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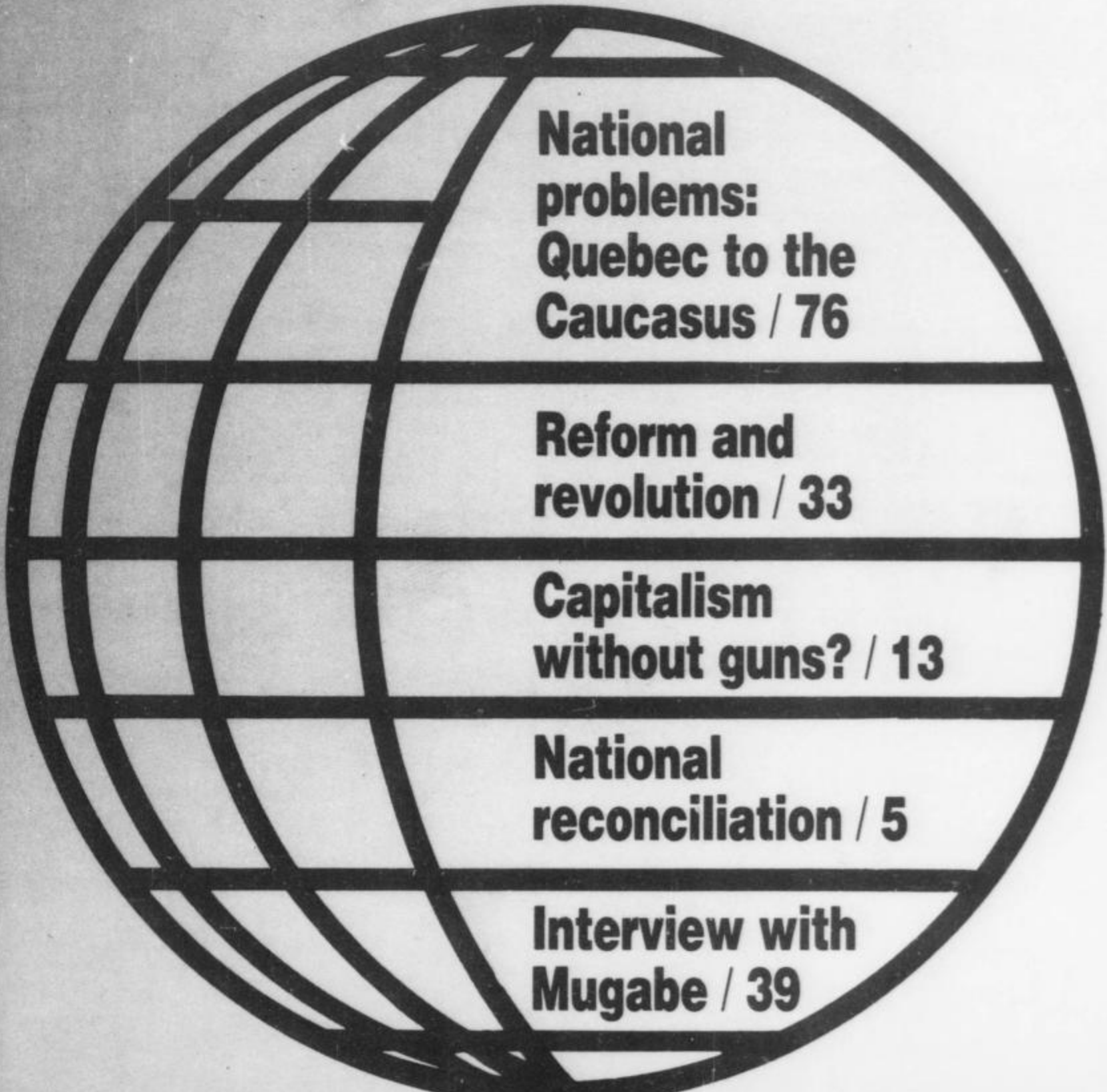
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