist relations. He concentrates on the problem of how the huge masses of the unemployed are to be supported. If a reduction in working hours which is inevitable fails to produce the desired result then, he says, the introduction of a 'basic wage' or 'social income' — an annuity with no connection to productive labour and paid for life — must help. Schaff believes that the capitalists can accept this solution for the sake of preserving their economic domination (p. 38) and he asks if a society with paid unemployment would still be capitalist (p. 42).

Schaff recommends that the state "look for ways and means of more general control over the stability of this system which would continue to offer a broad scope for competition and private enterprise" (p. 46). But what is so new about a society in which there would be ample opportunities for traditionally capitalist competition and private enterprise? The novel thing, it is claimed, is that although there is no nationalisation (because, it is alleged, the socialist countries have set a bad example), "there is at least intervention in the realm of the sacred right of private property" (p. 44). To sum up, Schaff does not go beyond the claims long advocated by the more zealous supporters of freedom of capital to the effect that any intervention of the bourgeois state in the economy, any large-scale planning, even undertaken essentially in the interests of the monopolies, is already 'socialism'.

The idea of a 'basic wage' or 'social income' is attracting numerous supporters. It is backed or at least considered worthy of discussion by individuals and organisations of widely different political affiliation — diehard conservatives, timid reformists and 'alternativists' who, although seeing themselves as terribly radical, are unaware of the need to uproot evil at source — the intertwining of monopoly capital and state power. What is behind this 'strange bedfellowship'? Young people who, deprived of work and of the least means of self-assertion, at times pin some hopes on these vague ideas. One can also see why reformists who reject the class struggle, let alone socialism, regard 'basic wage capitalism' as the best of all possible worlds, as the culmination of compassion and solidarity in an inhuman society. But what prompts the conservatives to accept these projects?

At this point the perennial question arises: who is to pay for it all? Should 'social income' be financed at the expense of other social spending and of the gains won by the working people? This solution would greatly facilitate the all-out dismantling of social programmes, a goal the conservatives strive for. They would be quite content if these resources would also come from increased taxes levied on all wage and salary earners.

It would be worthwhile, of course, to think about rallying the employed and the unemployed together if 'social income' were provided at the expense of capital. But one must be realistic and face the actual conditions of struggle. One can hardly expect to prove that even with the most favourable alignment of forces, it would be feasible to financially support the unemployed solely through redistribution at the expense of capital. Those ready to join the struggle know from experience that 'social income' will eventually be reduced to redistribution at the expense of the employed. Why should they fight for it, all the more so since the unemployed would receive, in the form of 'social income', *smaller* unemployment benefits. All this would virtually mean abandoning the demand that the ruling class observe the right to jobs.

One can hardly suspect those advocating the 'basic wage' of a desire to split society into classes — all the more so because this has happened long ago. But schemes of this sort may help foment disunity between the employed and the unemployed and even impart a semblance of a social privilege to the jobs held by the exploited workers.

The main reason why the question about the future of labour has been raised is that as the scientific and technological revolution causes a sharp increase in labour productivity, capitalism is less able than ever to ensure the right to employment, even inasmuch as it recognises this right at all. This prompts capital to camouflage the exploitation of workers with particular care. But other, equally important factors, also come into play. New technologies give the monopolies the means to effect savings in variable capital, to intensify and regiment labour and to devalue the skills of the work force. State-monopoly capitalism steps up the exploitation of wage and salary earners and intellectuals. New technologies promote alienation in the world of labour. All this has prompted new social movements to level criticism at labour too — at the form in which this labour is demanded from and offered to the worker under capitalism. This explains the emphasis with which these movements' ideologists demand meaningful jobs allowing individual judgement by the worker.

For example, these problems motivate the reasoning of Andre Gorz, an existentialist philosopher and sociologist, in his book *The Roads to Paradise.*[3] His key precept is that the old, 'industrial' society is in its death throes. There are no signs of any new society. Therefore, an alternative should be devised. Pessimistically and, at the same time, with utopian wistfulness, he calls for the establishment amid the old society of 'paradise isles' having no coercion or even regulatory standards. However, these isles would be surrounded by a world constantly threatening them with exploitation and alienation.

Gorz sees the root of all evil in the fact that decisions on production, consumption and social spending are taken separately. His ideal is to intertwine them so that the direct consumer would increasingly determine the choice of the products and that production, consumption and the citizen would make up an integral whole. He says that such 'reunification' is not possible everywhere or for all. Naturally, Gorz completely abandons realism when he tries, at least speculatively, to fuse these 'paradise isles', constantly swept by the tidal waves of capitalist relations, into a single

world. His theoretical constructs invariably and completely ignore the question of which forces are actually capable of transforming society. (After all, one can hardly regard the 'non-class of non-workers' from Gorz's book *A Farewell to the Proletariat*[4] as such a force.)

Gorz therefore reduces the problem of transforming relations of power and ownership — a problem debated for generations — to the following precept: "To overcome capitalism means above all to end the sway of commodity relations, including the sale of labour, in favour of voluntary types of activity and relations of exchange whose mission is inherent in themselves" (p.85). This is to be ensured, on the one hand, by automation of production which allegedly deprives exchange relations of their basis and, on the other, by the establishment of a 'network' of spontaneous mutual assistance and solidarity and by reactivating person-to-person relations which are corrupted, crippled or destroyed by commodity relations. (Similar constructs are typical of many 'alternative'-oriented ideologists.)

Gorz also seeks to justify the demand for lifelong annuities, to be paid irrespective of one's employment, since it is now impossible for many people to get a job. "It is the full workday," he writes, "that prevents [man] from exercising his own aptitude for creative work and independence." However, he maintains that the sphere of autonomous activity can only rest on the basis of heteronomous labour (i.e., labour subject to external forces), a basis that would be impossible to remove in the future too. Gorz states that complete elimination of such labour is neither possible nor desirable.

In presenting his ideas about autonomous activity and heteronomous labour, Gorz invokes the works of Marx but confuses two radically different things. In the third volume of *Capital,* Marx offers an extremely important definition of a future society. "The sphere of actual material production," he writes, "is nonetheless still . . . a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working day is its basic prerequisite."[5]

While acknowledging the inevitability of the 'realm of necessity', Gorz ignores that which Marx considers essential to this realm. According to Marx, freedom in the sphere of material production proper "can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature".[6] Therefore, *Marx demands an end to exploitation in the 'realm of necessity'; the scope for the freedom possible in it is brought about by a socialist transformation of society.*

Rejecting this transformation, Gorz accepts both the 'realm of necessity' and the exploitation and alienation which are by no means its concomitants. This attitude is quite consonant with his existentialist position. Existentialism asserts that alienation can be limited but never

abolished, for it is innate in any society irrespective of its system: "There is something of a big machine in any society" (p.104). In other words, alienation is existentially determined and inevitable.

In their *German Ideology,* Marx and Engels note that alienation (or estrangement) has specific social (not existential) roots. They define it as the "consolidation of what we ourselves produce into a material power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations".[7]

There was a time when simplistic views were current among Marxists and the complex dialectic involved in the efforts to overcome alienation in socialist society was not fully taken into account. Particularly often, this was the case with criticism of views incompatible with Marxism. An examination of this problem has made it possible to conclude that even after socialist relations of production become definitively established, the effects produced by the alienation of labour "do not fade from consciousness automatically or overnight, even though alienation itself has been eliminated".[8]

Alienation is a complex philosophical category and, at the same time, a routine, extremely widespead and oppressive capitalist reality. In day-to-day life it means that by taking part in the manufacture or marketing of this or that product, any hired worker thus reproduces his own dependence, his own status as a 'manpower' commodity, and his own subordinate position amid the sway of hostile forces and structures of power and market which are hard to discern. To treat these problems as if they were beside the point or did not deserve attention would mean to give up criticism of capitalism in the sphere where it deals painful blows to the masses, especially to their psyche. The unmistakable feeling that one is at the mercy of alien force regulating even one's private life is so strong in industrially developed capitalist countries that, as a way of evading submission to these alien forces, renunciation of hired labour is recommended (not as an extraordinary move) — that is, escape to the still existing 'niches', even those of the 'social income' type.

Alienation in its various forms appeared before the rise of capitalism. It exists under capitalism and is felt under socialism as a consequence of contradictions that have not been grasped or taken into due consideration. The overcoming of alienation is a long process which begins with the elimination of its deep economic roots. As socialism develops, the social fabric and the individual's place and role in it become ever clearer and more controllable. Society acquires a growing ability to ensure greater conformity of results with the intentions, needs and purposes of the people.

It is therefore wholly untenable to believe that alienation is inherent in the socialist system. This fallacious concept has been recently publicised by the advocates of the 'negative convergence' theory (who allege that the opposite social systems show an increasing similarity in negative aspects). They present alienation as a social phenomenon standing above the existing socio-economic systems and claim that in this respect socialism is no different from capitalism. Alienation is even pictured as more intolerable than exploitation; the latter is almost dismissed as insignificant.

Exponents of this view disregard (or deny) the fact that *socialisation of production under socialism is essential for ending a state of affairs in which the 'product' proves impossible for men to control and thwarts their expectations*. Gorz's society of the future which features exploitation in the 'realm of necessity' and allegedly ineradicable alienation is a far cry not only from paradise but also from the already existing and possible worlds.

Those who, like Schaff and Gorz, maintain that the scientific and technological revolution eliminates the working class and the power of capital oppose Marxism — although, as we have seen, they turn to Marx for support. Specifically, they invariably invoke his *Grundrisse* (the initial 1857-1859 version of *Capital)* in their current theoretical speculations. In *Grundrisse,* Marx noted "the tendency of capital to give production a scientific character; direct labour [is] reduced to a mere moment of this process".[9] With unprecedented farsightedness he forecast a degree of automation at which the worker "steps to the side of production instead of being its chief actor".[10]

Let us see whether Marx's analysis of the subject can lead to Schaff's and Gorz's conclusions which they seek to bolster by exploiting the prestige of the founder of Marxism. Evidently, the best way to settle a dispute concerning the views of this or that author is to turn to what he actually wrote. Referring the reader to the relevant section of the initial version of *Capital (Grundrisse,* pp. 690-691), let us quote only a few of the points made in these complex and extremely informative passages (to the extent that is possible in an article). We believe that these points enable the reader himself to grasp Marx's attitude to the subject in question.

In examining the way labour becomes more science-intensive, Marx says: "To the degree that large industry develops, the creation of real wealth comes to depend less on labour time and on the amount of labour employed than on the power of the agencies set in motion during labour time, whose 'power effectiveness' is itself in turn out of all proportion to the direct labour time spent on their production, but depends rather on the general state of science and the progress of technology, or the application of this science in production."[11]

What are the effects of this process on the working people? In *Theories of Surplus Value* Marx notes that the means of production, the material conditions of labour "do not appear as subsumed to the labourer, but the labourer appears as subsumed to them. He does not make use of them, but they make use of him." Science and the forces of nature in their economic application also "get on their hind legs against the labourer".[12] As the independent capacity of the individual for production outside the scope of capitalist relations is destroyed, dependence on capital becomes ever more real.

Therefore, Marx says nothing about the 'disappearance' of either the power of capital or labour as a result of scientific and technological development. It is not labour but the worker which "appears . . . superfluous to the extent that his action is not determined by [capital's] requirements".[13] Today, millions of people have learned the hard way that capital refuses to employ workers if this employment promises no profit — even if many requirements remain unmet and there is a huge army of the

new poor, as is the case in the United States, the richest capitalist country.

Is capital losing its urge to grow by exploiting labour? Can one really expect this miracle to happen? Marx writes that "capital itself is the moving contradiction . . . On the one side, then, it calls to life all the powers of science and of nature, as of social combination and of social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth independent (relatively) of the labour time employed on it. On the other side, it wants to use labour time as the measuring rod for the giant social forces thereby created and to confine them within the limits required to maintain the already created value as value. Forces of production and social relations . . . appear to capital as mere means, and are merely means for it to produce on its limited foundation. In fact, however, they are the material conditions to blow this foundation sky-high.[14]

What does an analysis of capitalist reality more than one hundred years after Marx show? Could it be that production — say, at automated Japanese or US factories — is no longer subject to the laws of value and surplus value? Is any regulation of reproduction 'free' from the effects of these laws really possible in a social system based on private property in the means of production? No such examples are available.

Facts prove that Marx was right: material conditions for blowing capitalism sky-high are indeed maturing. Lenin described state-monopoly capitalism as "capitalism in transition", adding that "socialism is now gazing at us from all windows of modern capitalism".[15]

Does labour have a future? This remains a rhetorical question. It is posed on the basis of concepts that have been deduced in a hasty and preconceived manner from a perfunctory examination of objective processes. True, labour, both physical and intellectual, cannot be impervious to change, especially today, when unprecedentedly far-reaching change is occurring in the world around us. Man is transforming the surface of the Earth and the biosphere and reaching into outer space and into the microcosmos, into the worlds of atoms, elementary particles and genes. All components of the productive forces are changing — from the means and instruments of labour to forms of energy.

In terms of form, the labour performed by the slave in ancient times, by the serf in the Middle Ages or by the soot-covered worker in the din of nineteenth-century mechanical workshops cannot be compared to the labour of 'white-smocked' workers on the almost deserted floor of an automated factory in the late twentieth century. But this is hardly the reason to conclude that labour as such is to disappear at one stage of history or another. Today, too, such conclusions are groundless.

Labour — naturally, in a changing form — has been and remains a source of social wealth (as does nature). In the course of labour and in the course of shaping his relationship with nature, man creates the motive forces of society, and develops material and intellectual culture, his own aptitudes and skills, his creative potential and his personality. The most diverse types of labour have always been and remain an expenditure of muscular and nervous energy and an application of skills and expertise, although in different proportions.

New technologies do not abolish labour. They merely make it

incomparably more productive and call for a change of its forms and for new skills. This applies even to the most advanced computer technology — to informatics. Its devices will be lifeless and useless without labour, without programming and control.

Obviously, it is impossible to foresee every kind of change in the forms and functions of labour. But we have every reason to say that man has been and will be the principal productive force. One can argue that informatics is already developing systems that perform labour operations superior to man's abilities even in the intellectual sphere. But will the advent of such systems make man merely an inferior machine? No, man and his labour remain the life-giving force of production. Systems of machinery perform functions assigned by man even if man is unable to perform them himself; these systems can only follow the track laid by man.

New technologies help to reduce *direct* labour which places only a tool or a machine as the instrument of labour between itself and the raw material. These technologies call for labour that is different. What kind of labour? Increasingly — but not only — 'universal labour'.[16]

Today's world uses labour performed at different technological levels. In some places, the waterwheel is still used to irrigate the fields. In others, powerful jets of water are used to mine coal. In Japan, a country of well-organised state-monopoly capitalism where technological innovations are introduced at a high rate to win new markets or guard the available ones against competitors, production still uses three historically different technological levels — manual labour of skilled mechanics, work with the help of machines, and automated production.

In the socialist view, increased labour productivity brought about by science and technology means that *higher real incomes are perfectly compatible with shorter working hours*. But the capitalists refuse even to consider this. They do not believe in the 'collapse of the law of value' predicted by the ideologists of 'information society'. Elimination of jobs is 'programmed' for cases when capitalism fails to ensure economic growth rates that are higher than the increase in labour productivity. This means that the armies of the unemployed no longer owe their existence largely to the cycle of crises. Besides, many advanced technologies are applicable in virtually all spheres of the social fabric — in management and the services, not only in material production.

Capitalism will use new technologies even more high-handedly as a weapon in the struggle against the working people. The changes that have occurred in the conditions under which capital is realised have already forced it to change its strategy. Learning its lessons from the upheavals and revolutions that shook the world, capital, pressed for decades by the working class movement, preferred to appease it and integrate part of it with the help of concessions and promises as the principal way of ensuring capitalist domination. Today capital (above all due to the deteriorating conditions of its realisation and to the aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism) is usually on the offensive, striving to win back what has been gained by the working people and resorting to 'counter-reforms'. The switch to 'conservative measures' thus reflects the contraction of the options open to capitalism. As far as the long-term prospects are

concerned, this makes it all the more important for the working class movement to *struggle for specific terms on which advances of science and technology are to be applied, for a redistribution of national income to benefit the working people, and for progressive reductions of working hours with full wages.* This cannot be secured by 'purely trade union means'. The struggle for specific economic concepts, for socio-political reform, for the prevention of plant closures and for government programmes to ensure employment at the expense of capital — up to large scale economic and political alternatives in response to 'counter-reforms' — all this is, to a great degree, a matter of political struggle.

To sum up, nothing has changed about the fact that man, with his inexhaustible adaptability, inventiveness and purposefulness, is the principal productive force of society. Therefore, the real problem is this: which society helps to enhance these qualities and which hampers human development and even cripples man? Which society is entitled to expect greater productivity from the working people because it guarantees them an opportunity to develop themselves and creates the material and intellectual conditions necessary for this? Which society can make labour, this form of 'interchange with nature' innate in all social systems, care as a loving father[17] for the protection of nature and renewal of its resources? Finally, which society reduces to a minimum the possibility of the results of social labour being turned against a part or even a majority of its members, and places these results at the service of man's development?

Many will find the answers to these questions in their own experience of life under capitalism which can no longer bless all able-bodied people even with exploitation. *The society we have in mind is socialism, under which labour becomes a human need and, in its developed, alleviated and humanised form, a means of putting all abilities of the individual at the service of a better life for all.*

[1] *Das Programm der KPÖ*, Vienna, 1982.
[2] Adam Schaff, *Wohin führt der Weg?*, Vienna, 1985. The references to the books are given in the text of the article.
[3] Andre Gorz, *Wege ins Paradies*, Berlin, 1984.
[4] Andre Gorz, *Abschied vom Proletariat*, Cologne-Frankfurt on the Main, 1980.
[5] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1962, pp. 799, 800.
[6] Ibid., p. 800.
[7] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 47.
[8] J. Andropow, *Die Zehre von Karl Marx und einige Fragen des sozialistischen Aufbaus in der UdSSR* (The Doctrine of Karl Marx and Certain Aspects of Socialist Construction in the USSR), Moscow, 1983, p. 11.
[9] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse. Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1973, p. 699.
[10] Ibid., p. 705.
[11] Ibid., pp. 704-705.
[12] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Part I, Moscow, 1969, p. 390.
[13] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 695. Here one might note that the prospect of 'labour disappearing' can be deduced only if one ignores the concept of the 'productive aggregate worker' which Marx introduces and which reflects the interaction and combination of different types of labour — from the simplest to the most complex — and its socialisation. It is no accident that under socialism, with the socialisation of the means of production indeed corresponding to the socialisation of labour, the question of whether labour has a future cannot arise at all. The only question remaining open is the important issue of the composition of 'aggregate labour'.

[14] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 706.
[15] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 302: Vol. 25, p. 359.
[16] "Universal labour is all scientific labour, all discovery and all invention. This labour depends partly on the cooperation of the living, and partly on the utilisation of the labours of those who have gone before" (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 103).
[17] In *Capital*, Marx quotes William Petty, an English economist, as saying that "labour is its [material wealth's] father and the earth its mother" (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1956, p. 43).

viewpoints

Restructuring In The USSR: External Economic Aspect

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THE restructuring of our entire economic mechanism, including the system of planning and management of our external economic activity, is determined by the strategy of accelerating economic and social development of the Soviet society, which was formulated by the CPSU Central Committee at its April 1985 Plenary Meeting, and which was given profound theoretical grounding in the documents and materials of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the January 1987 Plenary Meeting of its Central Committee.

The approach to mutually advantageous economic ties must be large-scale and future-oriented, it was said at the congress. A number of important decisions were taken to ensure such an approach, and they constitute the basis for reorganising the mechanism of our external economic relations.[1]

Why the New Approach?

Significant changes are now under way in the life of the Soviet society, in its social, political and spiritual spheres. Restructuring has the people's full support; it is gaining in depth and gathering pace.

We take into account that the elements of stagnation which have had a

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pronounced effect on the USSR economy as a whole were also in evidence in the external economic sphere. Thus, the scale, pattern and forms of our trade, and scientific, technical and production ties ran into a contradiction with the need to intensify the economy and accelerate scientific and technical progress. The 27th Congress of the CPSU said that there was to be a change in the raw materials orientation of exports and an increase in the share of manufactured goods. Together with a significant general expansion of external economic ties, it is important to concentrate on their priority lines, with emphasis on scientific and technical progress, and their wider use for solving social problems.

The Soviet Union's share of world trade falls short of the country's development level and requirements. The export potentialities of our manufacturing industry, mechanical engineering in the first place, are still being inadequately used. The switch to wide scientific, technical and producer cooperation is still slow. All of that is most tangibly felt in view of the changes in international economic relations under the impact of scientific and technical progress.

It is especially important to overcome the negative trends as soon as possible, because the significance of external economic ties for our economy has grown from year to year. It is an objective process generated by the general law-governed trends in the development of the productive forces. Over the past quarter-century, Soviet foreign trade multiplied five fold (adjusted for the growth of world prices). In the previous five-year period alone (1981-1985) it went up by 50 per cent. That naturally calls for a totally new approach to the external economic activity system and the relevant forms and method of administration and management. In the past, with the relatively small volume of trade (as compared with the scale of our economy), the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade could handle all the activitiy on external markets with adequate efficiency, but the separation of industry from foreign trade has now become a heavy brake both on expanding the country's external economic ties and on making them more efficient. Here is yet another essential point: under the scientific and technical revolution (STR), the significance of external economic ties for any country can no longer be measured only in quantitative terms (say, their contribution to the national income). Mutually advantageous business relations with foreign partners, however modest in scale, can have a profound effect on the development of various industries and lines of production, and through them on the economy as a whole.