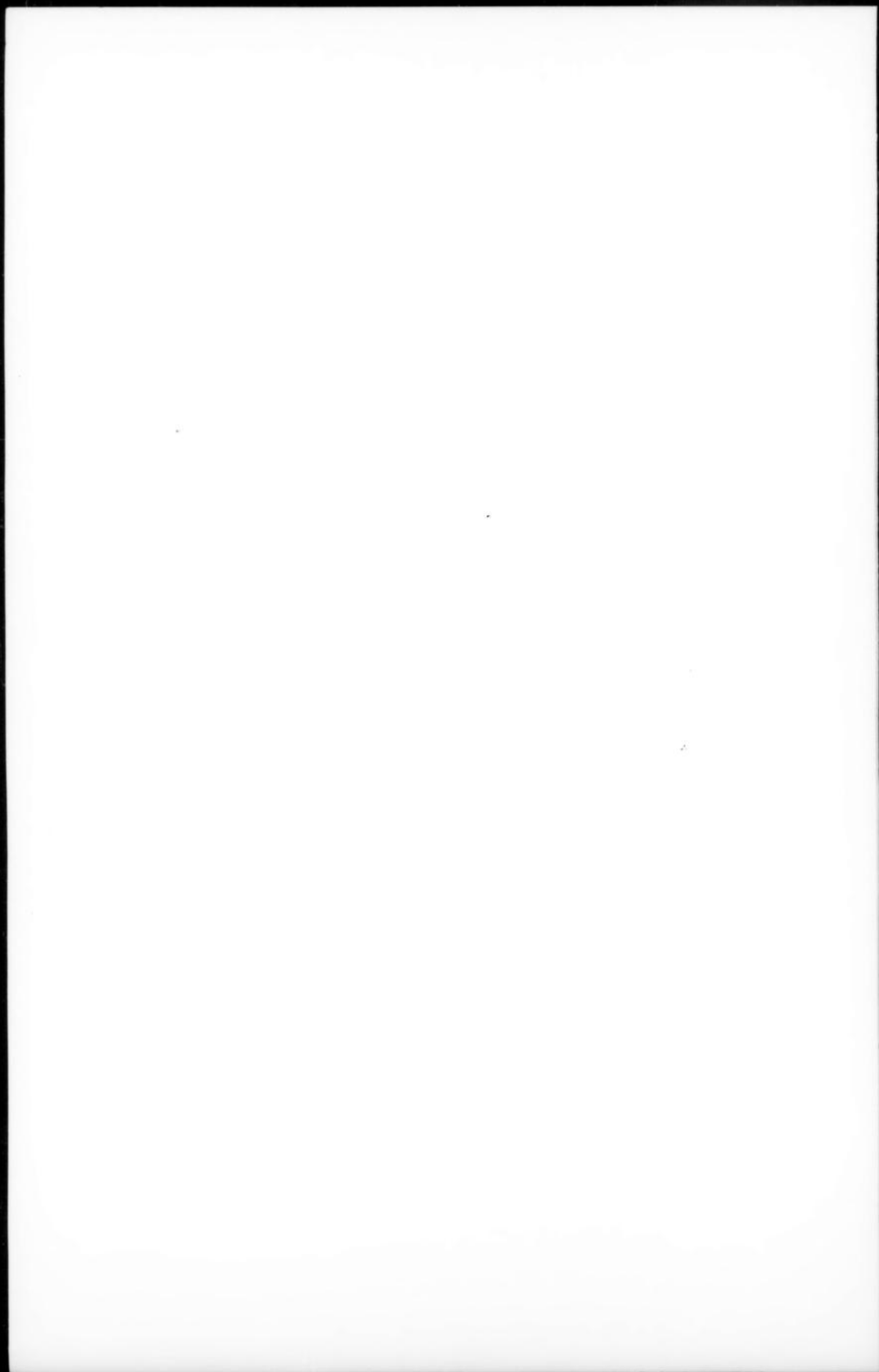
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for human survival

The Planet's Flashpoints

Policy Of National Reconciliation

National reconciliation is a new term in the international usage connected with the settlement of local and regional conflicts. The experience it represents is of interest to many countries. Although it is yet to be theoretically examined in depth, this policy is already winning recognition in the world as a means of accommodating the interests of different sides in complicated situations.

WMR has asked the Prague-based ambassadors of Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Nicaragua to explain the mechanics, objectives, motive forces and principles of the national reconciliation policies in their countries.

BY POLITICAL MEANS, NOT BY FORCE

Dr Abdul Baki Samandary
(Afghanistan)

THE April Revolution which, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), triumphed in 1978, was broadly supported by our people and by the world's progressive forces. At the same time, it was attacked by the counter-revolutionaries, international imperialism and the reactionary quarters. An undeclared war was launched against our country. In Pakistan and Iran, bases were set up for armed interference in our internal affairs.

We have had more than nine years of bloodshed. Hundreds of thousands have been killed or wounded. Some 2,000 schools and cultural centres, two-thirds of our communications and countless bridges and roads have

been destroyed. The loss of property exceeds 265 billion afghani', and it is a severe blow to our backward economy.

One can rehabilitate the war-ravaged economy, but one cannot bring those killed in battle back to life. The Afghan people are tired of the long war which has been forced on them. They want peace. Therefore, guided by new political thinking, the PDPA put forward the concept of national reconciliation, articulated by the Central Committee of our party at its plenary meeting in December 1986. The objective of this initiative is to secure peace, develop the national economy and use our human and material resources for the good of the new society we are building and for our people's prosperity. *The policy of national reconciliation guarantees Afghanistan's status as an independent, sovereign and non-aligned state.* It is the only way to peace which is to be achieved by political means, not by force.

After this policy was proclaimed, the PDPA and the government of the republic moved vigorously and constructively to create a healthy climate for talks with the opposition (witness the unilateral ceasefire of January 15, 1987, the general amnesty, the enactment of the law on restoring lost property to and providing jobs for returnees, the cancellation of earlier debts incurred by peasants, the decree establishing new relations of land tenure and water distribution, the law on political parties, the elections of the president of the republic, etc.).

The policy of national reconciliation is reflected in the new Constitution of Afghanistan which acknowledges the actual political, economic and social state of our society. The constitution institutionalises the changes that have occurred in the social fabric and guarantees equitable representation of all sections of the population in government. After the announcement of the new course, recognition has been extended to seven parties.

This is a revolutionary policy because it continues the course of national and democratic transformation, consolidates popular government and its basis, and makes peaceful life and work possible. We see it as a nationwide political process ensuring the cooperation of all the fraternal peoples inhabiting Afghanistan.

The objectives of this policy can be summed up as follows:

- ensuring nationwide peace and security, furthering revolutionary change and implementing the PDPA Programme of Action;
- renouncing armed struggle in tackling the issues of our republic's present and future;
- establishing a coalition government of national unity with the participation of broad political forces;
- ensuring equitable representation of all sections of the population in the political structure and in economic activity;
- guaranteeing freedom from persecution for previous political activities and effecting a general amnesty with exceptions only in special cases;
- achieving a political settlement of the entire situation related to Afghanistan in the absence of external interference and, consequently, the withdrawal of Soviet troops;

- enhancing an independent and non-aligned policy;
- preserving and adding to the historical and national traditions.

The mechanism. Special commissions comprising representatives of party and government bodies and of the political opposition, as well as unaffiliated individuals, are the principal working organs of national reconciliation.

We are prepared to cooperate with:

- all genuine patriots however conflicting or different their views were in the past;
- political forces, groups and factions;
- all armed opposition groups active within the country;
- all Afghans living abroad (refugees);
- Islamic parties, political opposition parties and figures of the former royalist regime.