What are the objectives of the changes in the external economic sphere now under way in the USSR? First, we need to markedly enhance the scientific grounding of the lines, forms and methods of this activity, and to put through the clearly defined idea of actively using international ties as an important factor in raising the level of scientific and technical progress and improving product quality. The second task (and it flows organically from the first and even offers a means for its fulfilment) is to involve in external economic relations the immediate producers and research, development and engineering units — associations, enterprises and agencies — and to do away with the disconnection between industry and foreign trade.

Realising the Advantages of Socialism

The point is, in other words, *how the advantages of the socialist economic system, primarily its planning, can be used more efficiently* than they have been in the recent past, as the January 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC said.

The important thing to bear in mind is that the extension of broader rights to associations, enterprises and agencies in effecting external economic ties is one of the strands of *the democratisation process now under way in the whole of social and economic life* in the USSR. They are being allowed more independence in economic activity, and that is to be written into a USSR law on the state enterprise (association), a draft of which is now under public discussion. This law is to affirm the centralised approach in tackling basic problems in developing the economy as a single whole, and give greater scope to economic management methods, full economic calculus and self-financing, and wider democratic principles for the administration and self-management of enterprises on the basis of clearly defined relations between them and state agencies. The draft law also reflects the new role economic units are to have in external economic affairs.

What kind of concrete measures are envisaged for tackling these tasks in restructuring external economic activity?

First of all, organisation in *administering* this sphere is to be perfected. A State External Economic Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers has been set up to coordinate the activity of ministries, departments and agencies involved in commercial, economic, monetary, financial, scientific and technical ties with foreign countries. The commission is to tackle a wide range of matters bearing on the USSR's relations with foreign partners and control performance of decisions.

In 1987, more than 20 ministries and departments, and 75 major associations and enterprises have been empowered to conduct export-import operations on their own. For this purpose, foreign trade agencies have been set up at ministries and departments, and economic-calculus foreign-trade firms within associations and at enterprises. These measures are certainly overdue. Some of our enterprises export a sizable part of their product. Thus, the Kirov First Moscow Watch Works exports about 60 per cent of its product, and by 1990 it is expected to go up to 80-90 per cent. It is vitally necessary for such economic units to have direct access to external markets.

This year, foreign-trade agencies in our industry operating directly on the international market are expected to account for almost 20 per cent of export-import operations, including over 40 per cent in machinery and equipment. Producers are now to deliver more than 65 per cent of Soviet machinery and equipment exports.

External economic activity is to be differently *planned* with a new system of indicators and plan-formation procedures. Foreign-exchange earnings are, in particular, one of the targets being set among the proposed norms for assessing the results of economic activity of ministries, departments and foreign-trade associations on the one hand, and of associations, enterprises

and agencies, on the other. Their annual and five-year plans have a special section reflecting all foreign trade operations, the development of socialist economic integration, and the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA Member Countries.

The results of external economic operations are to be fully accounted in the overall results of activity of the economic units and to have a direct effect on the shaping of their economic-incentives funds. Export-import activity by associations, enterprises and agencies is to be assessed in the light of the existing contract prices by calculating these in Soviet roubles at differentiated foreign-exchange coefficients so set as to stimulate more efficient export and raise technical standards and product quality in accordance with the demands of the world market, and also to reduce unwarranted imports.

Operations by associations, enterprises and agencies on external markets are, therefore, to be *an organic component of their economic activity as a whole,* and for a very good reason: the economy is, after all, a coherent system. The experience of some socialist-community countries has shown such an approach to be the right one.

Special foreign-exchange funds are to be set up to provide economic incentives for producers to boost exports and renovate their technical facilities. These funds are to be formed through deductions at stable long-term rates from the sale of the finished product and the provision of services, and also from their total earnings in co-production and the sale of licences. The exporters are to have complete disposal of these funds, with the exception of small deductions to the industrial ministries.

The import of machinery, equipment, materials and other goods for the technical re-equipment of production, research, development, engineering and other projects is, accordingly, to be affected by the same agencies from their own or borrowed foreign-exchange funds.

They are to bear greater economic responsibility for fulfilling plan targets for export, and observance of contract discipline. Whenever they fail to do so, the losses will have to be met from their own foreign-exchange funds.

Priority to the Fraternal Countries

We attach special significance to our ties with other socialist states, above all those who are members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; they accounted for 55 per cent of the USSR's foreign trade in 1985. We regard priority development of cooperation with these countries as an important political and state task, and the measures that have been taken are aimed to deepen these ties and make them more dynamic.

Essential changes are envisaged above all in planning, with active introduction of new progressive forms of cooperation between associations, enterprises and agencies of the Soviet Union and the fraternal socialist countries, and the creation of the economic and organisational conditions required for their activity on the basis of full economic calculus and mutual advantages.

The concept for developing external economic ties between the USSR and the CMEA countries until the year 2000 is now being worked out, with

the central planning agencies, ministries and departments acting on the assumption that a genuine turning-point needs to be effected in the entire system of this cooperation through scientific, technical and economic integration. Special attention is being given to seeking solutions for major economic and technical problems, formulating the lines of large-scale mutually advantageous specialisation, and a switch from mainly commercial relations to close cooperation in production.

Direct producer, scientific and technical ties between the fraternal countries' associations, enterprises and agencies are a key means for stable and efficient cooperation, exchange of advanced experience, and mutual assistance in mastering and applying new hardware and high technology. The development of such ties is geared to the fulfilment of the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress, higher labour productivity and modernisation of the economy. Direct ties should, furthermore, help to make fuller and more rational use of the capacities and resources, to boost output up to the highest world technical standards and quality, and reduce and eliminate their important dependence on the capitalist powers.

Those who take part in international cooperation in production as well as in scientific and technical cooperation tackle all the problems arising from this form of relations on their own and without any intermediaries. They decide on the lines and concrete objectives of cooperation, select the enterprises and agencies in the CMEA countries for their partners, agree the product mix, and the volume of mutual cooperation deliveries. The economic enterprises are to effect deliveries of their products and various samples of goods, tooling, materials and so on, and to exchange services in advancing cooperation and development of production on their own or via foreign-trade agencies. The partners can lend and rent instruments, machinery and equipment, place orders for the fabrication and delivery to the USSR of the products they need accompanied by the transfer of the material resources and technical specifications required.

The decisions on joint research, development, engineering and experimental projects with agencies in the CMEA countries are to be taken by the enterprises themselves, as in setting up joint collectives of scientists and specialists, exchanging scientific and technical documents, (with the exception of those containing discoveries, inventions and know-how) and mutual assistance in training personnel.

Associations, enterprises and agencies are entitled to conclude economic agreements and contracts on their own behalf, and to agree prices on coproduced components and rendered services. Such prices must naturally be tied in with the price of the final product, which is fixed in accordance with the price-formation principles operating in trade between the CMEA countries.

The transferable-rouble earnings accumulated on foreign exchange accounts will not be a dead weight. Apart from the above-mentioned objectives, they are to be used for purchasing industrial goods, medical facilities and cultural, everyday, sports and other goods in the fraternal countries which are not included in state distribution plans.

Joint Enterprises

We believe that *joint socialist enterprises, international associations and agencies* are a progressive form for concentrating scientific, technical and production potentialities in tackling pressing economic problems, especially in the development and installation of new hardware. There are some natural distinctions here: while joint enterprises are set up on the basis of the common property of the partners, international associations and agencies maintain their national property and operate together on the basis of coordinated and common plans.

It has been laid down that joint enterprises on the territory of the USSR are to be guided by Soviet legislation, labour and social regulations that are obligatory for our citizens. Such enterprises function on the basis of full economic calculus, self-financing and able to pay their own way. The Soviet state guarantees to the foreign partners the payment of their share of the profits, and the repayment of other assets in the event the enterprise is wound up or in the event of the partner withdrawing from it.

The procedures governing the activity of international associations and agencies, including finance, is to be decided by agreement between the partners, which may, whenever necessary, partially merge their property and set up joint organs of collective management.

The measures taken in the USSR in administering external economic ties have brought closer the competence of our associations, enterprises and agencies to those of economic units in the fraternal countries, and Soviet enterprises have been given even broader powers in some areas.

We attach great importance to the bilateral intergovernmental agreements signed in November 1986 during the 42nd session of the CMEA in Bucharest between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria, Hungary, GDR and Czechoslovakia, and somewhat earlier with Poland, on developing direct ties and setting up joint economic agencies. These documents provide for coordinated terms for such cooperation.

These agreements are already being actively implemented in the CMEA countries. The number of international associations and agencies, for instance, is to be shortly increased to 80, and another 30 joint enterprises are to be set up.

One should not, quite naturally, regard the problems dealt with here as having been solved. When trying to realise what had been agreed, we come up against definite difficulties, mainly in price-formation and settlements. But we and our CMEA partners have vital common interests and they markedly prevail over the existing differences, especially since many of the concrete forms, methods and instruments of the new stage of cooperation take account of the experience of some fraternal countries which have tried them out in practice. Exchange of experience is an organic element of relations between peoples of the socialist community and a guarantee of the further development and enrichment of the practice and theory of socialism.

Mutual Advantage Principle

The measures to restructure the USSR's external economic activity also relate to other countries, both less developed and industrialised capitalist countries. The establishment of joint enterprises on Soviet territory is above all the new element being introduced in relations with them.

We regard such cooperation as offering *great opportunities in expanding and consolidating long-term mutually advantageous economic relations,* which should improve the political climate, help to make active use of the advantages of the international division of labour, enlarge the Soviet Union's export facilities, speed scientific and technical progress and fill the market with high-quality goods.

The establishment of joint enterprises with companies from industrialised capitalist countries is, so far, the only form of direct ties to be used in economic relations between the Soviet Union and the West. Mixed enterprises with the partners' common property are international associations or agencies; they are a form of cooperation which, in this case, meets both the character of relations between states with different social systems, and the current trends in the evolution of the world economy. In our day, traditional commercial ties are being increasingly complemented with production organised on an international scale, with joint enterprises being one of the main units in such a pooling of efforts.

I have already said how the USSR views the benefits to be got from such producer units: they can make an essential and effective contribution to accelerating our economic and social development. But what is there in this form of cooperation for Western businessmen? It cannot, after all, be assumed that the capitalists are moved by a desire to promote the progress of the socialist society. A realistic view would suggest that they have other inducements and business interests which are determined by an understanding of the vast potentialities in cooperation with the Soviet Union. The fact that our market is virtually unlimited, that we have vast resources and modern scientific facilities is of primary importance. I believe that the USSR's good name as a trade partner is also of considerable significance. Let us bear in mind that the USSR has always met its international obligations precisely and in due time.

One has to say that foreign companies have met the new prospects with interest. More than 100 bids have come in from the FRG, Finland, Japan, Italy, Holland, the United States, India and several other countries. Negotiations are now under way, and some joint enterprises with capitalist companies may soon be set up. The current perfection of the USSR's external economic ties, notably joint ventures with Western countries, is not in any way at odds with the *state monopoly* and can do nothing to weaken or dismantle it. That the forms in which Lenin's principle is realised tend to change and will go on developing is quite another matter.

The Western press has widely discussed the prospects for such enterprises. There have been both positive and sceptical views, and even some blatant speculation as to their efficiency. I should like to say in this context that we do not, of course, compel anyone to engage in cooperation: it is voluntary and mutual. There is a need here for strictly

considering the mutual interests and giving up any kind of restrictions, boycotts and embargos. Economic relations in the modern world *can be based only on equality, trust and scrupulous observance of agreements.* All these conditions are a pledge of efficient cooperation. The Soviet Union, for its part, is prepared to engage in new forms of economic relations with foreign partners, along with the traditional forms, on the principles of mutual advantage, and to guarantee respect for their rights and interests.

It was only a few months ago that the decisions on improving the administration of the USSR's external economic relations were taken. Much has been done, and much remains to be done. Restructuring is no simple process, but it is under way, gaining in depth and width.

The Soviet Union seeks to develop Lenin's conception of external economic activity in present-day conditions, because we see it as an effective means for solving both political and economic problems. Equivalent exchange in the products of national labour is the natural basis for the economic integration of the socialist-community countries, and goes to strengthen the community's might and unity. The USSR's cooperation with LDCs helps to form their economy and social life on progressive principles. Economic, scientific and technical ties with the countries of the world capitalist system help to strengthen the material basis for the policy of peaceful coexistence.

For all the contradictions and difficulties in developing mutually advantageous cooperation based on equal partnership the idea that states are interdependent in an integral world has been spreading in the international community. Scientific and technical progress ever more vigorously impels countries with different political and social systems to seek mutually advantageous forms of cooperation. *The new processes in the economy of the socialist-community countries, notably the radical reorganisation of the USSR's external economic activity, will undoubtedly help to enrich business cooperation throughout the world.*

[1] There is, first, the resolution of the CPSU CC and the USSR Council of Ministers 'On Measures for Improving the Administration of External Economic Ties', and 'On Measures for Improving the Administration of Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation With the Socialist Countries' (August 1986). There is also the Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium 'On Matters Relating to the Establishment on the Territory of the USSR and Activity of Joint Enterprises, International Associations and Agencies with the Participation of Soviet and Foreign Agencies', Companies and Management Agencies' (January 1987), the decisions of the USSR Council of Ministers 'On Procedures for Establishing on the Territory of the USSR and Activity of Joint Enterprises, International Associations and Agencies of the USSR and other CMEA Countries' and 'On Procedures for Establishing on the Territory of the USSR and Activity of Joint Enterprises with the Participation of Soviet Agencies and Companies of Capitalist and Developing Countries' (January 1987). — *Ed.*

Local Government Under Pressure

Brit Rundberg — Board Executive Committee member, Left Party – Communists of Sweden, Stockholm Municipal Council member

"IN Sweden there is much talk about the high taxes. But while the income tax is indeed high here, commercial ventures are nonetheless in an advantageous position. The depreciation allowances are very liberal. Owing to the incomes policy, skilled labour is much cheaper than in many other industrialised Western nations." These words are from one of the glossy advertisements which the Stockholm Municipal Council has printed in a bid to attract foreign capital. This sort of promotion, presenting Sweden as a country and Stockholm as a city offering unprecedented benefits to investors on account of the low business tax and the modest wage for skilled labour, is addressed notably to businessmen in the USA, West Germany, and Japan.

Quite different messages are addressed to the Swedish population. These say that we should economise in order to offset the budget deficit, that there should be a ceiling on wage rises, and that the time has passed when local authorities — Municipal councils and landstings[1] (county councils) — could extend their social programmes.

The clamorous invitations to foreign investors and the austerity preaching for the working people are two sides of one and the same coin. Real incomes have been diminishing for a number of years, while food prices and rent have been climbing inexorably. In 1986 Swedish trade unions published a report on the working people's living standards. It states that real wages have fallen by 10 per cent over the past ten years. The wages of nearly 400,000 of the employees at private businesses are below the official minimum. Actual unemployment, including its hidden forms, is reaching 12 per cent. Had they not been receiving social benefits, more than half a million Swedes would have been unable to make ends meet. The working people are thus having to pay for the economic policy of giving increasingly favourable opportunities for big capital and the export industries.

In Sweden most of the social services directly linked to the people's day-to-day life are administered by municipal and county councils. A good half of all of the latter's expenditures are for school education and for welfare for children and senior citizens. The activities of municipal councils cover public health, environmental protection, the electricity and water supply, the sewerage system, the fire-fighting service, the maintenance of street cleanliness, the tending of roads and parks, sports and leisure facilities, and the promotion of culture. Taken together, all of this is of exceptional importance for the normal functioning of society.

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Housing construction and town planning constitute a special question. Although it comes under the jurisdiction of the municipal councils, this does not mean that the building and management of housing is entirely in their hands. Private capital holds strong positions in this sphere. The local authorities administer the repair and maintenance of housing. They are responsible for the power supply, although electricity may be produced by private companies or facilities run by the municipal council or the state.

In some areas — power supply, health services, public transport — where the reach of the municipalities is limited, the administration is exercised by the landstings, who provide these services on the scale of counties.

The local authorities cover their expenses from taxes, revenues from communal services, and state subsidies. The latter are allocated for a number of services, chiefly schools and children's institutions. The municipalities get most of their funds from taxes. For instance, the Stockholm Municipal Council receives 42 per cent of its funds from taxes, 36 per cent from public services, and 18 per cent in the shape of subsidies. The remainder comes from rent for building sites.

The municipalities and landstings have the authority to determine the size of taxes and the payments for communal services. Hence, the charge for accommodation in kindergartens, fares, or the level of welfare assistance to pensioners may be disparate in the various counties. The quality of utility services may differ quite considerably.

The local authorities get about one-fourth of the gross national product for their requirements, and they spend twice as much money as the central authorities. The significance of this public sector[2] is also seen in the fact that it employs over 25 per cent of all wage workers: 600,000 by the municipalities, and 400,000 by the landstings; 70 per cent of these wage earners are women.

The municipalities and landstings significantly extended their activities during the 1970s. This is quite understandable because social services were at the time, and still are, in a state of glaring neglect. Special attention has been paid to the aged and children. As an echo of the 'left tide' of 1968[3] a positive attitude prevailed towards the ideas of social solidarity and collectivism. Naturally, this did not mean that all shortcomings were eliminated, but any municipality with a progressive political leadership had the possibility of partially mitigating the negative consequences of the class injustices of capitalist society. Of course, many social sector agencies were no more than brooms sweeping away negative products of our economic system. But even that led to an improvement in the life of many people, including those with the least material security.

At the same time, the 1970s were marked by crises that followed one another in different industries — steel, mining, shipbuilding, and telecommunications. Factories were closed or production was transferred outside the country. Employment declined most conspicuously in the private sector. During that period some 100,000 jobs were lost in industry as a whole. It was on accouint of the public sector (i.e., the job opportunities appearing in the municipalities and landstings, where work was given to some 40,000 people annually in the course of that decade) that

the growth of unemployment was slower than the disappearance of jobs. The persons involved were mainly women and young people employed in the public health and social welfare services. *The stake that was put at the time on promoting the public sector thus allowed improving the life of those who were most in need of society's support and assistance — children, senior citizens, and the ailing. The expansion of the welfare services proved to be an extremely effective means of combating unemployment.*

However, a fairly massive propaganda campaign, orchestrated by the Association of Swedish Entrepreneurs, was started against the public sector. This sector with its social services was depicted as something akin to a cancerous growth on the body of society. The production decline, the contracting profits, the flight of capital, the diminution of investments, in short, all the consequences of the capitalist crisis were blamed on the 'expansion of the municipalities' and the 'excessively high wages' of the working people. In combination with the deteriorating economic situation, this propaganda onslaught helped the bourgeois parties in 1976 to win the parliamentary elections for the first time in four decades. In the course of the first three years their government did not venture to attack the social gains of the working people, although the propaganda assault against the public sector did not abate.

But after the 1979 elections, the bourgeois parties, which retained power, decided it was time to implement the policy marked out by the Association of Swedish Entrepreneurs. It was decided to put an end to the expanding activities of the municipalities. To achieve their purpose the Swedish conservatives resorted to rhetoric about the 'freedom of choice'. It was alleged that the municipalities had undertaken the role of guardian and had thereby denied this 'choice' to ordinary people. They argued that if taxes were reduced and less funds were extended to the municipalities the range of the latter's activities would be limited and, consequently, there would be more 'freedom of choice'. Private enterprises could offer services with the same success, they contended, declaring that the people should be allowed to choose for themselves.

In the early 1980s the bourgeois majority in the Riksdag launched its first frontal attack on the rights of the local authorities. The municipal tax levied on judicial persons, i.e., enterprises, was rechannelled to the exchequer. The government intended to use the funds received to compensate for some of the shortfall in the state budget. This was strongly opposed by the Communists and the Social Democrats. Municipalities throughout the country protested. John-Olof Persson, finance counsellor and one of the top persons in the Stockholm Municipal Council, urged a 'rising' against the government's decision. With the transfer of the tax revenues to the government, the self-administration of the municipalities — this deeply-rooted Swedish tradition — came under threat. The Social Democrats began charging that municipal funds were being 'confiscated'.

For Stockholm — the nation's largest municipality — the bourgeois government's decision signified its deprivation of 500 million kronor annually. This was a big sum of money even in an annual budget of 17 billion kronor. Some social programmes had to be reconsidered. Other municipalities, which had considerably less funds and reserves, were much

harder hit.

The first serious backlash of this 'curbing' of the municipalities and landstings was a steep rise of unemployment among young people. Large numbers of young people who graduated from school in the early 1980s found that the private sector no longer had jobs for them, while the public sector, which had to some extent been a 'substitute' for the former, was not generating as many jobs as previously.

The Social Democrats returned to power in 1982, but the talk about repealing 'confiscation' had subsided by then. Practically the same policy as that of the bourgeois parties is being pursued. The social democratic government cut the state subsidies in the 1986-87 fiscal year by 2,500 million kronor. This hurt the municipalities and landstings, 'disabling' them, as the newspaper *Aftonbladet* wrote, in the face of acute social problems. Actually, the Social Democrats are keeping to the course charted by the Association of Swedish Entrepreneurs back in the 1970s. The tax returns from judicial persons remain frozen in the Riksbank and there are no signs that they will be returned to the local authorities. Everything points to the opposite, to the intention of the social democratic government to continue fleecing the municipalities. By and large, the measures instituted by the bourgeois and social democratic governments in the 1980s have divested the local authorities of more than 40 billion kronor. To compensate for these losses taxes have had to be increased by 4.5 per cent in Stockholm alone.

Little wonder that in the 1980s the municipalities headed by bourgeois parties or Social Democrats have cut back services significantly. The former auctioned public property to private hands and reduced the volume of their own activities on the plea that taxes had to be reduced. The latter have taken similar measures in order to keep in step with the policy of the social democratic government. This was done to the accompaniment of propaganda attacks on the public sector with the argument that it was preventing Swedish industry from getting on its feet.

As a result of curtailed activity many of the municipalities have accumulated fairly large unutilised liquid assets. The government would not be averse to using them. An interest in these assets has been shown by the Finance Minister Kjell-Olof Feldt. He has declared that social consumption, i.e. municipal services, has to be moved into the background in order to extend private consumption. Such is now the orientation of social democratic policy, which is welcomed by the bourgeoisie.

Stockholm, which is administered by Social Democrats, is a vivid example of a municipality adapting itself to government policy. Although the city has been deprived of about one billion kronor in revenue there have been no protests. More, there is talk now of a further cut in spending on the city's libraries, playgrounds for children, and so forth.

An outcome of the restrictions on the resources of the municipalities and landstings is the deterioration and degutting of services used daily by working people. This concerns children's institutions, hospitals, and schools. As a result, there is growing criticism of the public sector and this is encouraging the right-wing forces to step up their campaign for the reprivatisation of this sector.

If this course continues it will inescapably lead to a further escalation of class inequality. Without a well-developed sphere of social services taking the needs of all citizens into account we shall descend to a society that will be increasingly similar to the one in the USA or Britain. People with fat wallets will have the possibility of getting high-quality services, while the majority will have to rest content with mediocre or even poor services in a public sector bereft of the necessary funds.

It looks as though the aims upheld by the Swedish working class movement are being discarded by the social democratic government. The message addressed by the municipal authorities to the people of Stockholm to tighten their belts further and their invitation of foreign capitalists to a paradise of profits and low wages is perfectly clear. The money and resources of the public sector are being speedily redistributed in order to line the pockets of owners of capital.

It is our party's view that the paramount thing today is to restore, in domestic policy, the aims of the working class movement, namely, the right to work for all, social insurance, and social solidarity. Of course a capitalist society cannot be turned into a socialist society by developing municipal services no matter how progressive they may be. But it is possible to change reality step by step for the good of working people, and for that reason it is important to safeguard the rights of the municipalities and extend and democratise their activities.

Competent social services equally accessible to everybody are an effective instrument of public relations promoting social solidarity and collective decision-making: they are a means of countering the exhortations of the bourgeoisie about things becoming good when a fat wallet will give people 'freedom of choice'. The guideline towards collective decision-making on social problems in municipalities will not only help to reduce unemployment within a relatively short span of time; indirectly it will benefit those enterprises that produce goods for the domestic market. All this will help us to foster Swedish society's development not on the terms being imposed by foreign, transnational capital but on our own terms, which are consistent with national interests.

[1] There are 284 municipal councils that administer cities and towns with a population from 10,000 to 650,000 (Stockholm). Moreover there are 24 landstings. Elections to these bodies are held once in three years.

[2] In Swedish official statistics the heading 'public sector' embraces socio-economic activity financed by central and local authorities (social welfare, education, public health, research, culture, and so on), state and community-municipal property (with the exception of state-run industrial enterprises and companies), and also the expenditure on defence and on the maintenance of public law and order. — *Ed.*

[3] The steps that were taken by the Social Democrats to enhance the state's regulating role and improve the condition of the working people brought them a landslide victory at the 1968 parliamentary elections for the first time in the postwar period. — *Ed.*

Upholding the National and International Interests of Working People

Donald Ramotar — Executive Committee member, Central Committee, People's Progressive Party of Guyana (PPP)

TODAY the former colonial countries that have won their sovereignty are fighting for genuine and full freedom and independence. The level of their struggle depends on different factors and specific conditions — the degree to which the productive forces have developed, the degree to which the working people are organised, the existence of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard, and many other factors.

The situation in Guyana, too, displays its distinctive features. Our party is legal, and has been for most of its thirty-seven years of existence. During the colonial period, we used legal methods to organise the masses and mobilise them in the struggle for universal adult suffrage and contested the elections held under those conditions. We were successful at winning a majority on three occasions in the then British Guiana.

The Programme of the PPP, which was adopted at its 20th Congress in 1979, states that our "party believes in peaceful, democratic and legal methods of political struggle, but it is not a pacifist organisation".[1] Today, in the face of the increasingly anti-democratic policy of the ruling PNC[2] and its submission to imperialism and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Communists, together with other forces, have organised a broad Patriotic Coalition for Democracy.[3] We are using all legal methods of struggle and hope to expand them as far as possible. As our programme states, "revolutionaries have never been the first to resort to violence, and do not advocate acts of terrorism. However, they are prepared to respond by all means to counter-revolutionary violence and terror and to facilitate the realisation of the will of the majority."[4]

The PPP has been calling for a political solution to Guyana's problems for some time now. This calls for a government which would comprise representatives of progressive and left forces and which would enact, in the interests of the masses, democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented reforms. The Communists advocate a strong public sector and oppose all attempts at its denationalisation. It is necessary to introduce centralised planning, guarantee the right of wage and salary earners to take part in economic management, set a wage level adequate for a normal living standard, restore subsidies for essential goods, and ensure their equitable distribution at stable prices. Other urgent tasks include steps aimed at reducing the bloated armed forces which are expensive to maintain, and establishing a genuine people's militia, expanding mutually beneficial trade and economic ties with socialist and developing countries, etc.

The economic and political situation in Guyana was discussed at the plenary meeting of the PPP Central Committee held in Georgetown in January 1987. It noted that the government was unable to curb the crisis and to bring peace and prosperity to the people. Accommodating steps are taken mostly to woo the private sector, while the conditions of the working masses have worsened.

The current course of the government is fraught with grave dangers. In an attempt to attract local and foreign investment, the regime is abandoning anti-imperialist positions. This is true of the nationalisation of industry. The expressed goal of 'socialism' announced by the PNC is at odds with the actual policy of the authorities which are making secret deals with imperialism, rig elections, wallow in corruption and have nurtured what is essentially a new capitalist class and a parasitic bureaucratic élite. The plenary meeting has concluded that the profound crisis that has swept the country is essentially political. The Communists will continue to work tirelessly in order to secure the adoption of decisions based on anti-imperialist tactics and the implementation of measures leading to socialism.

Imperialism is trying relentlessly to fragment the world's revolutionary movement, divide and isolate its different contingents, and drive a wedge between the socialist community, particularly the Soviet Union and the working class in capitalist countries, as well as the national liberation movements. All sorts of 'theories' are being used for this purpose — the concepts of the two 'superpowers', 'equidistance', a 'third way' and the like. Unfortunately, sometimes many working people are fooled or confused by them.

We in Guyana have the experience of what harm can be done when the working masses are divided. Under the slogan of 'no more Cubas', Washington pressurised the British colonialists to hold back independence to the then colony on the grounds that an independent Guyana governed by the PPP would be a source of additional concern to the United States. Using racism, reaction was able to provoke racial clashes and eventually to saddle the country with a government of its choice.[5] The effects of those events in the 1960s are still being felt in the country — the almost totally ruined economy, the grave social problems and the erosion of political democracy.

To change the course of events, it is necessary to develop unity in the working masses, firstly in the working class. Our party has been working patiently towards this goal. The Communists are intensifying their work in the mass organisations, among youth and women. Our consistent efforts have led to the emergence of a progressive wing in the TUC, which takes pro-workers' positions against conservative trade union leaders.[6] Solidarity is growing between the workers of the two largest industries — bauxite, which employs the majority of Afro-Guyanese, and sugar, which employs the majority of Indo-Guyanese workers.[7] This is of particular importance because it was in these areas that the largest racial clashes took place in the early 1960s. The prestige of the Communist-led trade unions is growing.

Of course, this process is not proceeding as smoothly as we would have liked. It is cutting a path for itself in a jungle of contradictions and is forced

to overcome numerous obstacles. The Central Committee report to the 22nd Congress of the party (1985) noted some of the difficulties — for example, that "there is a great hostility to trade unions by employers of sawmills and other small establishments. Attempts to unionise workers often lead to dismissals. Consequently, workers in fear of losing their jobs are not prepared to join unions. The high unemployment situation and the lack of firmness of the government facilitate the employers in their anti-union methods."[8] Moreover, the government often use the armed forces and the courts to break strikes and to penalise strikers.

The PPP pays close attention to its work in the countryside. This work cannot be overestimated because Guyana is mainly an agricultural country. However, the rich agricultural bourgeoisie owns 80 per cent of the total acreage. Thus the bulk of the poor peasantry are forced to rent little plots of land to eke out a living.

Our members who work in the mass organisations embracing the peasants, mainly in sugar, rice, tobacco and ground provisions are often elected to leading positions of these bodies, an indication of their dedication and sacrifices. However, here too, we meet stiff resistance from landlords, the bourgeoisie and the government. Often they try to create their own 'mass organisations' and foist them on the backs of the peasants. The genuine bodies are forced to carry out a tenacious struggle for recognition, similar to that which the workers carry out for their union recognition. This common experience is prompting the workers and farmers in the countryside to establish closer links with the workers in the towns. Of note is that when the workers go on strike, foodstuffs are often collected for them from the farmers. And through the persistence of the Communists, resolutions calling on the regime to recognise the legitimate farmers' organisations are passed at the congresses of trade unions and of the TUC.

Upholding the interests of the people, our party is using a broad variety of forms in its struggle. In parliament and in other elective forums the Communists expose the severe shortcomings of the regime, its corruption and incompetence, its sell-out to the IMF, and make concrete proposals on various issues. A recent example was seen last year, when the country was in almost total darkness and transportation was virtually at a standstill due to a shortage of fuel. Our party's parliamentarians proposed that the regime barter our bauxite for oil with Venezuela. The proposal was highly appreciated by the masses, and the regime, on one of the rare occasions, heeded our call.

However, we have no illusions on the limitations of parliament. The programme of the party spells this out very clearly: "The PPP regards participation in parliament not as an end in itself, but as a platform and one of the forums of struggle for the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society. It does not want mere bourgeois parliamentarianism, but strives by the correct use of parliament, through revolutionary parliamentary tactics, to advance the task of political education and organisation of the masses. It also combines parliamentary struggle with vigorous action of the people outside parliament."[9]

Our 22nd Congress stressed that we should offset the onslaught of

imperialist propaganda with our own counter-offensive. That is imperative in the current conditions of anti-communist hysteria, a manifestation of the Reagan administration's crusade against Marxism-Leninism, the socialist world, and the national liberation movement. It is a major task of the party as a whole and of every party member to expose the precepts devised by imperialist theorists and to rebuff their inventions vigorously.

Our struggle is developing in difficult conditions. Opponents level countless accusations at the Communists. We are often criticised for paying too much attention to international questions. There are efforts to present the PPP's internationalist position as being anti-national and against Guyana.

Guided by the Marxist concept of proletarian internationalism, the People's Progressive Party of Guyana has seen for itself the importance of the international support rendered by broad democratic forces throughout the world. We enjoyed this support during our struggle for independence, and we also rely on it today as we rebuff imperialism and local reaction.

Back in 1917 Lenin wrote that to be a real internationalist means "working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle,* this *and only this,* line in *every* country without exception".[10] This idea remains topical and has been repeatedly borne out by history. No party can therefore ignore either the national or the international interests of the working class, without risking isolation from the revolutionary masses and doing serious harm to itself and consequently to the world's anti-imperialist movement as a whole.

As part of the international communist and workers' movement, the PPP seeks close cooperation with all other like-minded parties and with other democratic and peace forces, wherever they are. Above all we strive to cement our ties with the communist parties and with Marxist and other progressive groups of the Caribbean. Our congresses have become a major event in the region by making it possible to exchange experience and consolidate our fraternal ties.

In March 1984 Caribbean left organisations met in Georgetown at the initiative of our party, to assess the situation in the region after the US invasion of Grenada. The participants in the meeting resolved to increase their solidarity with the peoples of Grenada, Cuba, Nicaragua and El Salvador, and to resist US interventionist plans in the region. Our party worked actively in founding the Conference of Caribbean Anti-Imperialist Organisations which encompasses a very broad spectrum of social and political currents and seeks to mobilise the region's masses against military and economic imperialist aggression.

Guyana's Communists express their solidarity with the world's peoples fighting for freedom and independence, and we render them moral and, wherever possible, material support. We have organised big campaigns of solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese people, with the working people of Kampuchea, Afghanistan, Chile, Angola, and Nicaragua, with the civil rights struggles in the US, and with the struggles against colonialism and apartheid in Africa.

Naturally, the PPP sees its solidarity with the socialist community as an important duty. For us, the gains of real socialism represent the highest advancement of the world's working class and revolutionary movement. The accomplishments of the socialist countries are our accomplishments. It is only natural therefore that we see the defence of socialism against all sorts of slander as a perfectly natural need.

In Guyana, anti-communism, anti-Sovietism and anti-Cubanism are gradually losing their potency, due mainly to the consistent ideological struggle of the PPP and to the growing experience of the masses themselves. The situation has been further improved by the establishment of diplomatic relations between our country and many states of the socialist world. It is now much more difficult for the reformists and reactionaries to come with frontal attacks against socialism.

The Communists of Guyana are convinced that today the struggle for peace is closely connected with social progress in every country. Progress in defeating imperialist-backed forces in any one country is an important factor in strengthening the peace movement as a whole. It is also true that any gains in the relaxation of international tensions benefit the cause of national and social progress in all countries.

The fight for peace today is bringing home to more and more people in Guyana an understanding of the dialectical connection between the national and the international. They have grasped that the preservation of peace is an indispensable precondition for the solution of all other global problems, for all national and class contradictions. In this struggle there can be no innocent bystanders. In the words of our national poet Martin Carter, "all are involved, all are consumed."

[1] *For Socialism in Guyana. Political Programme of the People's Progressive Party*, Prague, 1982, pp. 72-73.
[2] The People's National Congress of Guyana, formed as a result of a split of the PPP in 1955, has been the ruling party since 1964. — *Ed.*
[3] Established in January 1986, the coalition includes five opposition parties — the PPP, the Working People's Alliance, the People's Democratic Movement, the Democratic Labour Movement, and the National Democratic Front. — *Ed.*
[4] *For Socialism in Guyana*, p. 73.
[5] The coalition government of the PNC and the bourgeois United Force party, formed as a result of the 1964 by-elections. On May 26, 1966, British Guiana was proclaimed independent and was officially renamed Guyana. — *Ed.*
[6] For details, see Janet Jagan, 'Full-Fledged Communists', *WMR*, No. 12, 1985. — *Ed.*
[7] Guyana has a population of about 950,000. Within this total, people of African descent make up 31 per cent; those of East Indian descent, over 50 per cent; and those of mixed descent, 11 per cent. — *Ed.*
[8] *Report of the Central Committee to the 22nd Congress of the PPP*, Annandale, 1985, p. 126.
[9] *For Socialism in Guyana*, p. 72.
[10] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 75.

Twenty Years Of Israeli Occupation

Naim Ashhab — member, Political Bureau, Central Committee, Palestinian Communist Party

ON June 5, 1967, the Zionist rulers, supported by US imperialism, launched the Israeli aggression against Arab countries. In an age when the colonial system has been all but eliminated, the occupation of Arab territories by the Israeli invaders has continued ever since. Reflecting on this fact, one is prompted to ask several questions. What are the objectives and the character of this occupation? Why has it been so protracted? How does it affect the population of the occupied territories? And finally, what are the prospects?

The aggression of June 1967 pursued two major objectives — to deal a blow to the anti-imperialist regimes in Egypt and Syria, forcing them to abandon the path of progress, and to complete the annexation of the remaining lands of the former mandated territory of Palestine after the creation of the State of Israel.

Preparations for the war had been conducted for many years — essentially since the failure of the tripartite Anglo-French-Israeli aggression of 1956 against Egypt in retaliation for the nationalisation of the Suez Canal. Launching a new act of aggression, the US-Israeli alliance no doubt made use of the weak points of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes — the lack of democracy, the passivity of the popular masses, the degradation and the inertia of the state apparatus, especially of the armed forces which demonstrated their complete helplessness and incompetence.

Looking back, one can hardly close one's eyes to the fact that the aggressor was partly successful as far as the first goal was concerned in securing — albeit not at once (after Gamal Abdel Nasser's death) — Egypt's deviation from the anti-imperialist course, an end to its confrontation with Israel, and a change in the nation's progressive orientation. The signing of the treacherous Camp David accords by Anwar Sadat was a logical culmination of these developments.

As for the annexation of the remaining lands of the former mandated territory of Palestine, one can, now that twenty years have elapsed, conclude quite definitely: *despite the serious changes that have occurred there over the years of occupation, the expansionist schemes have met with grave difficulties.*

The Zionist colonisation plans stipulated, *first,* the seizure of as much Arab land as possible under any pretext; *second,* the establishment of as many Zionist settlements there as possible; *third,* the ousting of as many indigenous inhabitants as possible; *fourth,* steps to bind the economy of the occupied territories to that of Israel; and, *fifth,* the destruction of the Palestinian people's cultural heritage.

Resorting to various forms of pressure and brute force and even stooping to outright swindles, the invaders have since confiscated 52 per cent of lands in the West Bank and 42 per cent of the Gaza Strip despite the

resistance of the population.[1] They began with the expropriation of vast tracts of the emiria land,[2] claiming that Israel was the 'legitimate heir' of Jordan which had exercised sovereignty over the West Bank and of Egypt which controlled the Gaza Strip prior to the 1967 war. Subsequently the invaders appropriated many other tracts citing the absence of the owners and then began to confiscate land for reasons of 'security and the public good'. Real estate dealers appeared who, by stealth and deceit, bought land from gullible rural dwellers. These cases were so frequent that they were even discussed in the Israeli courts and in the press, although nothing was done to assist effectively the victims of the swindles.

The annexation was accompanied by the destruction of whole Arab villages (for example, this fate befell three villages in Latrun District); thousands of houses were torn down as punishment for the owners' 'anti-government activities'. As a rule, the houses were razed to the ground without waiting for the military courts to announce official verdicts. New houses were also destroyed, allegedly for lack of a construction permit — but actually, in their bid to oust more indigenous inhabitants, the authorities virtually refused to issue building permits to anyone.

From 1967 through 1986, 193 Zionist settlements were established on the confiscated lands,[3] including ten urban-type settlements[4] — and that in addition to the occupation of East Jerusalem, now with a Jewish residential belt (100,000 people); besides the invaders have overrun the city's many Arab areas in the Old Quarter and continue to evict their indigenous inhabitants.

The Zionist settlements are important to Israel not only in economic terms but also as military and police factors. Their locations were chosen under a strategic plan, in accordance with the 'benefits' these paramilitary entities would bring. Set up in close proximity to Palestinian-populated towns and villages, they have been repeatedly used, particularly in recent years, for the suppression of mass action against the occupation. The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported in December 1986 that the West Bank and Gaza Jewish settlers had in their possession more than 10,000 firearms — only those that were officially registered with and allowed by the Defence and Interior Ministry. The same is true of the situation on the Golan Heights which were also annexed by Israel.[5]

Palestinians continue to be driven from the occupied territories. Twenty years ago, after a lightning strike against the armies of Egypt, Syria and Jordan which left the Palestinians dejected and confused, the invaders forced many of them to abandon their homes.[6] It was a repetition of the tragedy of 1948, when some one million Palestinians fled Zionist pogroms. This time, however, people who had learned the lessons of 1948 reacted differently: they tried to return home at any cost, but the occupation authorities immediately blocked the avenues of return.

Israeli soldiers ruthlessly opened fire on those who tried to cross the Jordan back to the West Bank. That was when the Zionists began to establish a network of settlements there and introduced various restrictions and prohibitions. Numerous decrees and orders were issued to bar indigenous inhabitants from returning home and families from reuniting. Under this legislation, even a mother and her child who have been forced

to leave, torn away from their family, cannot come back to live at home. The press has recently mentioned the tragic fate of Radja Rubeia, the mother of two infants, whom the invaders separated by force from her husband who lives in the Gaza Strip.[7] This brutal policy has broken up thousands of families. At the same time, the Zionist administration declares that Jews from any country are free to settle permanently in Israel or in the occupied territories.

The invaders keep devising more ways of forcing Palestinians to leave their homeland. Increasingly strict procedures in making applications for trips abroad threaten those who leave the country temporarily with being deprived of the right to return on any bureaucratic pretext. They may thus easily be turned into exiles who, like most of the Palestinian people, live away from home.

Even the universities opened in the occupied territories in recent decades are used as an additional means of increasing the emigration of the indeginous population. Their establishment was permitted during the oil boom period, when demand for skilled personnel rose dramatically in the neighbouring countries. However, the number of university graduates is much higher than domestic demand requires. To avoid unemployment, people are compelled to go abroad.