The economic aspect. Consolidation of the economy is an essential aspect of national reconciliation. Commitment to national reconciliation stems from the essence of the socio-economic policy pursued by the PDPA and by the government of the republic. Several steps have been taken in recent years to prevent economic dislocation and a decline in living standards. More than 90 billion afghani has been invested into the economy over the past five years, much more than in the previous five-year period. Our country is combating underdevelopment, but to defeat it, we must live in peace and security.

Our strategy in this sphere is being pursued with due regard for the multi-structured character of the economy, an economy comprising several sectors — public, cooperative, mixed, and private. The party takes the interests of all classes and social strata into account and has developed an individual approach to every social group.

The role of the clergy. Islam is the religion of Afghanistan, and this is reflected in the new constitution. The Muslim clergy plays an important role in securing peace in conditions of national reconciliation. Traditionally, clergymen have carried great weight in Afghan society. An Islamic research centre has been opened. Popular traditions, including religious ones, form the unifying basis of our policy.

The role of industrial workers and peasants. National reconciliation makes it incumbent on Afghanistan's nascent working class to make our industry more productive. The working peasants are the force which shapes the political climate in rural areas.

The role of local entrepreneurs. They enjoy prestige in Afghanistan. The public and private sectors cooperate smoothly. Recently, private entrepreneurs have launched joint projects with financial and technical Soviet participation.

The role of petty craftsmen. This largest social group holds a prominent place in the national economy. The government seeks to supply it with raw materials and gradually involve it into the work of producer cooperatives.

The role of the intelligentsia. The policy of national reconciliation pays due attention to the special role of intellectuals in society. They are doing a great deal to explain the objectives of national reconciliation, and they are the foremost champions of progress in culture and education.

The international prestige and stature of the Republic of Afghanistan is growing. We have established diplomatic relations with more than 80 countries. Our foreign policy is based on the principles of peaceful coexistence. Relations with the Soviet Union, our northern neighbour, are of special significance. Cooperation with the socialist countries is acquiring a new quality; it is of fundamental importance to our republic's socio-economic development.

As a non-aligned Islamic country, Afghanistan seeks to promote contacts with the Islamic world; our relations with it have historical roots. We favour an atmosphere of trust and good-neighbour relations with the People's Republic of China and all other neighbouring countries. We maintain traditional ties with member-countries of the Non-aligned Movement. We also intend to improve and expand our political contacts with developed capitalist countries on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

We hold that the need to ensure favourable international conditions for social progress and peace in Afghanistan is an integral part of the policy of national reconciliation.

The signing of the Geneva Accord, President Najibullah's repeated appeals to the opposition and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan which began on May 15, 1988, have opened the way to ending the war and securing peace in our country and in the region.

¹ 1 US\$ equals 50 afghani. — Ed.

THE FLEXIBILITY OF OUR CONCEPT

Chim Nguon
(Kampuchea)

The 3 years, 8 months and 20 days of Pol Pot's inhuman 'social experiment' drove the Khmer nation to the brink of extinction. Pol Pot's supporters murdered more than 3 million innocent people, destroyed 5,857 schools, 1,986 pagodas, 108 mosques, and 796 hospitals and outpatient clinics, and abolished public institutions. Society was in fact plunged into a primitive state.

Having taken power into their own hands and forced to begin practically from scratch, the people, led by the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), are overcoming numerous difficulties and rebuilding the country. We are working to meet the targets of the first five-year plan adopted by the KPRP at its 5th Congress and featuring food and raw rubber production and progress in forestries and fisheries.

Subjected to continued aggression, Kampuchea is doing its best to promote peaceful settlement of global problems through joint efforts exerted by the forces of socialism, democracy and peace. That is why our government has drawn up and proclaimed a policy of national reconciliation consonant with the aspirations of the Kampuchean people towards a society of equality and justice. *The objective of this policy is to*

guarantee the nation's peaceful future, ensure social and economic development and forever rule out a recurrence of the threat of genocide.