Emergency legislation passed as far back as the years of the British mandate, when the authorities exiled opposition activists to other British colonies, is also evoked. Over the 20 years of Israeli occupation, about 3,000 people — prominent patriots representing different political currents — have been deported in this way.

The invaders also make wide use of economic weapons in their policy of forced eviction of the Arabs. Ever more people are losing their jobs and means of subsistence at home.

With due regard for the role of the economic factor in the efforts to secure control of the occupied territories, Israeli's ruling circles are doing everything to tie the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to the more powerful Israeli economy. The authorities have eliminated market barriers and levied greater taxes on Arab businessmen. All sorts of bans and restrictions on the trade ties of these areas with the neighbouring Arab countries and with the rest of the world have been imposed.[8] *The plan is to transform the Palestinian economy into a mere appendage of the Israeli economy.*

The policy of the occupation authorities has ruined tens of thousands of small businessmen, artisans and people from other strata of the Arab population, turning them into hired workers. Many Palestinian tradesmen found themselves to be simply in service with Israeli companies. The invaders immediately established control over the sources of water supply. Having connected Palestinian towns and villages to the Israeli power grid, they then moved to obstruct the operation of local power plants, seeking to strangle and eliminate them.

To Israeli capital, *the occupied territories have become the main object of colonial plunder.* For several years now, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have been second only to the United States in the structure of Israeli exports. Inequitable trade with these areas enables the Zionist

bourgeoisie annually to pocket one billion dollars. But there are other aspects to this economic plunder. The Palestinian employed beyond the 'Green Line' (that is, in Israel proper) are subjected to ruthless exploitation, and they now number 100,000 (they totalled 20,600 in 1970).[9]

Palestinian workers are deprived of all rights guaranteed under the Israeli Labour Code. A Palestinian earns a little over one-third of an Israeli worker's wage, although the workday, together with the time needed to get to and from work, is often as long as 18 hours. Grave violations of relevant rules occur when women and children are hired: they work in very different conditions which are not up to the generally accepted standards. Trade unions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are not allowed to operate beyond the 'Green Line'. The Histadrut, the Israeli trade union association, does not admit Palestinians from the occupied territories. Besides, it is led by Zionists and is itself Israel's biggest employer.

UN statistics on per capita incomes in Israel, on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip refute the lies of official propaganda about economic progress in these territories. Facts prove that in an effort to preserve the differences between the two occupied areas, the authorities keep to the 'divide and rule' practice. In 1982, gross per capita product was 1,032 dollars on the West Bank, only 610 dollars in the Gaza Strip, but 6,086 dollars in Israel.[10].

To rob our people of their national identity, the invaders are trying to trample upon our civilisation, crush our cultural heritage and distort our traditions. They are changing the names of cities, towns, villages and even some dishes of Palestinian cuisine, and they have repeatedly attempted to desecrate and destroy our holy places. To sum up, an offensive is being waged on all fronts, aimed at the physical, economic and spiritual destruction of the Palestinian people.

Acting jointly with the United States, its ally, Israel stubbornly refuses to recognise the unity of our people who live in the occupied territories and in diaspora. Exiled from their homeland, Palestinians suffer continuous persecution abroad too. Assassinations and acts of mass extermination keep occurring in an unbroken chain. Our enemies resort to vicious plots and cunning intrigue to prod certain forces in the Arab world into action against the Palestinians. The war against our people rages on — witness Israel's new attacks against the refugee camps in Lebanon and the blockade mounted by the Shi'ite Amal movement to starve the exiles to death.

In June 1987 it will be five years since Israel launched its bandit aggression against Lebanon. The invaders occupy part of the territory of this long-suffering country, and imperialist interference in Lebanese domestic politics continues, an added factor aggravating the solution of the Palestinian national problem.

The crushing of the Palestinian Resistance Movement (and the Lebanese national patriotic forces), preferably at the hands of others, was a major objective of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. This lends particular significance to the recent admission of General Amet, formerly chief of Mossad — Israeli intelligence service — in an interview with *Le Figaro* magazine: "In 1970 we forced Jordan to take steps against the Palestinians,

and King Hussein had more Palestinians killed in a month than Israel had in 20 years."[11] This leaves no doubt of Zionist complicity in the events of Black September 1970, although it does not exonerate the Jordanian regime either. Israel is also responsible for the Sabra and Shatila massacres (Beirut, 1982), and this has been confirmed by the official Israeli investigation of the matter. The logic of these heinous crimes becomes clear if one recalls the Zionist ideologists' cherished goal of exterminating the Palestinian people. Seeking to have this genocide committed by Arabs, they want to avoid condemnation by the international community and at the same time to foment discord in the Arab world.

After the US-Israeli alliance succeeded in pushing Egypt into separate deals, most of the pressure was shifted to the Palestianian Resistance and to Syria in an effort to provoke a collision between them. This was felt particularly acutely in Lebanon.

An alliance comprising the Palestinian and the Lebanese patriotic forces and Syria should underlie the efforts to settle this destructive conflict. Relations between the Palestinian Resistance and the National Patriotic Forces of Lebanon were forged in the course of their joint struggle which subsequently won major victories by driving out the US–NATO 'multinational force' and frustrating the fettering Lebanese–Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983.

To properly assess the gravity of the anti–Palestinian campaign, attention should be drawn to certain changes that have taken place in the region since the aggression of June 1967. The adverse effects of Camp David are not at all confined to Egypt's withdrawal from the ranks of the frontline states. The Egyptian regime has become a major source of pressure on the Palestinian people and the PLO; the aim is to break their resistance to the occupation and to imperialist diktat.

The developments under way in the Arab East over the past two decades have enabled forces which are a far cry from the national problems of their peoples to dominate the ruling élite in several countries. This was motivated by their class–based interests and ties with foreign monopolies. As a result, Arab solidarity weakened noticeably, as seen in full measure during the 1982 blockade of Beirut by the Israeli invaders. The slogan of 'national struggle'[12] also suffered a fiasco. Some regimes washed their hands of the Palestinian problem and were drawn increasingly into the plots and forays against our people. The rulers of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco, to say nothing of the Egyptian leadership, have recently stepped up their efforts to break the Palestinians' commitment to the struggle.

The difficulties which the Palestine Liberation Organisation encounterd after its withdrawal from Beirut have resulted in its fragmentation over the US plans for a settlement. Today, Washington and Arab reaction are doing their utmost to prevent the restoration of Palestinian unity, the most urgent demand of the overwhelming majority of the popular masses both inside and outside the Palestinian territories. *Unity can be achieved only through an unremitting struggle against imperialism* and through the removal of obstacles such as the 1985 Amman Agreement[13] which was the fruit of illusions about the US versions of a 'settlement'. Upholding

national unity, thousands of Palestinians took part in the harsh battles of last year's December uprising in the occupied territories, in other actions against the invaders and in the defence of the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

The session of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) held in Algiers in April 1987 played an important role in restoring Palestinian unity. The decisions adopted have formed the basis for overcoming the split which has affected the Palestinian Resistance Movement for more than four years. The Palestinian Communist Party was officially admitted to the PNC, and it is now represented on the PLO Executive Committee. The results of the session have helped to consolidate the movement and dealt another blow to the schemes of imperialism, Zionism and reaction.

Twenty years later, the Israeli rulers find themselves in the same impasse they ran into on the first day of occupation: they do not know what to do about the occupied territories because the Arab population is holding fast to the land and refuses to emigrate. The presence of an indigenous population in the occupied Arab territories undermines the Zionist programme and its proclamation of the Jewish character of the state. But giving up these lands would deliver the coup de grace to the entire doctrine of expansionism. *The schemes of our enemies encounter the steadfastness of our people who are waging an heroic struggle against attempts to block a just settlement of the Palestinian problem* — attempts including the administrative autonomy project, the Camp David deal and the latest plot — the plan for a 'division of functions' (condominium) in the occupied territories between the Israeli and the Jordanian authorities.

Even some of the dedicated Zionists are becoming aware that the policy of annexation has no future. General Yehoshafat Harkabi, former chief of the Tsahal (Israeli army intelligence), has said that "we have no other choice except to hold talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation because most Palestinians regard it as their sole legitimate representative".[14] He has stressed that the government will be saddled with the insoluble problems because, as official statistics show, the Arabs will soon constitute a majority of the population in Israel and the occupied territories.

The policy of occupying foreign territories has adversely affected all Israeli society. Its social contradictions have sharpened, the domestic politics have shifted to the right, the trend towards fascism has gained strength, and the country's dependence on US imperialism has increased. Israel leads the world in per capita terms of the foreign debt which now exceeds 30 billion dollars — despite the fact that the annual amount of US aid ranges from three to five billion dollars. The money is not used to improve the well-being of the people, but is channelled into the arms build-up so that the Israeli aggressors could act more effectively in supporting Washington's neoglobalist plans.

The steadfastness of our people and the solidarity of our friends have made it possible *to frustrate all attempts at 'eliminating' the Palestinian problem and declaring it non-existent.* The international community has recognised the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to an independent national state of their own. Worldwide understanding is

growing of the need for an international conference to consider all aspects of the Middle East crisis which is rooted in the question of Palestine. All parties concerned, including the PLO (the sole legitimate representative of our people), should take part in this conference. Specific proposals on its organisation were advanced by the Soviet Union back in 1984. Last year the USSR suggested that a preparatory commission be set up, comprising the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. World public opinion is becoming increasingly aware of the need for practical steps towards convening a conference on a Middle East settlement.

The record of the past 20 years makes it possible to arrive at several conclusions.

First, the increase in the size of the working class in the occupied territories as a result of the invaders' policy of land confiscation and other forms of economic plunder has objectively enhanced its role in the national struggle. The working class is now fighting against a twofold oppression, both national and social.

Second, because of the colonial nature of the Israeli occupation, the Zionist regime has failed to find any class or social strata ready to collaborate with it in Palesinian society.

Third, all schemes to separate the destinies of the Palestinians remaining in their homeland from the destinies of those living in diaspora have merely helped to strengthen the unity of the Palestinian people within and outside the country and reinforced their resolve to preserve their national identity and cultural heritage.

Fourth, the weakening of Arab solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people and the incessant attempts of certain regimes to control it have served to deepen the Palestinians' awareness of the need for self-reliance. They have come to better understand the importance of taking national decisions independently. The restrictions imposed on the PLO in this sphere were one of the causes behind the protest against the Amman Agreement.

Fifth, the repression unleashed by the occupation forces, the persecution and the genocide in the occupied territories and elsewhere, and the forays of the quarters hostile to the Palestinian cause have strengthened the commitment of the popular masses to resistance.

To sum up, *there is only one way open before our people — that of rebuffing the enemy and continuing the struggle.* That is the lesson of the past 20 years. In all battles, the Palestinian Communists have been playing a prominent role, taking part in mass actions in the occupied territories especially and working vigorously to restore national unity.

[1] *Al-Kateb* (Jerusalem), No. 75, 1986, p. 36 (in Arabic).

[2] State-owned lands. — *Ed.*

[3] *Al-Rai* (Jordan), March 9, 1987, p. 19 (in Arabic).

[4] The Gosh Emunim Zionist organisation estimates that there are now 60,000 Jewish settlers on the West Bank alone. They own 52 per cent of the land, while the idigenous Arab population (900,000 people) accounts for 48 per cent of the territory (according to Professor Israel Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli Human Rights Committee, who announced this at a meeting with Nazareth students). (See *Al-Ittihad,* March 3, 1987, p. 2, in Arabic.)

[5] There are now 13,000 Syrian nationals living on the Golan Heights.

[6] The 1967 aggression caused more that 300,000 Palestinians to flee from the West Bank into

Jordan. See Juraj Racz, *The Middle East. Is There a Solution?* Prague, 1986, p. 11.
[7] *Al-Ittihad*, March 15, 1987, p. 1.
[8] Professor Israel Shahak "About four weeks ago the Common Market decided to offer certain privileges to Arab farmers from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip so that they could export their produce to EEC countries. But the occupation authorities have refused to issue export licenses and allowed the use of Israeli ports for the exports of only those goods which will not compete with Israeli products." (See *Al-Ittihad*, March 3, 1987, p. 2.)
[9] *Al-Kateb*, No. 75, 1986, p. 35.
[10] *Al-Kateb*, No. 81, 1986, p. 33.
[11] Quoted in *Al-Ittihad*, March 8, 1987, p. 1.
[12] The struggle for Arab unity and for solving the Palestinian problem. — *Ed.*
[13] For more details, see Naim Ashhab, "Any US-Orchestrated Settlement Would Be Illusory", *WMR*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 88-94. In April 1987 the PLO Executive Committee officially declared the agreement abrogated. — *Ed.*
[14] Quoted in *Sawt al-Bilad*, (Nicosia) No. 118, 1987, pp. 24-25 (in Arabic).

Artists in Struggle

"My Poetry Sprang From Revolution"

Ernesto Cardenal — poet, Minister of Culture of Nicaragua

You awaken from the rumble of cannon,
From the scream of aircraft flying.
That's revolution, you think. But, wait, hold on,
It's only the tyrant
His birthday dining and wining.

In these lines, written long before the Somaza regime was overthrown in Nicaragua, Ernesto Cardenal expressed his expectation of revolution. Poet, priest, and deeply committed to freedom and justice, he was one of the clerics, who, when the dictatorship was still in power, joined the Sandinist National Liberation Front in order to bring its victory nearer. Ernesto Cardenal, whose work is known throughout Latin America and in the world at large, is now Minister of Culture in the people's government of Nicaragua. In that capacity he visited Czechoslovakia, where he gave the following interview to the *WMR*.

You grew up in the family of a wealthy businessman, attended a Catholic college for children of privileged people, and received your education abroad; in short, you had every opportunity to live a life of ease and security. But soon after you returned home in 1949 upon your graduation from Columbia University, USA, you joined in the rising against Somoza. What made you an opponent of the dictatorship?

I CANNOT be listed among the leaders of the struggle of those years. But even as a youth I had an aversion to the Somoza dictatorship and joined in a rising to bring down the founder of that bloodthirsty dynasty. I had always loathed tyrannies, given much thought to socio-political problems, and commiserated with the lot of the Nicaraguan people. Being a poet by nature, I broke with the business interests of my family, became a rebel and later took a revolutionary stand and joined the Sandinist Front.

You were ordained a Roman Catholic priest more than twenty years ago. How do you reconcile the profession of religion with participation in an armed struggle?

Revolutionary violence does not clash with the postulates of the Christian teaching, which has always stood by the right of peoples and individuals to defend themselves with arms in hand. It is quite normal to use violence to win freedom. Thomas Aquinas once said that a soldier fighting for a righteous cause could be likened to a saint.

What do you, as a leading proponent of the theology of liberation, think of the possibilities for cooperation between Christians and Marxists? As Che Guevara put it, when believers in Latin America join the revolution it will be invincible.

In Nicaragua this is more than simple cooperation. There is an unbreakable alliance between us. Some of the Sandinists are both Christians and Marxists. We hold that we are facing the same problems. Evangelism and revolution have one and the same aim — that of creating a just and immaculate society here, on earth.

From the Cardenal biography. Ernesto Cardenal embraced his present political views when he was heading an independent Christian commune he had set up in 1965 on an island of the Salentiname archipelago in the southern part of Lake Nicaragua. Initially, he concentrated mostly on the religious education and creative development of the commune members. In the commune he founded a school for up and coming painters and poets. He described himself at the time as a Christian Communist and his ideals as collective work and creativity. However, the spreading people's struggle against the Somoza tyranny radicalised the members of the commune. "At first we spoke of a non-violent revolution," Cardenal wrote later. "But very soon we saw that this was not possible in Nicaragua. Every true revolutionary prefers non-violence to violence, but the choice is not his to make."

Cardenal's view of the Church as an ally of the exploited masses took final shape on Salentiname. "There is a Church that is on the side of oppressors, and a Church that sides with the oppressed; one Church for the rich and the other for the poor," he said in one of his interviews. "As a Christian, I consider the people's Church as the true Church, and that the Church supporting exploiters has betrayed the Gospel."

The commune was laid waste by Somoza troops in 1977. Ernesto Cardenal and other members of the commune joined the Sandinists. To quote the poet, "The hand that wrote songs of love now caressed the breech of a gun."

You have been writing for 40 years. During the years of struggle against the dictatorship your poems were often circulated in leaflets and declaimed at rallies. In your opinion, what sort of literature brings the most benefit to the revolution?

Any real art contributes to the cause of revolution regardless of the subject it deals with. A work may raise serious social and political problems while being artistically weak; in that case it can do little for the revolution. But real art, even if it is not linked directly to politics, can cause an upheaval in art and powerfully influence people. As for myself personally, I have always had a leaning for socio-political subjects. I find their study very gratifying. However, one should write on these subjects only when one really feels there is a need for them. Every artist should devote himself to what he regards as the closest to his heart.

How do you combine your duties as Minister and priest with poetry? Would you permit a glimpse into your creative laboratory?

My official duties leave me with very little time for art. But I see the performance of these duties as serving the people. It is just as important to spread culture as it is to give people food. Christ said that he came to the world to serve, not to be served, and he exhorted his disciples to do the same. As you know, the word 'minister' has two meanings: a priest and a member of government. For me this is profoundly symbolic. I believe that in serving the people as a minister of the revolutionary government I am doing my duty as a priest.

As regards the way I work on poems: I sit down at a typewriter having in advance prepared many notes and figures of speech, and I begin painstakingly, like an artisan, picking out what I need and throwing out everything that is irrelevant. The character of my poetry is basically political and documentary. Therefore, in order to write I have to read newspapers, journals, and articles on economic, social, and political problems. Anybody reading my poems will see that they were preceded by extensive research.

From the Poems of Ernesto Cardenal

. . . If we take human history as measuring 24 hours,
We shall find:
Private property, classes, and society's division into rich and poor
Span only the last ten minutes.
INJUSTICE is to be seen in the last ten minutes . . .
Humanity's subconciousness constitutes a colossal seam of communism

. . . There had once been practically no weapons (weapons of war, of course).
Wars began after the great inventions were made (agriculture, pottery, weaving, sailing, baking) and in no way helped to increase the human race.
Every invasion destroyed what was created, demolished what was built.
Wars only reversed humanity's development.
Superstition exploited science.
Kings and priests lived off artisans and peasants, conceiving the myth of the divine origin of power (read: dictatorship).
So this is the distance
between the classless society of the past
and the classless society of the future
which the world has to travel.
"What do we need weapons for?", Fidel said at a mass rally in Santiago de Cuba (in the year 1960 after the birth of Christ).
Indeed, what do we need them for? So let us all go together to the funeral of weapons and capital!
(From *A Prophesy About Managua)*

Would you say a few words about cultural development in Nicaragua today? What is the revolutionary government doing in that direction? What is the role of cultural workers in the defence of the nation's freedom and independence?

Under Somoza Nicaragua did not even have a Ministry of Culture. One of our first acts was, therefore, to set up such a ministry, which came into being together with the revolutionary government. This gave us the organisational basis for promoting painting, music, and literature.

Currently, the Nicaraguan revolution is democratising culture, once the prerogative of the élite, by bringing it to the masses. Formerly, our people could not use the achievements of culture, one of the reasons being that more than half of the urban population was totally illiterate, while the illiteracy rate in rural communities was as high as 95 per cent. Within only five months the government was able to start a nationwide campaign to wipe out illiteracy. We were then able to go further, to begin setting up libraries, museums, and houses of culture.

After the revolution in Nicaragua there was a resurgence of various forms of culture. People are being increasingly attracted by everything that is national, distinctive — folklore, handicrafts, and folk art, all of which were on the verge of disappearing.

There has been a blossoming of poetry. Our people have long and rich literary traditions. This is probably due to the character of the Nicaraguan people. The appearance of Ruben Dario[1] was not an accidental phenomenon. However, it was hard for poetry to reach the ordinary people. Those who sustained literary traditions were usually members of the élite. But good modern verse is now written by workers, peasants, and soldiers of the people's militia. This was made possible by the revolution.

The flowering of Nicaraguan poetry is also due to the fact that there has never been a break in the continuity between the different generations of writers. Competent, veteran writers have always given a hand to newcomers to the profession, and the latter have always sought to learn from them.

The revolution is, it may be said, the biggest gain in the nation's history and the highest expression of Nicaraguan culture. Eminent personalities of our literature and poetry have always stirred the people's self-awareness. A new solidarity, a new type of relations between people is now surfacing in Nicaragua. Those who can read and write voluntarily teach those who cannot. The ongoing health campaign is being conducted not only by doctors and other medical personnel: all of our people are involved in it. People are working voluntarily in production. The country is being defended not only by its armed forces but by the people themselves: workers, peasants, and soldiers constitute a single host.

Cultural workers are likewise contributing to the country's defence. Some are fighting at the front-lines, where a number have fallen for the cause of the revolution. Others go to the scenes of hostilities to support the troops with their music, painting, books, and theatrical performances.

A campaign of solidarity with Nicaragua has spread throughout the world. What is your assessment of its significance for your people's struggle?

Serious danger threatens Nicaragua today. The man in the White House is capable of anything. But we will fight for our revolution to the end. The support of other peoples is of the greatest value to us.