Our concept of national reconciliation covers and accommodates a wide range of factors and pursues long-term goals. It stipulates joint efforts of all Kampucheans for the sake of our country's prosperity. Irrespective of their class or ethnic background, ideological or religious beliefs, all citizens can take part in the drive to build an independent, peaceful and non-aligned Kampuchea.

The concept expresses a clear-cut attitude to our countrymen abroad. Back in August 1984 the PRK government declared that it regarded all those deceived by fraudulent propaganda and lured into the opposite camp as *victims of the reactionary forces and their families, as innocent sufferers*. We called on these people to reunite with their families and countrymen for normal life and work. Those who have returned enjoy civil rights, including the right to vote and be elected. They are being helped to find housing and jobs.

Nor have we lost sight of the socially heterogeneous group of people who are sent into battle against us. Our position is that all members of the opposite camp's armed units who cease their hostile activities and surrender to our authorities will be forgiven and their civil rights will be restored.

We regard with compassion the fate of our countrymen in the refugee camps on Thai soil. Some 300,000 people are living there in appalling conditions. The Thai authorities and international organisations should ensure that the camps are no longer used against the Kampuchean people for military or political purposes and that an end be put to the practice of terrorising the refugees. The problem of *orderly repatriation* will have to be tackled.

Given the overall flexibility of our concept of national reconciliation, all its aspects are aimed at the single objective of creating favourable conditions for our nation's progress. This policy gives all interested parties a tangible and promising opportunity to sit down at the negotiating table. This year, the non-aligned movement held a conference in Harare to discuss a political settlement of the situation related to Kampuchea. Taking part were representatives of the PRK government and, significantly, spokesmen for three Khmer opposition groups, as well as delegates from Cuba, India, Indonesia, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. They held consultations on a peaceful and mutually acceptable settlement of the Kampuchean problem and on the role of the non-aligned countries in this process.

We regard *readiness for compromise* where it can help settlement as an important aspect of our reconciliation policy. An informal conference on the settlement of the problems related to Kampuchea was held in Bogor, Indonesia, in July 1988. Hun Sen, our head of government, spoke there and outlined a seven-point programme for establishing a national reconciliation council led by Norodom Sihanouk, the former monarch of our country, and comprising the four Kampuchean parties; for holding general elections to the National Assembly, adopting a new constitution and forming a coalition government.

It was also suggested that an international commission be established to monitor compliance with the agreements achieved in the sphere of political settlement, and that a conference be organised, to be attended by Kampuchea, Vietnam, Laos, the ASEAN countries, the president of the Non-aligned Movement, the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary General and representatives of other countries so as to guarantee Kampuchea's sovereignty as a non-aligned state.

The instrument provides for the complete withdrawal of the remaining Vietnamese volunteers from Kampuchea by the end of 1989, or, at the latest, during the first three months of 1990, provided an end is put simultaneously to the interference in our internal affairs, including foreign assistance to Pol Pot's followers and other factions of the Khmer opposition and the use of bases and refugee camps outside Kampuchea. We hold that our country's internal problems should be tackled by Kampucheans on the basis of national reconciliation, political isolation of Pol Pot and his henchmen, and the elimination of their armed units.

The concept of national reconciliation implies *political pluralism* and principles of multi-party, coalition rule. This is what shapes our attitude to the various national forces, including the opposition, and our desire to secure peace and prosperity for Kampuchea while proceeding from a common platform.

Under today's complex domestic and external circumstances, the party believes that the problem can be solved through an *integrated* and constructive policy of reconciliation. Not everything depends on us here. So far, the other side has refused to make any substantive concessions. However, the flexibility of our concept makes it possible to agree to accommodation for the sake of attaining the main goal. The People's Revolutionary Party and the government of Kampuchea seek in a spirit of goodwill, to end the suffering of our people as soon as possible. Ours is a popular government, and we must do all we can to serve the people.