A vivid manifestation of solidarity is the aid, including cultural aid, from socialist countries. Here in Prague I want to say how much I appreciate the Czechoslovak government's intention to provide the Sandinist Association of Cultural Workers with materials and equipment for its work, and make a gift of musical instruments to our chamber orchestra. Stronger links are being built between the Nicaraguan Film Institute and the Czechoslovak State Institute of Cinematography and between the writers' unions of the two countries. We attach considerable importance to the exchanges of specialists and exhibitions and to cooperation between art schools.

Revolutionary Nicaragua has support and sympathy everywhere in the world. I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who are showing solidarity with the peoples fighting for freedom or defending the freedom they have won.

[1] Ruben Dario (1867-1916) was an outstanding lyric poet and reformer of poetry, who strongly influenced Nicaraguan and all Latin American literature. — *Ed.*

Current Processes: Analysis, Conclusions, Forecasts

WMR has repeatedly published articles presented by members of the Institute for Marxist Studies (IMSF) in the FRG.[1] Readers responding to these publications want to know in detail when and how IMSF was set up, how it functions and what are its plans for the future. We have asked **Dr Heinz Jung,** Director of IMSF, to tell us about the work of the body of West German Marxist researchers. The publication below is the first in a series on the centres for Marxist studies in various countries.

When was the IMSF set up and for what purpose?

THE Institute for Marxist Studies in Frankfurt on Main has been operating on its own since 1968, when the democratic and working class movement in the FRG was on a significant upgrade. Suffice it to recall the student action and the famous 'September strikes' in 1969, which ushered in a new stage of the struggle by the working people and their trade unions. The long period of conservative-dominated government was gradually coming to an end. Important changes were in evidence in spiritual, political and ideological life. It might be recalled that the Communist Party of Germany (CPG) was unlawfully banned in 1956, after a long period of repression. The ban, not lifted to this day and outlawing the very idea of Marxism-Leninism, did much to limit the activity of Marxists, especially in research and academic centres, in which few of them were allowed to work up until the 1960s. The new stage was marked by an increased interest in Marxism, especially among young intellectuals. A legal communist party was once again constituted with the formation of the German Communist Party (GCP) in the FRG in 1968. That was the situation when IMSF was set up.

IMSF aims to study the conditions in which the working class of the FRG has to live, work and carry on its struggle; to develop the Marxist theory; and to help expand and consolidate the influence of the Marxist world outlook in the country. It looks to the practical requirements of the trade union and political working class movement and other democratic movements in general, and has close ties with the GCP, a revolutionary Marxist party of the working class. Over the past years, these main lines of research have been established.

— theoretical elaboration of problems in present-day capitalism and the economic processes inherent in it (state-monopoly capitalism and the political system of the FRG, the new developments and the crises);

— scientific and technical progress and its social consequences (the impact of the productive forces revolution on the economy and the society under capitalism, the ecological crisis and its effects, etc.);

— a Marxist analysis of the problems of peace (the arms business and militarism in the FRG, the peace movement, disarmament);

— the reproduction of labour power and the condition of the working class (changes in the structure and conditions of its formation, individual and social consumption, incomes, living conditions, poverty, urban and community problems);

— social movements, trade union struggle (new areas, trade union tasks, new social movements, alternative conceptions, etc.);

— way of life and consciousness of the working class, notably young workers (shaping of a class consciousness, of wants and values, leisure, cultural development); and

— women's problems (working and living conditions, theoretical and practical aspects of their oppressed conditions, women's movement and emancipation).

We keep a close watch on the strike movement, and the struggle by the working people and their trade unions over the terms of wage agreements. IMSF has pertinent records and a unique archive. One could say that our theoretical analysis is focused on the current changes under way within FRG imperialism. That naturally includes polemics with modern bourgeois 'critics of Marx' and with those who have trumpeted the arrival of an imaginary 'crisis in Marxism'. That is the kind of practice-oriented analysis of our day that should, we believe, demonstrate the viability of Marxism.

In accordance with its potentialities, IMSF has been making a contribution to the study of the life and theory of Marx and Engels and has disseminated the results of Marxist studies by other research centres. Just this spring, a Centre for Marxist Peace Studies was set up under IMSF to promote more active participation by the working class movement in the struggle for peace.

We have a small research staff, whose efforts are concentrated in definite areas, so that we have to invite scientists, journalists and students inclining to Marxism or working in the light of it to cooperate with us. That is why much of our research is done on a cooperative basis, by working groups, and in the form of gratuitous participation in the projects.

What are the main results of IMSF activity?

Since its establishment, IMSF has prepared and issued over 200 independent works, apart from articles in journals; it has arranged many scientific seminars, colloquia, and conferences, including some with the participation of Marxist scholars from capitalist and socialist countries.

Our own publishing house has printed monographs, booklets, information releases, study aids, etc. Our annual *Marxistische Studien* (Marxist Studies) is noteworthy. Since 1985, it has appeared twice a year, and it gives a full picture of the activity of IMSF and the FRG Marxist scholars contributing to it. Scientific and popular science literature on the main themes, aids on trade union and political work in the communities are also issued by publishers closely related with us: Marxistische Blatter-Verlag (Frankfurt on Main), Nachrichten-Verlag (Frankfurt on Main), and Pahl-Rugenstein-Verlag (Cologne).

Two major works are well known outside the country: the three-volume study *The Class and Social Structure of the FRG. 1950-1970,* and the two-part monograph *The State Within the System of State-Monopoly Capitalism of the FRG,* which was issued in the early 1980s.

In our work we rely mainly on official statistics, those of the Federal Bank and major bourgeois economics institutes, and also make use of critically analysed scientific works issued in the FRG and abroad. We collect material and documents, take polls to study social movements, strikes, changes in the consciousness of the working class, etc.

IMSF activity is a part of the overall internationalist work in the study of capitalism and imperialism with the Marxist approach. That is why we have close contacts with many Marxist study centres in the capitalist and socialist countries, including the Institute of World Economics and International Relations in the USSR, and the Institute of International Politics and Economics in the GDR, with which we arrange joint international symposia.

What are the main lines of your current research and why?

The FRG is going through a crucial period in virtually every sphere of social life, from economics to politics. Our efforts are aimed to comprehend the ongoing processes, an important task of current research. What does that involve?

Since the mid-1970s and especially since the early 1980s, crisis processes in the capitalist system have been mounting. FRG capitalism has moved into a long phase of stagnation that goes beyond the usual cycles. However, it has coincided with the modernisation and rationalisation of production, an extremely dynamic process revolutionising the productive forces. Scientific and technical progress is having a profound effect on the economy and the society as a whole. There is, in particular, most intense reproduction of capital and exploitation of labour power, processes which are connected with the spreading internationalisation of economic life, the growing expansionist and aggressive urges of the monopolies, rivalry between the imperialist centres, plunder of the Third World countries and, finally, militarisation of the economy.

The development of capitalism now tends to increase the economic and social pressures on the working class. This is expressed in the massive, multi-million unemployment in the West, the redistribution of wealth to the big monopolies, the decline in real wages, the anti-labour legislation, and the attacks on trade union rights. Capital has created new areas of more intense exploitation and use of wage labour without trade union protection. New technology tends to change the structure of employment and brings 'flexible' working hours. There is a threat of fragmentation and divisions among various groups of wage workers, and all of that is now having an impact on the prerequisites for the formation of the working class. The period of young people's schooling and occupational training has markedly increased. There have also been changes in the use of leisure time, and an erosion of the traditional class milieus in the residential areas. That tends to change the conditions for shaping the class mentality, the

class consciousness and attitudes to social and political phenomena and various movements and organisations.

That has produced new social contradictions, new areas of conflict and new conditions for the class struggle, which the Marxist forces and the working class movement have to reckon with. This relates primarily, of course, to the problems of peace and disarmament, on which mankind's survival depends. But there are also issues arising from the distorted development of the productive forces under capitalism, the deterioration of the environment and ecological problems, mounting conflicts in the whole sphere of reproduction, and also relations between the sexes. The trade unions are faced with the task of finding an effective response to the structural changes in the working class with an eye to the growing numbers of salaried employees and technical intellectuals, who have yet to be adequately unionised.

IMSF studies also deal with these problems of our day. Issues of *Marxist Studies* have dealt with the following topics: new social movements (1982), structural changes in the working class in the 1980s (1983), conditions for the formation of an industrial working class and its struggle (1984). Against the background of these changes, we have analysed the FRG's development prospects until the year 2000 in the economic, social and political spheres, and have examined the left-wing forces' alternative concepts and approaches, possible growth and greater strength (1985).

The 1986 yearbook deals with the further development of state-monopoly capitalism in the 1980s, and the prospects for conducting a progressive anti-crisis policy. The latter is an exceptionally important political issue, because it implies the possibility of replacing the conservative methods of administration within the system of state-monopoly capitalism. How probable is another policy with greater emphasis on state intervention? What are its intrinsic contradictions? We intend to show the approaches and the forces which could help to bring about a further swing towards democratic and social progress and a break with the logic of capitalist development. This issue of the yearbook was prepared with the participation of scholars from the United States, Great Britain, France and Italy. We have issued monographs on the following topics: changes in the way of life of the working class, the condition of women in the FRG, the strike movement for shorter working time (35-hour working week), the death of forests and environmental policy, the jobs ban, studies on the problems of peace in the FRG, and so on.

To whom are the works of the IMSF addressed in the FRG? What kind of response have they had?

IMSF works are addressed mainly to scholars of institutions of higher learning and research centres, experts and activists in the working class, trade union and so-called alternative movements. These are the trade union leaders, journalists, teachers, faculty members and students of various schools and institutes, etc., who are concerned with these topics. The interest in our works is evidenced by the broad response they receive and by the number of people participating in our conferences and

seminars. Along with the setting up of working groups and 'expert rounds' with the participation of 20–30 persons, we regularly organise large conferences, such as 'The Intelligentsia, Intellectuals and the Working Class Movement in Western Europe', which was held in 1985 and was attended by over 1,000 persons.

Together with organisations and groups of the anti–imperialist solidarity movement in the FRG, we held a scientific conference on 'The Debt and the Exploitation of the Third World and the Role of the FRG' in Cologne in the summer of 1986. It was attended by specialists from various developing countries. There was also the international symposium 'Scientific and Technical Progress and the Working Class in the Industrialised Capitalist Countries (1980s)', which was arranged jointly with *WMR* in Frankfurt on Main in the spring of 1986.

We strive to involve in our measures and subsequent publications people from the widest possible spectrum of left political forces, trade unions, democratic and alternative movements, and also of various theoretical groups and staff members of journals taking a positive attitude to Marxism. We maintain constant ties with organisations and institutions of the Marxist working class movement, such as the GCP, the Spartakus Marxist Union of Students, and the Union of German Socialist Working Youth, among others.

As in the past, it is no simple matter to arrange Marxist research and disseminate Marxist theory in our country. It has no official support. Indeed, the possibilities for Marxist activity are even now considerably curbed by anti-communism and anti-Marxism cultivated in vast areas of science, the long years of anti-constitutional jobs ban practices against Communists in state services, and concessions to pressures at many institutes and establishments. All that also has an effect in the social democratic and trade union movements.

What are your plans for the future?

The social battles and ideological debates are increasingly focused on the problems in the capitalist use of scientific and technical progress. That is why we intend to lay emphasis on studying a wide range of topics bearing on the impact of this process on working conditions and the condition of the working class, such as the elaboration of an alternative conception for using scientific and technical progress for the benefit of the working people, an analysis of the situation in the country since the latest Bundestag elections, the possibility of stronger resistance to the conservative shift to the right, examination of the new SDPG programme, and cultural policy trends, among others.

We believe that it is most important and pressing to extend Marxist research into the problems of peace, which should be promoted by the new centre. We intend to prepare new works examining the economics of armaments and the military-industrial complex, militarism, the potentialities and conditions for disarmament, and the economic basis for peaceful coexistence and the policy of détente.

[1] See *WMR*, No. 1, 1984; No. 7, 1986, and No. 1, 1987.

FORTHCOMING WORLD WOMEN'S CONGRESS

Women's struggle for their rights, for changes in social life, and for a world without wars and violence has a long history. The Great October Socialist Revolution gave a mighty impetus to their social activity. Over the past seven decades, the women's movement has developed into a major force; its gains, experience, old and new problems and priorities are soon to be discussed at a World Women's Congress scheduled by the Women's International Democratic Federation to be held in Moscow from June 23 to 27.

There are still many problems calling for constant attention in the work of the Communists in the women's movement. How are they to develop cooperation with its organisations in the present, greatly changed situation? How are they to draw working women into party ranks and mobilise them for the struggle for peace and social progress? Those are the questions facing many parties working in very different conditions. On the eve of the Moscow World Women's Congress we present two articles dealing with these problems.

Starting From Oneself

Francisco Gamboa — CC Political Commission and Secretariat member, People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica

THE social status of women has altered, but their emancipation is far from complete. Most of them continue to suffer from inequality, unemployment and hard living conditions in many capitalist countries. The discrimination, expressed above all in economic inequality, has turned women into one of the main victims of capitalism; their suffering is two-fold, they are exploited as workers in production, and simply as the 'weaker' sex. In addition, women's social status is demeaned by the traditionally privileged status of men.

Costa Rica is a country in which most of the problems arising from discrimination against women appear to have been solved. Divorce and civil marriage were instituted over a century ago, and the existing family law is highly progressive. Still, the legacy of the age-old inequality of women lives on in customs and traditions, public morality and religion, the relations of production, family ties, and so on. Hence the need for more active participation by women in the joint efforts of the working masses for radical social change. *That being the situation, we Communists are faced with new and challenging tasks.*

Women's urge for equality is one of the most pronounced features of our time. It is realised in the struggle to do away with a social order under

which man is oppressed by man, and eventually to build a classless society, and the fundamental idea here is that expressed by Lenin at the First All-Russia Congress of Working Women in 1918, when he said: "There can be no socialist revolution unless very many working women take a big part in it."[1]

But before such a revolution takes place, it is possible in varying degrees to modify features of the capitalist system that is the epitome of everything indicative of the inferior status of women. But even after the victory of the revolution the Communists need to focus their attention on the problem.

That is why the People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica has carried on active work among women and fought for their equality in the more than 55 years since its formation. Women make up over 50 per cent of the country's population, and 26 per cent of its labour force. Indeed, there is evidence of a fairly rapid growth of that percentage. Thirty-six years ago, the Union of Costa Rican Women, a mass organisation, was set up with the Communists' active participation, and a monthly newspaper is being published. That has done much to educate, rally and rouse women to action. They have been more broadly involved in the mass working class movement, as can be seen from women's heroic participation in the frequent strikes staged on the country's banana plantations.

Women have always been prominent in our party. Over the past three decades, they have made up from 19 to 23 per cent of the membership. Among those who have been most prominent in the revolutionary struggle is Carmen Lyra, the most outstanding woman in our national literature. Until her death in exile, she was a member of the party leadership. Luisa Gonzalez, an indomitable fighter who is now over 80 years old, is still at her fighting post, enjoying the respect and affection of our entire people. Much party work was done among working women by Yamitleth Lopez, a working girl, who died in defending the Nicaraguan Revolution.

However, at one stage we had to note with alarm the existence of a set of problems in this sphere, which in essence come down to the following:

the Union of Costa Rican Women, whom the party has helped much, was developing less than satisfactorily;

the growth of the percentage of women among party members was slow, and women took a very limited part in political work on the plea of household chores, the negative attitude of husbands to such work, and in some cases even opposition on the part of children;

the number of women in leading posts at various levels of the party structure and in the mass movements did not correspond to the growing role of women in Costa Rica's economic and public life.

We also failed to get young women and girls to take an interest in political work. Very often they simply refused to do it. Young women were willing to take part in the trade union movement, in the activity of urban and rural communities, but not in the struggle for women's equality, although they recognised that it was necessary.

Feminist organisations and women's groups set up by bourgeois parties managed to get many ordinary working women into their ranks. These organisations take an opportunist and reformist stand, and often overtly reactionary and pro-imperialist attitudes. Besides, statistical data on

women's political activity, electoral campaigns in particular, testified to their preference for conservative alternatives.

In the early 1980s, the People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica decided to analyse every aspect of the situation, and the results showed that it had launched major practical initiatives in its work with the women's masses. But the results also revealed one big flaw: neither in the formation of the women's union, nor in the subsequent period did we seriously clarify the theoretical principles of this complicated and specific activity. Our principles and approaches to it had remained unaltered over many years and had ceased to be in accord with Costa Rica's social reality.

Guided by the well-known truth that *nothing is more practical than a good theory,* the party turned to the works of the Marxist-Leninist classics, critically assessed its experience of work among women, and made an in-depth study of the development of the women's movement not only in our country, but, as far as it could, throughout the Latin American continent. Its conclusions and generalisations may be of some interest. Here are some of them.

When we Communists declare that we stand for peace and are prepared to lay down our lives in defence of the interests of the working class, we are, as a rule, believed even by our enemies. But there is a different response when we say that we work for the full equality of women. Indeed, women, our party comrades and relatives, often doubt the sincerity of men who are party members. These doubts, we must honestly admit, are not altogether groundless. Women often witness the failure of party members to match word and deed, even in their personal life. Participants in the feminist movement have criticised us for taking the old, patriarchal approach in our daily relations with our wives and daughters.

The party believes that is fair criticism. We do not act in a vacuum, and survivals of the past are still to be found in our own minds. It is hard to get rid of past prejudices even for Communists who have done so much for the emancipation of women. But it has to be done, and *if there is to be a valid solution for the women's problem, one has to start with oneself.*

Some feminist organisations lay emphasis on the man-woman relationship and set it up as an absolute. It is hard to accept such an approach to the problem, for that tends to reduce it to the conflict between the sexes, with all the various opportunistic distortions of views and conclusions. The abstract nature of this approach is obvious, because it fails to come to grips with the whole complex of the intricate realities of social life, notably the key matter of the class struggle.

But in opposing this feminist line, we have lost sight, I believe, of the 'kernel' of their approach. The Communists tended to go to the other extreme in their work with women, and have often underestimated the significance of the persisting privileges of men. In our relations with women's organisations, we should see to it that the party approach is thoroughly considered, and has a solid and well thought-out political basis. There is also a need to bring to light and accept all that is positive or common in their views and approaches. *What is possibly most dangerous for the Communists is to fail to see the elements of truth in what their opponents say.*

It is perfectly obvious that there do exist potentialities for joint action by various forces for peace, democracy and social progress in many countries, including Costa Rica. The important thing is to know how to make use of them. Our party has some experience in such activity, especially when it comes to anti-war action.

It is easy to lose trust and relations of cooperation. That is always a direct result of ham-fisted work and an incorrect line with respect to women both within the party and elsewhere, something that often sets off a chain reaction. Practice shows that once they cease to trust the Communists on the women's question they — and others as well — may cast doubt on other aspects of party activity. What is more, criticism of the party develops into attacks on existing socialism (the same charges are made against it, as against us), and rejection of the only possible way towards the full and final emancipation of women, the way of revolutionary class struggle. That is the political reality which we cannot afford to ignore.

righting the situation. The party's 15th Congress in 1984 voiced grave concern over the state of cooperation with the country's women, and passed a special resolution which says, in part: "Serious and painstaking ideological work needs to be started in the party to explain the significance of the struggle for the full equality of women as a component part of the overall struggle for socialism. The problem of discrimination against women must be seen both as a historical phenomenon and as a phenomenon of the present day, so that we, Communists, should more clearly see our duty of acting against any signs of such discrimination even in our own ranks. We must help women to overcome all the obstacles to their participation in social life which are largely connected with their status in the society and the family."[2]

The resolution summed up the main results and outlined the main goals in the party's further efforts. It provided the guidelines for all the Communists in thought and action and also the basis for wider and more productive party work among women in our country.

The results were quick to tell. We gradually came to comprehend more clearly the complex, delicate and multifaceted relations with women in general, and with women party members to an equal extent, and to be more consistent in backing up our declarations with deeds. It is not surprising that our party's authority and influence among masses of women and in the country generally have gradually begun to grow.

The efforts to elaborate and implement a clearer and more consistent line helped us to develop contacts with women's organisations, among them feminist ones, of which there are many in the country, including bourgeois party organisations and the relevant state institutions. With our assistance, the Union of Women has succeeded in re-organising and reviving its work. The Union has now got down to all-round educational activity, and has strengthened its links with the trade unions. Its regional committees have begun to act successfully, and have helped women's organisations to take mass joint political action.

Here is an example. The well-known feminist organisation, the

American League of Women for Peace and Freedom (which has a branch in Costa Rica) held a continental anti-war conference in the country in 1985. Members of the League, with the participation of women Communists, had a significant role in preparing it. The conference requested Mikhail Gorbachov and Ronald Reagan to state their views on the problems of war and peace, and it soon received a reply from the Soviet leader. The conference was a great event.

We can now say that the Union of Costa Rican Women has overcome the difficulties of the earlier period and has become the country's most authoritative women's organisation. The Second National Congress of the Union was held in July 1986 in one of the finest theatres of the capital under this slogan: 'Peace — Justice — Equality', and was attended by 500 representatives from 35 women's associations. It showed that the women's movement in Costa Rica is developing in the right direction. Delegates emphasised that "women's struggle in defence of their rights and against discrimination is closely bound up with our people's general struggle to do away with hunger, poverty, slums, unemployment and injustice".[3]

A more favourable atmosphere has been created in the party for work among women, whose participation in governing party bodies at every level has begun to grow. Much more attention is now being given to women Communists. The very fact that the women's question was discussed in a spirit of frankness and self-criticism did much to improve the party atmosphere as a whole.

Improvement of the conditions in which women now work in the party's ranks helps to advance the Communists' struggle for their equality. Only a definitive settlement of the women's question will help the 'better half' of mankind to take a fitting place in the common ranks of the fighters for democracy and the people's well-being, for national independence, peace and socialism, and to translate the communist ideals into practice.

[1] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 180.
[2] *Documentos del XV Congreso del Partido Vanguardia Popular. 14-17 de septiembre de 1984*, p. 57.
[3] *Memoria. II Congreso Nacional de la Mujer Costarricense "Emilia Prieto Turgores". 11-13 de julio de 1986*, p. 9.

Working Together For Equality And For The Future

Nancy McDonald — Central Executive Committee member, Communist Party of Canada

THE social activity of women in contemporary society spans all streams of struggle in Canada. Women are actively involved in the constantly growing peace and trade union movements, for Canadian independence, solidarity, environmental and cultural struggles, active in defence of the family farm, education and anti-racist movements, the Native peoples, immigrant and national organizations. In addition, women play an important part in political parties, coalitions and one issue groups at the community, provincial and country-wide level.

The new situation in Canada, brought about by the policies of the pro-U.S. neo-conservative Mulroney government, has sharpened and expanded the struggle for women's rights, resulting in an upsurge of actions and fightback. The women's movement has sought broader cooperation with the peace and trade union movements in extra-parliamentary activity, in alliances and coalitions. The Canadian government policy of free trade between Canada and the United States has also stimulated women into seeking allies against government policy, and is reflected in the formation of the 'Coalition Against Free Trade'. The prospects are being seen by women as threatening increased unemployment in the manufacturing and service industries where women constitute the majority of workers, and which would be particularly vulnerable under such an agreement.

Aside from many class and democratic organizations, the Canadian women's movement includes self-help groups, charitable associations and loosely structured action collectives with no clearly defined programs.

The *National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC)* is presently recognized as the most influential expression of the movement. It is an umbrella organization which currently unites more than 500 member groups, including the women's committees of all political parties, of the Canadian Labour Congress and of CLC provincial federations of labour, together with professional, church, ethnic, rural and autonomous women's groups. NAC stands for the preservation of life on this planet and the removal of the nuclear threat; it demands that more women be elected and appointed to public posts and calls for pay equity, equal employment opportunity for women, adequate counselling and training, guaranteed medical care and pensions, maternity and paternity leave, equal rights for Native and immigrant women, etc.

NAC is heterogeneous in the true sense of the word and is an interesting phenomenon peculiar to Canada, due to the political forces in it. It is the most powerful lobby on behalf of more than three million women. The

Nancy McDonald held leading posts in the trade union movement. She is currently coordinator of the CPC CEC programmes for women, and member of the leadership of the Congress of Canadian Women.

Communist Party participates actively in NAC. Some of the party's economic policies, particularly its advanced positions for preventing a nuclear war and ending the arms race, have been adopted by NAC and are now its policy.

Among the women's organizations of both nations of the country, the *Congress of Canadian Women (CCW)* and *La Ligue des Femmes du Quebec* hold the most advanced and consistent programme. In addition to priorities held in common with NAC, their specific priorities focus on the economic and social status of working women. The CCW Bill of Rights for Women stresses the demands for women's economic security. We believe that such demands enhance the interconnection of women's interests and the fight for their rights with the overall fight against monopoly, for the unity of the working class movement, for democracy and peace. The CCW and La Ligues des Femmes conduct vigorous campaigns of international solidarity and contribute to the activities of the Women's International Democratic Federation in the name of peace, security, independence, national liberation, the well-being of children and women's social and economic equality.

The Communist Party of Canada has been and will always be a true and honest champion of women's rights, seeing their fight for equality as part of the class struggle. The party advocates and fights for a basic change of direction for Canada, from one of subordination to the U.S. multinationals to one of economic development and independence through the Canadianization of the economy, which includes nationalization of Canada's natural resources, banks and financial institutions. This platform envisages full employment with verifiable affirmative action programmes for women, increased social assistance programmes funded by taxes on monopoly and cuts in military spending, and effective implementation of the UN Declaration on Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination and Oppression of Women. The Communists believe that fundamental precepts along these lines must be entrenched in Canada's Constitution to ensure genuine equality of the sexes.

The CPC's comprehensive and specific demands are in harmony with the demands of the progressive and democratic side of the women's movement. Let us examine how the Communists cooperate with this movement as a whole.

We are aware that many women's organizations focus on single issues such as day care, abortion or the fight against rape and against the spread of pornography. These objectives are important both by themselves and as part of the overall democratic demands aimed at radically changing social security, health care and education. This is why the Communists support these demands and reflect them in the party's policy on the problems of women, formulating them in profound interconnection with other issues.

Specifically, we highlight the social aspect of every such proposal — for example, explaining why to many, abortion is an economic necessity, while the neo-conservative, clericalist forces try to present it as something abstractly humanitarian and hold forth hypocritically on the 'death of innocents.' The Communist Party holds that whether to have a child or not is a matter for the woman to decide, her right. In this connection the party

advocates a range of steps (removal of the ban on abortion from the criminal code, coast-to-coast abortion facilities fully covered by government medical insurance, an expanded network of family planning clinics, etc.). To guarantee the right to happy motherhood, and taking into account the growing number of unmarried mothers, we also propose a series of steps which include an integral system of day care and child rearing.

Our party not only states that the protest of Canadian women against the course of the ruling cabinet is spreading to ever newer areas but also vigorously supports the groups, associations and forces that raise their voice against various aspects of the government's socio-economic policy.

It is no accident that we demand the right of women to be employed in economic branches traditionally closed to them: out of the total of more than 150 occupations, Canadian women are employed only in 15, although there has been a significant and continuing exodus of women from the home into the labour force.[1] But their influx increasingly encounters growing unemployment and the adverse effects of the scientific and technological revolution on jobs. As a result, there have been militant strikes in those sectors where women are concentrated — among nurses, teachers, bank clerks and clothing and textile workers. The 1984 drive for unionization and equality at Eaton's, a department store chain, was supported by the Communists and recognised by the labour movement and by many women's organizations as an historic battle. It was a clear example of labour and the women's movement realizing their common interests and uniting in action.

Many trade unions have begun to establish women's committees and organize conferences on issues of particular importance to working women. Women have been promoted into leadership positions throughout the trade union movement, and Shirley Carr is now President of the Canadian Labour Congress, the first such case in the capitalist world. Some unions have set up coalitions with women's organizations to better promote their demands.

The influx of Canadian women into the labour force and their growing militancy lead to radical changes in the women's movement. Economic and social issues are more and more coming to the forefront of its activities. *This new stage of cooperation indicates that working women are becoming an active component of the working class in its struggle against monopoly.*

The celebration of March 8 as International Women's Day is another major achievement of such cooperation. Broad coalitions were formed to organize rallies, marches and concerts and to publish leaflets. This year Communists marched with a 7,000-strong demonstration in Toronto. Men and women carried posters demanding government action to provide Canadian women with equal access to employment and housing, respect of their dignity, and the Native people's — Indians' and Eskimos' — right to self-determination. 'Linking Racism and Sexism Together' was the main theme of the march: these two phenomena are increasingly seen not as inherent in human nature but as elements of the political and economic system used to divide human beings and to secure their exploitation by capital.

Most women's organizations are united in their demands for peace. This is the sphere in which their objectives coincide with the Communists' platform — the struggle against the nuclear threat and Star Wars, against involvement in SDI, for a nuclear-free and independent Canada, for détente and against any integration in Reagan's policies.

Hence the support both the Communist Party and the women's movement render to the coalitions against 'free trade' with the United States that are springing up across the country. Hence also our active participation, together with Organized Working Women and other women's associations, in the April demonstration in Ottawa against Ronald Reagan's visit to Canada. Responding to the call of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the women of Toronto demonstrated for sovereignty in trade, environmental protection, and solidarity with the peoples of Central America and South Africa.

We welcome sincerely the meetings sponsored by Canadian feminist and other organizations between U.S. and Soviet women scholars and researchers and Canadian women to discuss peaceful uses of outer space. We are proud that five conferences of solidarity with Latin American women have already taken place.

Many Canadian women are active in the Communist Party; they accounted for one-third of the delegates at its 26th Congress in 1985.

The tasks our party is facing include not only ensuring an influx of Canadian women into its ranks but also more vigorous participation of Communists in actions organized by the women's movement, cooperation with it and explanation of CPC positions. Today we see our central task in uniting the working class and democratic forces into a People's Majority outside parliament against the neo-conservative majority inside. Our party works day in and day out for such an alliance through its mass and independent actions in all movements and struggles of the working class and working people. This concept stands at the very heart of our mass policy, helping to strengthen and unite the women's movement and to link it more closely to the working class. Guided by Marxist theory and by the practice of the socialist countries in solving the 'women's question,' the Communists argue that *the fight for women's full participation in society on equal terms with men is essentially a social, class question.* It can only be fully resolved under socialism which guarantees the securing of democratic rights for women and all working people.

Ideological questions tolerate no scholasticism, and that applies especially to the women's movement — perhaps, more than to any other. When analyzing the diversity of ideas and trends within it, Canada's Communists bear in mind not only the main features of capitalist society, but also the differentiation in the class interests of women, who do not form an independent class but are a component of each class in Canada. This brings to the fore the nature and trends in the women's movement in general, namely its two sides — the working class and democratic side, and the bourgeois side. Despite their outward similarities in the striving for emancipation, the aims of women who represent antagonistic classes cannot be identical. This should not be taken to mean that no basis for cooperation leading to united and parallel actions exists in the movement

as a whole or in its parts. As long as inequality of the sexes exists, so will the need for cooperation to achieve limited objectives favorable to the cause of democratic rights and equality of women.

To us and our partners, the essential thing is to correctly appreciate both the possibilities and the limits of this approach. But differences emerge precisely *in the interpretation of the root cause* of women's inequality, that is, in the ideological struggle within the women's movement as a whole. We keep stressing that *the roots of women's discrimination and inequality are the same as those behind the exploitation and oppression of the working people.* This being the case, it is necessary for the working class and its organizations to fight against any and all tendencies to regard the women's question as a 'thing in itself,' thus separating the specific nature of the women's movement from the movement of all working people, from the general democratic, economic and political struggle for social advancement, peace and disarmament.

Through the press and through their work among the masses, the Communists explain that the struggle to liberate women from discrimination and exploitation is inseparably linked with the struggle to liberate the whole of society, which greatly depends on the struggle of the working class and its allies for the winning of political power that would open the door toward the building of a socialist Canada.

It is an equally important and complex task to combat all aspects and manifestations of male supremacy and male chauvinism. We see it as our duty to combat any tendency to gloss over or disregard discrimination against women, or to submerge this issue in the general struggle against monopoly. We also combat petty-bourgeois feminist aims and concepts which distort the nature of the movement for equality and reduce it to a struggle between the sexes. To allow such concepts to form the ideological base of the struggle for equality is to hide the face of the main enemy — state-monopoly capitalism — and to weaken the ability of the working class and its allies to wage an effective fight for equality and to win women for the general democratic anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly struggle.
struggle.

The development of the women's movement and the correct policy of the Communist Party on these issues help rally together the country's democratic forces, create a vigorous socio-political climate and influence the shaping of Canada's foreign and domestic policy. The Communists are working around the clock to win the confidence of women and are building a powerful people's alliance in a common struggle for a coalition government which will open the door to the building of socialism in Canada.

[1]The number of working women increased 50 per cent between 1974 and 1984. They now make up more than 40 per cent of the country's workforce, still receiving less than two-thirds of men's pay for equal work.

surveys, letters, and diary

Pages of History

Old But Evergreen Truths

The 140th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist League

COMMUNISTS live, work, think and carry on the struggle in almost every country on all the continents. They belong to nearly 100 communist parties, which differ in size and influence. They speak in different languages, and they have concrete tasks on which their views do not always coincide. But for all the diversity of the conditions of their struggle and strategic and tactical conceptions, the Communists are a multimillion community ranging over the entire globe and working for the common goal.

The cornerstone of this movement was laid in London, where the First and the Second Congress of the Communist League were held 140 years ago under the definitive influence of the scientific theories of Marx and Engels, and where the world's first revolutionary communist party was founded. Exactly half way down the historical period since these events, the Great October Socialist Revolution took place in Russia. It put into practice the ideas of the 1847 trailblazers, and gave them a new concrete content and a powerful impetus.

But it would not be appropriate just to pay glowing tribute to the historical accomplishments of the founders of scientific communism. We have rather to recall their intentions, convictions and hopes in order to draw on them for drive, incentive, confirmation and strength in tackling today's tasks. That is why we publish in *WMR*, for the first time, three important documents from the period in which the international communist movement originated, documents which may be largely unknown to our readers. All three documents relate to the First Congress of the Communist League (June 2-9, 1847) and reflect the principal views of the vanguard of the emergent party of the working class, and also give an idea of its democratic character.

One document consists of extracts from the draft Programme, known as the Draft of the Communist Credo, which was worked out by the First Congress of the Communist League, and which was discovered in 1968. The draft is written in Engels' hand and signed by the Congress Chairman Karl Schapper and its Secretary Wilhelm Wolff. Under a decision of the

Congress it was circulated to all the organisations of the League for discussion.

The second document is A Circular of the First Congress of the Communist League to the League Members. It is presented here in abridged form.

The third is an extract from the one and, regrettably, only issue of the *Kommunistische Zeitschrift* (Communist Journal), which appeared in September 1847 and which the Central Committee had intended to publish as the organ of the League. Its masthead carried for the first time the slogan 'Working Men of All Countries, Unite!', which had been adopted by the Congress.

CC member Karl Schapper was the editor of the journal and he must have written the leading article which we also present in abridged form.

Roland Bauer
SUPG representative on *WMR*

Frederick Engels

DRAFT OF THE COMMUNIST CREDO

Question 1. Are you a Communist?
Answer. Yes.
Question 2. What is the aim of the Communists?
Answer. To organise the society in such a way that every member of it can develop and use all his capabilities and powers in complete freedom and without thereby infringing the basic conditions of this society.
Question 3. How do you wish to achieve this aim?
Answer. By the elimination of private property and its replacement by community of property.
Question 4. On what do you base your community of property?
Answer. Firstly, on the mass of productive forces and means of subsistence resulting from the development of industry, agriculture, trade and colonisation, and on the possibility of their infinite extension due to the machinery, chemical and other resources.

Secondly, on the fact that in the consciousness or feeling of every individual there exist certain irrefutable basic principles which, being the result of the whole of historical development, require no proof.
Question 5. What are such principles?
Answer. For example, every individual strives to be happy. The happiness of the individual is inseparable from the happiness of all, etc.
Question 6. How do you wish to prepare the way for your community of property?
Answer. By enlightening and uniting the proletariat.
Question 7. What is the proletariat?
Answer. The proletariat is that class of the society which lives exclusively by its labour[1] and not on the profit from any kind of capital; that class whose weal and woe, whose life and death, therefore, depend on the alternation of times of good and bad business; in a word, on the fluctuations resulting from competition . . .

Question 14. Let us go back to the sixth question. As you wish to prepare for community of property by the enlightening and uniting of the proletariat, then you reject revolution?

Answer. We are convinced that all conspiracies are not only useless but even harmful.[2] We are also aware that revolutions are not made deliberately or arbitrarily, but that everywhere and at all times they are the necessary consequence of circumstances which are not in any way whatever dependent either on the will or on the leadership of individual parties or of whole classes. But we also see that the development of the proletariat in almost all the countries of the world is forcibly repressed by the possessing classes and that thus a revolution is being forcibly worked for by the opponents of communism. If, in the end the oppressed proletariat is thus driven into a revolution, then we will defend the cause of the proletariat just as well by our deeds as now by our words.

Question 15. Do you intend to replace the existing social order by community of property at one stroke?

Answer. We have no such intention. The development of the masses cannot be ordered by decree. It is determined by the development of the conditions in which these masses live, and therefore proceeds gradually.

Question 16. How do you think the transition from the present situation to community of property is to be effected?

Answer. The first fundamental condition for the introduction of community of property is a political liberation of the proletariat through a democratic constitution . . .[3]

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE IN LONDON TO THE LEAGUE COMMUNITY IN HAMBURG

London, June 24, 1847

We are sending you A Circular of the First Congress of the Communist League to the League Members, the new Rules, and the Draft of the Communist Credo, and request you to reply as soon as possible to the six following questions to enable us to start right away on the necessary preparatory work for organising the Second Congress:

1. Are you satisfied with the work of the Congress, and do you agree with the decisions taken at the Congress?
2. Do you accept the new Rules or reject them?
3. Can you make available to us for the purposes set forth in the Congress Circular the requisite funds for the quarter or half-year and how much can you let us have?
4. Have you already set up a circle, and if you have not, then what is the area in which it is easiest and best organised? (See Article 14 of the Rules.)
5. Do you want us to let your area have issues of the printed organ of the League, which is to be started in August, and how many copies?
6. Are social and communist ideas being spread among the population in your area, by what means, and what is the response?

We furthermore request you to discuss in the most earnest manner the Draft of the Communist Credo, and to let us have, as soon as possible, any additions and amendments you may deem to be desirable to enable us to put them together and present for discussion by the next congress, which is to draw up the final text of the Credo . . .[4]

FROM THE TRIAL ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL *KOMMUNISTISCHE ZEITSCHRIFT*

The task of this journal is to promote the emancipation of the proletariat, and in order to do that as soon as possible, we must call on all the oppressed to unite.

We call our organ *Kommunistische Zeitschrift,* because we are sure that this emancipation can be attained only through a total transformation of the existing property relations, in short, that it can be brought about only in a society based on community of property.

The communist movement is regarded by some in such a distorted light, while it is being slandered and its message so twisted by others that we have to say a few words here about it, because we are its participants. We shall mainly point out here that which does not accord with our views, thereby brushing off in advance some of the slanderous accusations that could be levelled at us.

We are not fanatical adherents of the system, for we know from experience that there is no sense in arguing and racking one's brains about some future system of society in abstraction from the means that could carry us to that society . . . The task of our generation is to find and collect the structural materials necessary for building the new edifice: building it will be the task of coming generations, and we can rest assured that there will be no lack of builders.

At any rate, we do not wish to pull the wool over the people's eyes, we want to tell them the truth, and to draw their attention to the looming storm, so that they can prepare for it. We are not conspirators wishing to start a revolution for slaughtering the kings on an appointed day; but then we are not lambs patiently bearing their cross either . . . We still have to stand our ground in the last and serious battle, and if our party emerges victorious from it, only then will the time possibly come to put our arms aside.

We are not among those Communists who believe that community of property can be introduced in the twinkling of an eye after a victorious struggle. We know that mankind does not make leaps and bounds, but merely advances step by step. We cannot pass from the inharmonious society to a harmonious society one fine day; depending on the circumstances, this will take a more or less protracted transition period. Private property can only be gradually transformed into public property.

We are not among those Communists who would like to abolish the liberty of the individual and to turn the whole world into one great barrack-room, or into one big work-house . . .

We have said what does not accord with our views; our Credo declares

who we are and what we want. It remains for us to say a few more words to proletarians belonging to other political or social parties. We are opposed to the contemporary society, in which we are oppressed and made to exist in poverty; but instead of uniting for this purpose, we are, unfortunately, much too often engaged in fighting each other, to the joy of our oppressors. Instead of getting down to business all together and setting up a democratic state in which each party would be able to attract the majority by means of the oral and printed word, we quarrel over what should or should not happen when we find ourselves victorious. That puts us in mind of the fable about the hunters who fell to fighting over the skin of the bear even before they saw the beast. It is time for us to end our strife and to join hands so as to defend our interests together. But if that is to be done, writers belonging to various parties should stop their bitter squabbles among themselves, in which they hurl the grossest abuse at their opponents. We, for our part, have respect for every man, be he even aristocrat or pietist, if he takes a firm and resolute stand on the views he believes to be right. The only people we do not spare are those who protect nothing but their own interests, using the banner of some political or social party or religion as a cover. It is the duty of every honest man to expose these foul hypocrites and to pillory them as soon as possible. Anyone can stand up for a wrong opinion, but he cannot be scorned so long as he believes it to be right and honestly defends it . . . To him we do not refuse to hold out a hand. Strength lies in unity, and it alone can lead us to our goal.

That is why, proletarians of all countries, unite — openly, wherever the law allows, because we have no fear of publicity — or secretly, where it is prohibited by the arbitrary rule of tyrants.

We declare in conclusion that there will be no space on the pages of our journal for the settling of personal scores, nor for eulogising individuals who do their duty. But we urge the oppressed and persecuted proletarians to turn to us: we shall at once come out in their defence by exposing the oppressors to public opinion, of which even the most inveterate tyrant is terrified.[5]

[1] Before Marx had worked out the theory of surplus value, Marx and Engels used such concepts as the 'value of labour', the 'price of labour' and the 'sale of labour', which, as Engels noted in his 1891 introduction to Marx's *Wage Labour and Capital,* "from the point of view of the later works were unfortunate and even incorrect" (*Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 142). Once he had established that the worker does not sell the capitalist his labour, but his labour power, both began to use the concepts of 'value of labour power', 'price of labour power' and 'sale of labour power'. — *Ed.*

[2] Following the discussion of the draft Programme by the members of the League, in October-November 1847, Engels gave a more precise and clearcut formulation of the problem:

Question. Will it be possible to bring about the abolition of private property by peaceful methods?