FOLLOWING THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER OF THE ACCORD

Bayardo Altamirano
(Nicaragua)

In January 1989, it will be eight years since imperialism launched an aggressive 'low-intensity' war against Nicaragua. Our people who number some 3.5 million have already lost more than 28,000 lives in it. Economic losses run into millions of dollars.

Throughout this period, the Reagan Administration has been working stubbornly to destroy the Sandinist popular revolution using a variety of techniques, from political and diplomatic pressure to economic blackmail and blockade to the mining of Nicaraguan ports. A permanent campaign of disinformation has been in full swing: Washington charges that our government is totalitarian and anti-democratic and that it has turned Nicaragua into a springboard of Soviet aggression. There are also threats

of direct armed intervention by the US Marines. The US Congress officially approves millions of dollars in 'aid' to the contras. Secret funds and money from questionable sources (including revenue from the sale of narcotic drugs) are used to finance the 'insurgents'. Often — suffice it to recall the Irangate scandal — money is transferred to them illegally.

An effort to organise the remnants of Somoza's National Guard into a counter-revolutionary army was central to the anti-Nicaraguan policy of the Reagan Administration. This army now poses a threat to our revolutionary government.

Still, despite all imperialist forays, our people are defending their revolution successfully. Although they had to pay a high price for it, *the defeat of the contras is, strategically, a fact*. It is now time to secure peace which is essential to the implementation of economic programmes, to full employment and to higher living standards and, in the long term, to a transition to socialism. In this connection the Sandinist National Liberation Front has clearly outlined two major political tasks — peace and economic development. Naturally, the former is an essential condition of the latter.

Proceeding from this concept, the Nicaraguan government has advanced and supported a series of peace proposals and displayed maximum flexibility so as to make tangible progress possible. Let me mention only the more important steps we have taken.

The establishment of the *Contadora Group* (comprising Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) was motivated by a desire to settle the regional conflict at the negotiating table with due respect for the right of every nation to self-determination. The group suggested that the Central American republics conclude an agreement on peaceful coexistence. This resulted in a document which, among other things, called for withdrawing all foreign military advisers from the region, confining armaments to defensive uses, and refusing to allow the use of national territory for aggression against neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, only Nicaragua signed this document.

The Contadora process gained considerable strength after Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay formed the so-called *Support Group*. The efforts undertaken by the nine countries representing almost 90% of the continent's population are a clear indication of the pan-Latin American position which has been taken vis-à-vis the high-handed US policy of pressure. The imperialist schemes to make the Contadora and the Support Groups collapse are doomed to failure. Nicaragua will invariably insist on their involvement as guarantors in any solution to the problem.

Since Washington is the chief architect of the aggression against our country and the contras are mere pawns of the United States, the need arose for launching *a dialogue directly with those who called the tune*. Such a meeting was held in Manzanillo, Mexico. We went there with a desire to reach agreement. Reagan's envoys, however, were concerned only with publicity, and they wrecked the talks.

Finally, thanks to the vigorous diplomatic activity of the Nicaraguan leadership, the presidents of the region's five countries signed, in Guatemala City on August 7, 1987, an accord entitled Procedure for the Establishment of Firm and Durable Peace in Central America, better

known as the Esquipulas II Agreement. It lays down the following mandatory and concrete steps: national reconciliation, including a national dialogue, an amnesty for political prisoners and the establishment in each country of a reconciliation commission; cessation of hostilities; democratisation; free elections; cessation of assistance to irregular forces; non-use of national territory for aggression against other states; talks on arms control and limitation (in accordance with the Contadora project); assistance to refugees; cooperation for development; and international verification of compliance with the accords.