Answer. It is to be desired that this could happen. The Communists certainly would be the last to resist it. The Communists know only too well that all conspiracies are not only futile but even harmful (*Collected Works,* Vol. 6, p. 349). — *Ed.*

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works,* Vol. 6, pp. 96-103.

[4] *Der Bund der Kommunisten. Documente und Materialen,* Vol. 1, Berlin, 1983, pp. 488-489.

[5] Ibid., pp. 504-508.

QUALITY GROWTH: THE OBJECTIVE

A Survey of Economic Statistics on CMEA Countries in 1986

THE fraternal countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance have been tackling large-scale strategic tasks in their economic and social development as recently outlined by the congresses of the ruling communist and workers' parties.

Some countries have been implementing the acceleration concept aimed to improve quality in every sphere of social life. *Among its key lines are utmost intensification of production through scientific and technical progress, restructuring of the economic mechanism, perfection of social relations and deepening of economic cooperation.*

Last year, the CMEA countries as a whole took a significant step forward in realising their programmes for economic and social development from 1986 to 1990 and their cooperation programmes. Many of these countries have consistently put through restructuring measures to overcome the negative trends in the economy and raise economic growth rates.

Their national income, the synthetic indicator of economic development, is estimated to have gone up by 4.2 per cent in 1986, as compared with 1985, for the whole group of CMEA countries (the annual average rate from 1981 to 1985 was 3.3 per cent). Industrial output, the basis for national income groowth, went up by 4.7 per cent (as compared with 3.4 per cent). These indicators are much higher than those of the industrialised capitalist countries (see Table 1).

Table 1: Main Economic Growth Rates Compared[1]

	1985 % on 1970	1986 % on 1970
I. National Income		
CMEA countries	196	204
Industrialised capitalist countries	154	158
EEC countries	140	143
II. Gross Industrial Output		
CMEA countries	217	227
Industrialised capitalist countries	151	153
EEC countries	131	134

[1] Data for 1986 are estimated.

In some socialist community countries, the growth rate of national income and industrial output was higher than the average annual growth rate for the preceding five-year period (see Table 2).

Table 2: National Income and Industrial Output Growth Rate

	National Income		Industrial Output	
	average annual increase % for 1981-1985	1986 on 1985	average annual increase % for 1981-1985	1986 on 1985
Bulgaria	3.7	5.5	4.3	4.3
Hungary	1.3	0.5	2.0	1.8
Vietnam	7.1	–[1]	14.9	–[1]
GDR	4.5	4.3	4.1	4.3[2]
Cuba	8.5	–[1]	9.2[3]	–[1]
Mongolia	6.5	5.6	9.3	8.0
Poland	–0.8	5.0	0.4	4.4
Romania	4.4	7.3	4.0	7.7[4]
USSR	3.6	4.1	3.7	4.9
Czechoslovakia	1.7	3.2	2.7	3.1

[1] Official summarised data are published later.
[2] Marketable manufactures.
[3] Prices for the respective years.
[4] Marketable output.

For the community as a whole, national income went up mainly through higher social labour productivity, but most countries have yet to reach the figure planned for the current five-year period. Plans for used and accumulated national income have not been fulfilled in all the countries mostly due to the unfavourable changes in external balance of payments, unproductive outlays and losses.

Economic growth was also affected by difficulties in material and technical supply and flaws in organisation, planning and investment.

Some positive advances were made in industrial output. Up to 96 per cent of the growth came from higher labour productivity.

Industries which determine faster scientific and technical progress and rising efficiency in social production had faster growth in most CMEA countries. *In Bulgaria,* mechanical engineering output went up by 9.3 per cent, and chemical output by 4.2 per cent. *In Hungary,* electric power production rose by 5 per cent. Microelectronic and machine-tool building were rapidly developed in the *GDR. In Mongolia,* fuel and energy output rose by 11.3 per cent. *In Poland,* mechanical engineering and metal-working output increased by 8.3 per cent, and chemical output by 4.4 per cent. Mechanical engineering output *in Romania* went up by 7.7 per cent. *In the Soviet Union,* mechanical engineering output rose by 6 per cent, which was 33 per cent higher than the indicator for industry as a whole.

Electric power production in the CMEA countries went up by 3.4 per cent; oil output, including gas condensate, by 3.2 per cent, and natural gas by 5.9 per cent.

The Way of Intensification

The CMEA countries continued to lay emphasis on intensifying economic development.

Bulgaria was engaged in complex restructuring of economic administration and management on the basis of the principle of self-management by producer, research and other collectives. Almost 8,600 R & D innovations were applied. Material inputs per 100 leva of output fell by 2.2 per cent. The economic and technical parameters of a large group of products have been improved. At the same time, plan targets for the production of sheet steel, electrical tools, mini-computer systems, phosphorous fertilizers and other products were not met.

In Hungary, the switch to a new system of enterprise administration and management was completed. Consumption of electric power and energy resources in the economy went down by 0.4 per cent, and by 1.5 per cent in terms of gross output per unit. The technology of steel casting and the quality of steel were improved. Fixed assets in industry, however, grew faster than output.

Almost 5,200 new products and technologies were introduced into industry *in the GDR.* The output of monolithic integrated circuits went up by 28 per cent, of computer-based numerical and programme control machine-tools by 11 per cent, while 72 per cent of metal-cutting machine-tools were fitted with computer chips. Nearly 29 per cent of the industrial product mix was renovated. National income growth went up with a simultaneous reduction in per-unit producer consumption by 2.0 per cent, especially through better processing of raw and other materials.

In Cuba, inputs of fuel, energy and raw and other materials were reduced. Projects in building and remodelling of major enterprises were effected much faster with the technical assistance of fraternal countries.

In Poland, investments in science and technology were concentrated on the introduction of computer chips in the economy, automation and

robotisation of production processes, nuclear energy, new technologies and new materials. Almost 2,000 technologies and roughly 4,400 products were introduced into state industry. The share of renovated products came to 3.3 per cent of total value of manufacturing output, and to 8.3 per cent in mechanical engineering and metal-working.

In Romania, scientific, research and development programmes helped to introduce roughly 2,900 new or improved types of machines, equipment units, instruments and installations, and almost 800 new materials. Renovation of manufacturing products came to 18 per cent.

In the Soviet Union, the switch to the new conditions of economic administration and management has had a positive effect on economic growth and acceleration. One-third of producer associations and enterprises turning out over one-half of industrial output have been switched to the new conditions. Economies in fuel and energy have accounted for 42 per cent of growing requirements. The energy-intensiveness of the national income has been reduced by 1.6 per cent, and metal-intensiveness by 0.6 per cent. The output of industrial robots has gone up by 14 per cent, flexible automated producer systems by 160 per cent, metal-cutting machine-tools with numerical control by 23 per cent, and machining centres by 40 per cent. However, plans for turning out many highly efficient products have not been fulfilled, among them those for machinery and equipment for the continuous casting of steel, new series of direct-current machines, and some types of farming machinery. The renewal of industrial products has been insignificant.

In Czechoslovakia, the application of scientific and technological achievements has helped to increase the percentage of progressive technologies, with a relative economy of 3.1 million tons of conventional fuel, which is much higher than the absolute growth of fuel and energy consumption in the country over the preceding five-year period, 476,000 tons of ferrous metals, and 13,500 tons of non-ferrous metals. Over 960 industrial robots and manipulators have been fabricated. The manufacture of integrated circuits went up by 37.8 per cent, electro-technical components by 20.6 per cent, and colour television sets by 8.2 per cent.

National statistical reports in the CMEA countries indicate that much remains to be done to speed economic growth, reduce energy-and-material-intensiveness of production and raise the product-to-assets ratio. *The thrust is to make thriftier use of investment resources, equip enterprises with the latest efficient hardware, and raise the economic and technical level and quality of products by, among other things, deeper involvement in the international socialist division of labour.*

Development of Agriculture

Unfavourable weather conditions prevailed in some CMEA countries last year. But the increased material and technical facilities in agriculture, the further spread of industrial technologies, and the wider use of progressive forms of labour and production organisation did something to reduce the negative effects of the poor weather and helped to make a step forward.

In Bulgaria, agricultural output went up by 2 per cent, as compared with

the average for the preceding five-year period, and by 10 per cent in 1985.

In Hungary, where the agrarian sector has risen to a very high level, gross farm output in 1986 went up by roughly 1 per cent. The gross cereal crop came to 14.2 million tons, or 4 per cent down on 1985, mainly due to the severe drought.

Despite the natural calamities and shortage of fertilizers, the working people of *Vietnam* have advanced in agriculture. They have produced 18.5 million tons of food (in terms of rice), which is 300,000 tons more than the 1985 figure, although the plan targets were not met. The gross output of coffee went up by 25 per cent in 1986, and of tea by 12 per cent.

The GDR has attained the highest ever results: average cereal yields have gone up to 46.4 centners per hectare. An important part here was played by new strains, which were sown to two-thirds of the farm area. All the parameters of the state procurement plan for animal products were fulfilled.

The drought and hurricane Kate had an unfavourable effect on the state of agriculture *in Cuba.* The beaten-down sugar cane defied mechanised harvesting, but losses were minimised by the working people's efforts.

In Mongolia, farm output went up by 12 per cent, as compared with the preceding five-year period; 8.9 million head of cattle were reared, i.e., 534,000 more than in 1985.

Poland's agricultural output went up by nearly 5 per cent. Gross cereal output went up to 25 million tons, or a 5.4 per cent increase for the year; in livestock farming growth was higher than 3 per cent.

Gross farm output *in Romania* went up by 12.8 per cent, with the cereal crop topping 30.3 million tons and the livestock population increasing with a growth of average productivity.

In the Soviet Union, the gross cereal crop came to about 210.1 million tons (nearly 30 million tons more than the annual average for 1981-1985). Gross farm output in 1986 went up by 5.1 per cent. There was an increase in the state procurement of cereals, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, and the basic livestock products.

Czechoslovakia increased its gross farm output by 0.5 per cent, including livestock output by 2 per cent, which was 4.3 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, higher than the average for 1981-1985.

Farm output in the socialist community countries as a whole increased by nearly 5 per cent: they took in almost 331 million tons of cereals, or 28 million tons more than in 1985, and 45 million tons more than the annual average for the preceding five-year period; 6 per cent more meat was produced in 1986, as compared with 1985. However, the agro-industrial complex was not adequately used everywhere to boost production and increase efficiency, and losses and non-productive outlays were still high.

The People's Growing Well-Being

Economic development and deeper all-round mutual cooperation helped to tackle *major social tasks. The fraternal countries now spend almost three-quarters of their national income on social and individual consumption.*

Real incomes per head went up as follows: in Hungary by about 3 per cent, in the GDR by 5 per cent, in Romania (cash incomes in the socialist sector) by 3.6 per cent, in the Soviet Union by 2.3 per cent, and in Czechoslovakia by 2.9 per cent (real cash incomes). The wages of industrial and office workers, which rose in most countries, are the basic source of growing real incomes of the population.

Consumer goods on internal markets were more available and the services extended. This was reflected in the growth of retail trade, which in Bulgaria came to 3.3 per cent, in Hungary to 3.5 per cent, in Cuba to 3.6 per cent,* in the GDR to 4.1 per cent,* in Mongolia to 3.7 per cent,* in Poland to about 5 per cent, in Romania to 2.4 per cent, in the Soviet Union to 6.4 per cent, and in Czechoslovakia to 2.2 per cent.

Housing construction was given unflagging attention. In the CMEA countries as a whole, the population received 2.9 million flats, including 54,200 in Bulgaria, 69,300 in Hungary, 215,700 in the GDR (including modernised flats), 185,700 in Poland, 108,100 in Romania, 2.1 million in the Soviet Union, and 78,200 in Czechoslovakia; 205,000 sq. metres of housing was made available in Mongolia.

While the output of consumer goods and the provision of services have grown, the supply of some of them fell short of demand. The quality of many goods and services still falls short of requirements. The targets for housing construction and cultural and everyday amenities have not been met everywhere.

★ ★ ★

The economy of the socialist community countries has been developing on the basis of measures agreed under the decisions of the 1984 CMEA Economic Summit, and the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress of CMEA Member Countries up to the Year 2000, which was adopted in late 1985. The cardinal problems in further improving their mutual cooperation, the fuller use of socialism's constructive potentialities and the use of new and progressive forms of cooperation were discussed in November 1986 at a working meeting of the leaders of the CMEA socialist countries' fraternal parties in Moscow.

Preparation and agreement of detailed documents have been virtually completed on 86 out of 93 major problems under the Comprehensive Programme, while almost 400 completed projects were made available for production.

Important steps have recently been taken to arrange progressive forms of cooperation on the basis of direct contractual ties.

The CMEA now has over 20 international associations and joint agencies, and the number is shortly to go up to 80.

The ruling fraternal parties believe that utmost returns from international cooperation are the key prerequisite for accelerated economic and social development.

* Current prices

Vaclav Soukup
CMEA Secretariat

Valery Andreyev
International Institute of Economic Problems of the World Socialist System

UNIVERSITIES BESIEGED BY THE POLICE

STUDENT unrest has been rocking many countries since last autumn. Never before has this action been more vigorous or powerful, or had such great international scope. This means that we are not facing local student 'riots' over this or that campus complaint but a serious social movement of the younger generation in defence of its rights, against the discrimination it suffers in the society based on exploitation. This explains why the upsurge of student protest has much in common in the countries of all continents.

First, the protest was not an instinctive emotional outburst provoked, as was often the case previously, by anarchistic appeals and slogans. It is rooted in a profoundly conscious resolve to uphold an inalienable human right — the right to education and confidence in one's future.

Second, young people have been fighting not only for their specific demands but also against any reactionary attempts on democracy, against militarism, police brutality and arbitrary action.

Third, from the very outset the students regarded their struggle not in isolation but as part of the movement the working people in many capitalist countries have been mounting against the policy of the monopolies which use the scientific and technological revolution for their own self-serving ends.

The authorities responded with brutal reprisals to the student action and sent armed police units against young people. But once started the struggle cannot be suppressed by force and violence. The students are fighting for a just cause, and the people and all democratic forces are on their side.

Josef Skala
President, International Union
of Students (IUS)

AFTER THE FIRST BIG VICTORY

A statement under this title has been released by the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party in response to the mass student action which set the country astir. The statement says: "The Prime Minister was forced to withdraw the Devaquet-Monory bill concerning the universities.* United and full of resolve, university and high school students preserved their independence and won a major victory. The Communists welcome this development. However, the victory cannot make us forget either the murder of the student Malik Oussekine or the police brutality unleashed

*The proposed law envisaged a reactionary reform to restrict the access of young people from working class and immigrant families to higher education. Specifically, the plan was to double tuition fees and to create more favourable placement conditions for graduates of élite colleges and universities. — *Ed.*

against our youth. The FCP demands that these events be investigated fully . . .

"The Communist Party supported the powerful student movement and continues to support young people in their commitment to retain full control over their movement, slogans and forms of struggle."

A PARTICIPANT IN THE STRUGGLE SPEAKS

The struggle of the student action grew, above all, because we set ourselves clearly formulated goals. This is what enabled us to make ours a mass movement. We are satisfied with the ties that developed between students and workers, and we appreciate the support we received from the French Communist Party and the General Confederation of Labour. It was very important for the students to know that workers were on their side. If the student movement does not decline and if we do everything to avoid the recurrence of past mistakes, we are sure to find simple and direct ways of pooling the efforts of the students and the working people in the struggle for genuine democracy.

Jean-Claude Olivin
National Secretariat member,
Communist Student League of France

EXAMPLE EMULATED

The French students' action has caused an upsurge in the struggle of students for their rights in other countries too.

In Spain, students and high school graduates are staging mass demonstrations demanding that the government scrap the introduction of a new discriminatory system of enrolment at colleges and universities and increase spending on education. Despite the attempts of the authorities to supress student action with the help of armed police units, Spanish youth is keeping up its struggle.

In Belgium, students poured into the streets to make the government revoke its decisions on raising the college and university tuition fees from 10,000 to 18,000 Belgian francs and increase government allocations to universities. Violent clashes with the police have occurred in many cities.

In the United States, mass demonstrations were held against the continuing cutbacks in federal assistance to needy students. These outlays have been halved over the past five years. The students also demand lower tuition fees. Education at 340 US colleges and universities now costs more than 10,000 dollars a year, and 18,000 dollars at Princeton, Columbia and Yale.

From press reports

STATISTICAL EVIDENCE

● There are 45 million people aged 15 to 25 in the ten EEC countries: 15 million are students, 18 million are employed, and 12 million have no definite occupation.

● In France, Britain, Italy and the FRG those who are under 25 and have no jobs now number five million. Unemployment in this age group is highest in the United States: 15 to 20 per cent (50 per cent among blacks).

● In the FRG, 2.8 million people will graduate from colleges and universities over the next 15 years. Only one out of three will find a job.

● According to UNESCO, children of working class families in the United States have five times less chance of entering a college or university than children from other social groups. The difference is eightfold in Britain, twentyfold in Italy and France and thirtyfold in Japan. As for the financing of education, a reverse proportion is typical of industrially developed capitalist countries: the lion's share of the outlays earmarked for higher education comes from the tax revenue. In actual fact, the poorer sections of the population whose children are a minority at colleges and universities pay for the education of the affluent classes.

Assessment

The conflict in which the aspirations, hopes and expectations of young people clash with what the ruling quarters want or intend to grant or allow them is growing ever more acute in the capitalist world. This conflict cannot be resolved without a radical revision of the social structure of capitalist society. In the Western countries, the demand for jobs, education, culture and social benefits is much greater than what the existing social structure can offer. The only prospect open before a large part of youth is to push ruthlessly forward, unscrupulously build a career, be as individualistic as possible and accept the rules of the game. In short, some young people begin to live by the 'dog-eat-dog' law of the jungle. Many, but not all use this tactic. The recent outbreaks of discontent at schools, colleges and universities, and the increased unity and activity of the young unemployed are therefore not accidental.

Pietro Folena
National Secretary, Italian Communist
Youth Federation

IUS Reports

STUDENTS PERSECUTED, ARRESTED, MURDERED

United States. The district court of Northampton, Massachusetts, has indicted 30 students of the University of Massachusetts who took part in a demonstration of protest against CIA recruiting activities on the campus.

The defendants maintain that the CIA is a group of assassins seeking to overthrow popular governments in developing countries.

Liberia. The House of Representatives of the country's National Assembly has announced the dissolution of the National Union of Students. The charges are that the union has fallen under the sway of the 'hostile ideology of socialism and communism' and that its members provoked 'disturbances and challenged the authorities'. The acting President of the NUS has declared that his organisation will oppose "any unconstitutional and illegal clause barring students from free association".

South Africa. The students of the University of the North in Pietersburg have been placed under constant police surveillance. Pretoria's racist authorities have made this move 'to suppress political activities and to monitor radical elements'. The same fate may befall other universities too.

Venezuela. The biggest wave of student unrest spread throughout the country this spring to protest at the police killing of Luis Carvallo Cantor, a university student from Merida. The youth action has reaffirmed the growing popular discontent with the economic crisis that has gripped the country. This was what Pedro Ortega Diaz, Central Committee Political Bureau member of the Communist Party of Venezuela, said.

Chile. "I am now firmer than ever in my opposition to Pinochet and his government. I will use every opportunity to tell people what happened to me and Rodrigo Rojas. Let them know about the brutality we encountered, about the way the junta treats the Chilean people," said Carmen Quintani, a student who returned to Chile after a long course of medical treatment in Canada. During a demonstration against Pinochet's tyranny in July 1986 the police attacked Carmen and Rojas, poured gasoline on them and set them on fire. Rojas died, but Carmen survived. Her return home gave a new impetus to the student movement of solidarity with the victims of political reprisals.

South Korea. Pak Jong Chol, a student of Seoul's National University, was tortured to death by the butchers from the Combat Communism Bureau of the police. His death set off vigorous protests that are still shaking the country. In Seoul alone, a 100,000-strong special police force has been let loose to suppress student demonstrations. Thousands of people have been wounded, maimed and beaten.

Jerusalem. Israeli troops opened fire on a peaceful demonstration staged by the students of the Palestinian Birzeit University who were demanding that the illegal order to close it be rescinded. To suppress the wave of solidarity with the victims of the massacre, the occupation authorities declared all Arab colleges and universities in the occupied territories a 'closed zone'. Searches and mass arrests were conducted on the campuses.

WMR Ties

WMR delegations took part in the work of the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark and the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Norway.

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Rene Urbany, Chairman of the Communist Party of Luxembourg, visited the *WMR* offices in Prague. He and the *WMR* Editor-in-Chief discussed ways of enhancing cooperation between the CPL and the journal.

★ ★ ★

Ali Yata, General Secretary of the Morocco Party of Progress and Socialism, has visited the *WMR* office and discussed steps to develop cooperation between his party and our journal.

★ ★ ★

During his visit to Prague George Toubi, Central Committee Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, called at the *WMR* office. The discussion that was held centred on ways of enhancing cooperation between the CPI and *WMR*.

★ ★ ★

Edgar Ponce, Central Committee member of the Communist Party of Ecuador and Chairman of the Ecuadoran Confederation of Labour, visited the *WMR* offices during his stay in Prague. At a meeting of the *WMR* Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean he discussed the latest events in his country, the Communists' tasks in this connection, and the prospects for the unity of the Ecuadoran working people.

★ ★ ★

A delegation of the National Democratic Front of South Korea led by Lee Chung Sang, Vice-President of the NDFSK Central Committee, has visited the *WMR* offices and discussed the outlook for cooperation between the Front and *WMR*.

In Memory of Jorgen Jensen

JORGEN Jensen, Chairman of the Communist Party of Denmark, a prominent activist of the Danish and international communist and working class movement, died in Copenhagen on April 13, 1987. He was 67 years old. The working class and all working people of Denmark lost a staunch champion of their vital interests, a patriot and a dedicated internationalist.

Jorgen Jensen was born into a working class family on January 18, 1920. He joined the Young Communist League of Denmark early and studied Marxism-Leninism. During World War II he was active in the Resistance movement against the Nazi invaders.

Jorgen Jensen's involvement in political affairs began in the trade union movement where he later held several leading posts. A member of the Communist Party since 1945, he vigorously upheld the interests and rights of metalworkers and earned respect and prestige. He was repeatedly elected branch chairman of the metalworkers' union and was for several years chairman of the National Association of Auto Mechanics. Jorgen Jensen was elected to the Folketing (Parliament) in 1975-1979. He also contributed greatly to the development of the Danish peace movement and was secretary of the Danish National Peace Committee.

Since 1952 Jorgen Jensen has served on the governing bodies of the Communist Party of Denmark, at first as an alternate member of the Central Committee and then, since 1955, as a member of the Central Committee and its Executive Committee. In 1977 he was elected Chairman of the Communist Party of Denmark.

Jorgen Jensen devoted all his life to the struggle for the cause of the working class, for the fundamental interests of Denmark's working people, for peace, democracy and socialism. A consistent champion of proletarian internationalism, he worked unswervingly to strengthen the international communist movement, promote its unity and ensure that action within the national framework be waged in concert with the struggle for the common goals of all Communists.

He did a great deal to consolidate the CPD's cooperation with *World Marxist Review*. His articles on key issues of the working class and communist movement generated a wide response among readers. In his last article for *WMR* he wrote: "While standing up for its own interests, the international working class simultaneously carries on a struggle for the interests of progressive mankind as a whole. It takes a stand in support of the people's national liberation movements, in defence of democratic rights and freedoms, and against reaction, fascism and neofascism. The working class has the crucial role in resisting aggressive imperialist schemes and the threat of a global nuclear catastrophe and, in backing measures to end the arms race, to effect disarmament and to consolidate peace and security. The struggle to attain these goals gives it extensive opportunities for cooperation with its allies and for enlarging the social and geographical boundaries for joint action."

All Communists will forever cherish the memory of Jorgen Jensen, a committed fighter for the ideals of peace and socialism.

the book scene

With Faith In People

Fidel Castro, *Ideología, Conciencia y trabajo político, 1959-1986* (Ideology, Consciousness and Political Work, 1959-1986), Editora Politica, Havana, 1986, 427pp.

IN its day-to-day work the Communist Party of Cuba steadfastly abides by Lenin's behest that a paramount, fundamental function of a revolutionary party is to build up the people's political consciousness.

Having become the first socialist state in the Western Hemisphere and having the most powerful and reactionary imperialist power as its neighbour, Cuba is the target of economic blockades, armed aggression, and psychological attacks. By virtue of this the Cuban Communists devote special attention to ideological work. Besides, the subjective factor is enhanced by socialist construction itself, which in my country began from the backward socio-economic base formed at a time when Cuba was dependent on US imperialism. It is also enhanced by the drive to eradicate errors and negative trends in society and upgrade the process of change.

These important points are dealt with in this book of excerpts from the speeches of Fidel Castro, First Secretary of the CPC Central Committee. In the Programme of the Communist Party of Cuba his many speeches are assessed as a "source of theoretical thought and a militant platform". Being part of the modern Marxist-Leninist worldview, the Programme says, Fidel Castro's outlook is "distinguished by maturity, wisdom, and scientific exactitude, and gives an accurate interpretation of Cuban reality, the problems of the so-called Third World nations, and the building of socialism, and also of other dilemmas and prospects facing humankind".[1]

In stressing the vital significance of revolutionary upbringing to socialist construction, Fidel Castro notes: "We should use consciousness . . . as the principal instrument for the development of the productive forces. We are going to create wealth with the help of consciousness rather than consciousness with the help of wealth" (p. 40).

In a socialist society the growth of the people's well-being and of the state's material base is closely tied to the general level of ideological consciousness. A growth solely of wealth without an accompanying rise of the consciousness level may generate contradictions. Hence the need to make sure that the socialist formula of distribution 'according to work' does not hurt the incipient communist consciousness and that an underestimation of ideological work does not endanger the shaping of the citizen of the new society. The point here is not to deny recognition to the certain limitations implicit in the socialist stage or to the need for utilising — while giving a different content — of some of the instruments implicit in the capitalist system. It is simply that these instruments and mechanisms

should not become predominant and prevent the growth of the people's ideological and political consciousness.

When moral and material incentives are brought to bear it is desirable that neither are abused, for any accentuated focus on moral encouragement leads to idealistic miscalculations, while any absolutism of the material factor encourages egoism and individualism. That this is the proper attitude is clearly demonstrated by the example of Cuba, where the broadest sections of the population are grateful to the revolution not only for material benefits. Fidel Castro justifiably points out that practically every Cuban can say: "I am grateful, above all, to the revolution and am prepared to die for it because I have an identity, a sense of personal dignity, and feel that I mean something to my people, to my country" (p. 227).

Our revolution draws its strength from the people's maturity and high level of political consciousness. This has made it possible to put up staunch resistance to the imperialist aggressors, abort their attempts to destroy socialist Cuba, and demonstrate the Cuban people's high sense of internationalism and militant solidarity with the peoples of many countries. This consciousness level was achieved in the process of transformations, of practice linked to revolutionary foresight based on Marxist-Leninist theory. "It is our ideology," it was stressed at the First Congress of the CPC, "that makes us strong and invincible."[2]

The Communist Party of Cuba is sustaining a spirit of militancy among the people, keeping their political consciousness solidly based on fidelity to the principles of socialism, and making their revolutionary morale unshakable. "The determination sooner to cease to exist than to cease to be a revolutionary," Fidel Castro said at the Third Congress of the CPC, "is a behest, which, as it constantly renews itself, should pass from one generation of Cubans to another."[3]

A mission of the revolution is to inculcate in people the sense of social justice, equality, internationalism, and solidarity, and foster their patriotism. The revolution's achievements should not be reduced to counting the number of houses and factories that have been built. Their significance is determined primarily by what they give the individual, by the principles and revolutionary ethics that they communicate to people.

It is accentuated in this book that patriotism and proletarian internationalism are inseparable concepts. It would be impossible to overestimate their impact on the upbringing of future generations. "Internationalism is the transcendent essence of Marxism-Leninism and of its ideal of solidarity and brotherhood between nations. The Cuban revolution would not have come about at all had there not been internationalism. To be an internationalist is to do one's duty to humankind" (p. 314). This, Fidel Castro continued, is why we should always feel grateful to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Our bond to the land of the October Revolution and Lenin will never break because the Cubans are a loyal, staunch, and grateful nation.

To defend one's country means not only to resist an enemy invasion but also to do everything to prevent aggression. Peace can be saved from a cunning and unscrupulous enemy like US imperialism only if the latter is

kept aware that he will have to pay dearly for dirty practices. This is what makes political work imperative in the armed forces. The ideological foundation for such work is the thesis that our main strength is not in weapons but in our morals, in the patriotism and revolutionary consciousness of the people holding these weapons in their hands (see pp. 326-327).

Fidel Castro speaks of what is being done by the Communist Party to rectify the errors that have been made and extirpate the negative trends that had appeared in recent years in diverse areas of society's life. Despite the revolution's grandeur and its indisputable successes and gains, he notes, it is vital to make a critical and self-critical analysis of what has been achieved without fearing that this criticism may be used by the enemy. The Communists are convinced that instead of weakening us an examination of problems in a healthy atmosphere and from the position of revolutionary criticism will make us stronger.

In parallel to bringing negative trends to light the party charts a long-term policy for promoting socialist construction. The issue here is not of a transient campaign, of a slogan of the day, of partial measures in this or that area, but of work methods guaranteeing concrete and steady economic advances and the attainment of the corresponding ideological maturity by the people.

Fidel Castro expresses our party's determination to eradicate shortcomings in labour organisation and remuneration, put an end to loose labour discipline and to slackness of political, managerial, and trade union requirements at the workplace, and uproot money-grubbing, greed, and crime.

"We went from one extreme to another: from total disregard for material incentives — a disease we were afflicted with at one time — to making a fetish of money," Fidel Castro says. "Moreover, we believed that [economic] mechanisms would allow solving all problems — this was another faulted belief. We neglected political work in the belief that under socialism problems would be resolved with the aid of such mechanisms. This is what generated many negative tendencies" (p. 175).

The party is working to root out the 'economic' deviation, the urge for amassing wealth, the admiration for spontaneity, and the disregard for ideological and political work. This effort will be successful provided it is forceful, consistent, comprehensive, and excludes extremes and unconsidered actions. The building of socialism and communism is a revolutionary challenge requiring, above all, a political approach, education of the people and the relevant level of their consciousness. Political transformative work will unquestionably be complemented with effective economic mechanisms.

Moreover, the economic and labour education of the people and the drive to enhance production efficiency will acquire growing importance. Marxist-Leninist theory, which regards labour not only as a means of existence but a vital need of every human being, acquires new shades and significance in the distinctive conditions prevailing in Cuba. Every revolutionary, particularly the Communist, Fidel Castro says in conclusion, has to be clear in his mind that labour is sacrosanct and that it

alone is the source of all wealth. The combination of study and labour is the indispensable formula of communist education, for we will learn to respect the fruits of labour if we ourselves work and create.

These are some of the points made in this volume, and they illustrate how the laws of social development formulated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism are applied in practice without mechanical approaches and florid rhetoric. From the first word to the last, this volume is permeated with a revolutionary spirit, optimism, faith in people, certainty in socialism's superiority as a social system, and pride in the achievements of the Cuban people.

Antonio Diaz Ruiz
representative of the Communist
Party of Cuba on *WMR*, Cand. Sc. (Philosophy)

[1] *Programa del Partido Comunista de Cuba*, Havana, 1986, p. 168.
[2] *Informe Central. Primer Congreso del Partido Comunista de Cuba*, ed. por el Departmento de Orientacion Revolucionaria del CC del PCC, Havana, 1975, p. 216.
[3] *Informe Central. Tercer Congreso del Partido Comunista de Cuba*, Havana, 1986, p. 100.

A Thorny Path

Rifaat al-Said, *A History of the Egyptian Communist Movement (1957-1965). Unity, Division, Dissolution*, Al-Amal, Cairo, 1986, 360 pp. (in Arabic).

THE author has written many other works on the communist and democratic movements in our country, including *A History of Socialist Thought in Egypt, A History of the Socialist Movement in Egypt (1900-1925)*, and *The Egyptian Left (1925-1940)*. The book under review is a continuation of these works.

A short retrospect is required for analysing the historical period dealt with in the book. Let us recall that socialist ideas first reached Egypt in the nineteenth century, and that the socialist movement got under way in the early twentieth century. It was given a powerful impetus by the Great October Revolution, and the Socialist Party was set up in our country in 1921. After it joined the Comintern in 1922, it became known as the Communist Party of Egypt (CPE). The Communist's active participation in the strike struggle and their efforts in organising major strikes at industrial enterprises gave the authorities the pretext for persecution and brutal repression. In 1924, the CPE was dealt a crushing blow: its entire leadership was arrested. The forces of internal and external reaction strove to prevent the party's re-establishment. Small groups operating underground in Cairo and Alexandria paved the way for 'pluralism' in the communist movement in Egypt.

The circles which emerged in the early 1940s had little in common with the party of the 1920s. They worked deep in the underground, were

isolated from each other, and had no links to the Comintern.

Two trends — revolutionary and opportunist — were evident in the communist movement in Egypt from the outset, says the author. They were distinctly divided in their approach to some theoretical problems, many aspects of practical work, combination of legal and illegal forms of activity, the question of alliances, etc. Lack of unity became a disorder of the Egyptian communist movement.

Two communist organisations — the Egyptian Movement for National Liberation (MELN) and The Spark[1] — were formed from the Marxist study circles in 1942. In 1943, the Al-Talia (The Vanguard) group was set up in Alexandria by the progressive section of the students and intellectuals. By 1945, another three goups had been formed: the Marxist League, The Citadel, and the Al-Fagr al Gedid (The New Dawn).

The deepening revolutionary processes after World War II created the objective basis for wider communist activity. The Democratic Movement for National Liberation, KHADETU (the Arabic acronym), resulted from the merger of the MELN and The Spark in May 1947. In 1955, it was joined by several other groups, and that led to the founding of the United Communist Party of Egypt. At that time there were two other major organisations in the country: the Egyptian Communist Party, known as Al-Raya (The Banner), so called after its printed organ, and the Workers' and Peasants' Party. In 1957, the United Communist Party and Al-Raya merged to form the Unified Egyptian Communist Party.

From 1957 on, says the author, the various Marxist organisations found common ground in their support of President Nasser's policy and his national, anti-imperialist line. In January 1958, the Workers' and Peasants' Party joined the Unified Egyptian Communist Party, producing an alliance of the main communist forces in Egypt.

However, the Unified Egyptian Communist Party lasted for only six months. The urge of the majority of its members to have unity at any price led to unwarranted concessions to the opportunistic elements and enabled them to seize the leading positions in the new party, with the result that it split into two organisations. One of them adopted the old name of KHADETU, and the other called itself the Egyptian Communist Party.

It is worth noting that the reactionary forces tried hard to fan the disagreements between the Communists and the President. The mass repressions in January 1959 affected not only Nasser's opponents, but even his supporters. Hundreds of people were imprisoned and subjected to excruciating tortures. Many of the prisoners died.

Nevertheless, because of their Marxist-Leninist convictions, the Communists continued to support the government's national, anti-imperialist policy. The author says: "In the dock, they showed a sense of pride for their militant history and political stand, and defended the ideas of Marxism-Leninism. Artillery commander General Khilyal, who was then on the bench, found himself in an unenviable position: the accused supported the regime and its policy, while remaining true to Marxism" (p. 202). The staunchness and cohesion of the fighters were a challenge to the authorities' perfidy, a challenge to their brutality.

In 1960, the KHADETU leaders organised in prison a discussion 'On

the Stay in Power of the Advocates of Unscientific Socialism'. The discussion went on for six months and ended with the adoption of a resolution 'On the Socialist Group'. This document said: "The national bourgeoisie is heterogeneous. In the present international situation . . . the ideas of socialism have become highly attractive, and this has led to the spread in the newly-liberated countries of diverse unscientific socialist ideas with a strong anti-imperialist edge. The contingents of the national bourgeoisie which have adopted these ideas can evolve towards scientific socialism. Our party must play its positive role in this process and give it the right direction" (p. 201).

The group which called itself the Egyptian Communist Party, says the author, took a different, hostile attitude to Nasser, and its statements ranged from the assertion that he was a "representative of state-monopoly capitalism" to the claim that the President's National Alliance[2] was nothing but an alliance of the Egyptian bourgeoisie.

The author has analysed the reasons for the party's self-dissolution in 1965 and shown the highly complicated internal political situation in which that decision was taken. The country was going through a period of social change: an agrarian reform was put through, banks and industrial enterprises were nationalised, and some measures were taken in the interests of the workers, peasants and the working masses generally. That was paralleled by the President's own ideological evolution. His attitude to the Communists changed for the better, and in 1964 they were set free. Some of our comrades were offered important posts in culture and personnel training, on the editorial boards of newspapers, journals and the radio, and in the Arab Socialist Alliance. At that time, Egypt maintained political, economic and cultural relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Cooperation between the Arab Socialist Alliance and communist and workers' parties in the socialist and non-socialist world got under way. Communist writers in many countries gave a high appreciation of Nasser's activity. The revolutionary democrats in power accepted many of the slogans earlier formulated by the Communists, and some of these slogans were translated into practice.

The author quotes statements by some communist group leaders in the country to the effect that in those conditions they believed there was no need to contrast themselves to Nasser's revolutionary democratic regime. The author says: "It seemed to them that adherence to their party was an obstacle in the way of broader mutual understanding" (p. 249), and could lead to "a clash with the patriotic regime, which, besides, was 'heading for socialism' as everyone then assumed" (p. 268).

The situation was complicated by Nasser's unbending attitude to the Communist's independent organisation: for him it was either dissolution or outright conflict. The idea of dissolution was partly justified by the intention to join the Socialist Vanguard, which then existed within the Arab Socialist Alliance, in the hope of subsequently turning it into a Marxist party.

KHADETU representatives met in conference on March 14, 1965, and passed a resolution which said, "Our activity has always been determined by the line towards a united party of the revolution . . . But now the party

is completing the period of its independent existence, it is . . . thereby taking a new revolutionary step in developing its earlier revolutionary stand" (p. 325). That was a reflection of the complicated objective and subjective factors which led to such a hard decision.

In contrast to KHADETU, the group styling itself the Egyptian Communist Party had no such qualms. Its members, who had once insisted that Nasser was a representative of state-monopoly capitalism, gave unreserved support to the government's stand after their release from prison, and decided on self-dissolution in April 1965. Dr Fuad Murci, a leader of the group, described it as follows: "I supported the idea of dissolution. I said that the idea may not quite accord with our principles, but it was a pressing need . . . The regime put forward the same slogans as we did. Nasser put forward the slogan of building a new society on the basis of scientific socialism. He strove to unite all the fighters in the ranks of a vanguard party. It was assumed that this would take place under the leadership of the Arab Socialist Alliance. We regarded the situation from a practical angle, and did not take a principled stand . . . The contradiction was that if we were to remain Communists, we had to dissolve the party" (p. 276).

The author looks into all these circumstances with due understanding, and says quite definitely that he believes the party's dissolution to have been a mistake. The same conclusion was drawn by the First Congress of the ECP in 1980. He gives a detailed description of the objective and subjective conditions in which the decision was taken, but fails to explain why it had been a mistake.

I think that this step was taken because of an incorrect assessment of the situation, and looked like a gamble with totally ill-considered consequences. It was quite an unwarranted hope to assume that the Socialist Vanguard was bound to evolve towards scientific socialism and that it would set up together with Communists a united Marxist-Leninist party. In this context, I should like to draw attention to the following important points.

1. Attainment of unity with the Socialist Vanguard and the formation of a united party on the basis of scientific socialism was in itself impossible without struggle and serious effort. One of the most important prerequisites for success in such a struggle is that the Communists must have a party of their own, and that must never be neglected in any circumstances.

2. The decision to dissolve the party induced young people, once yearning for Marxism-Leninism, to take a negative attitude to the Communists. Some were impelled to start afresh, ignoring all the positive experience that had been gained by earlier generations. The emergence of the new organisations led to even greater disarray. Young people refused to cooperate with the 'old' Communists. It took much time to right the situation.

3. The core of the Communists, who saw the decision to dissolve the party as a step in transition to a more significant stage — the stage of setting up a united party — believed that the dissolution did not signify an end to the struggle, but that, on the contrary, it required more vigorous

struggle. However, that was soon forgotten by many who ceased to do their duty. It is true that some of them took such an attitude upon their release from prison, but it was the decision to dissolve the party that swelled their numbers.

Following Egypt's defeat as a result of the 1967 Israeli aggression and the occupation of the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, the Communists began to work in the underground to revive the party. Several groups appeared at the same time. Three of them, the largest, united in an organisation which in the early 1970s began to publish the journal *Al-Intisar* (The Victory). On May 1, 1975, it carried the announcement of the formation of the Egyptian Communist Party.

Our party is now guiding the workers' action and exerting a great influence on the student movement. It initiated the establishment of the Union of Peasants, and it is popular among intellectuals. It remains in the underground, but makes use of many forms of legal activity, setting itself the aim of establishing a patriotic democratic front to act for the country's independence and for progress. The First Congress of the Egyptian Communist Party, which was held clandestinely in September 1980, drew special attention to the need to study the history of the communist movement in Egypt and emphasised the importance of the lessons of its practical experience from 1957 to 1965.

It is developments of that period which the author has analysed. His book is well written, and is bound to interest readers. He has made wide use of testimonials from those who went through these developments. In most cases, he tries to present the views of several eye-witnesses and to give a picture from various angles to avoid falling captive to some single version that may be less than full or precise. This principle is, regrettably, not always applied.

On the whole Rifaat Al-Said has done much work, and his book is undoubtedly a major contribution to the collective efforts required to write a complete history of the Egyptian Communist Party. It will help many fighters, especially young people, to obtain an objective view of one of the most complicated periods in the activity of the Egyptian Communists.

Mohammed Magdi Kamal
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Egyptian Communist Party

[1] It was, in fact, called by the Russian word 'Iskra'
[2] Set up in 1957 to unite the country's national forces. It was dissolved in November 1961. — *Ed.*

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