Once again, Nicaragua honoured its obligations scrupulously. It set up a nationwide forum in which 14 political entities (7 of them without the status of a juristic person) represented conservative, liberal, social Christian, Marxist and unionist currents. A law has been promulgated on an amnesty for political prisoners on the sole condition that the hostilities cease definitively; the amnesty applies to all Somozistas and counter-revolutionaries not party to crimes against humanity as defined by the OAS Juridical Committee. A National Reconciliation Commission has been created. Every month, our government unilaterally extends the ceasefire agreement which was originally concluded for a period of 60 days. In the context of expanding democracy and pluralism, the newspaper *La Prensa* and Catholic Radio have been allowed to resume their activities. Inspectors are free to visit any part of the country: although Nicaragua maintains political solidarity with guerrilla movements in neighbouring countries, it does not support them militarily because revolution cannot be exported, it can only be made by the people themselves. More than 15,000 Indian refugees have returned home from Honduras and Costa Rica. Whatever difficulties they may have had should be blamed on the authorities of the neighbouring countries, not on the Sandinistas (as acknowledged by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees).

Nevertheless, other countries are violating the provisions of the Esquipulas II Agreement. Honduras remains a sanctuary for the contras and a base for constant military exercises of US troops. El Salvador and Costa Rica allow their territory to be used for counter-revolutionary radio broadcasts and their airfields for shipping arms to the contras.

Efforts to correct the mistakes we have made in our policy with regard to the ethnic minorities of the Atlantic Coast — the Misquito, Sumo and Rama Indians — are an important advance in the settlement of the conflict. The discussion and approval of the Law on Autonomy, as well as the recognition and respect of these minorities' cultural identity, traditions and customs have helped in the large-scale return of these tribes to their homes and to peaceful life.

Acting in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Esquipulas II Agreement during his visit to the United States, President Daniel Ortega submitted through House Speaker Jim Wright concrete proposals on *talks with the contras* about a ceasefire, *to be mediated by Cardinal Obando y Bravo*. After indirect contacts in Santo Domingo, Guatemala City and San Jose, a step forward was taken: it was agreed that a meeting was to take place on Nicaraguan territory. On March 23, 1988, several accords were signed in Sapoá. Later, three more rounds of talks were held in Managua,

and it proved possible to find common ground on most agenda items.

Peace seemed to be within reach, but the Reagan Administration again wrecked this effort: its puppet Enrique Bermudez, Somoza's ex-colonel, put forward unacceptable demands. As a reward, the CIA made him commander-in-chief of the contras' armed units, precipitating a new wave of infighting among them.

The White House topped it all by appointing Richard Melton ambassador to Nicaragua and instructing him to carry out a plan of provocations and interference in our internal affairs. Naturally, no self-respecting government could tolerate that, and we were forced to declare that diplomat 'persona non grata'.

However, in spite of all this, our republic is *firmly committed to its chosen course*. In this speech on the ninth anniversary of the revolution, Daniel Ortega addressed new peace proposals to the US administration and to the contra leaders. At the ceremony celebrating the inauguration of President Borja of Ecuador and the restoration of our relations with that sister nation, our leader reiterated our desire to continue the dialogue. But the so-called National Resistance keeps silent, obviously on instructions from Washington. So far, the conclusion is pessimistic: as long as the present US administration remains in office, peace will hardly prevail in Nicaragua.

We hope that the new US administration takes a more realistic stand. As to the Nicaraguans and their leadership, we will, patiently and vigorously, continue to *seek peace at the negotiating table*, upholding the right of our people to build a more just society and to have a government of their own choice.

The Chances Of A Capitalism Without Guns

Professor Dieter Klein — (GDR)

IN the nuclear and space age, the human race has encountered a situation without precedent in history. It is facing global dangers. This makes it necessary to develop Marxist-Leninist theory, specifically political economy. The important thing is not only to ascertain the ways in which the laws of capitalism discovered by Marx operate today and to deepen our vision of socialism but also and primarily to analyse the ability or inability of developed capitalist countries to meet the requirements of a joint effort to ensure human survival. In other words, we need an integrated examination of the following question: can capitalism be reoriented on peace and broad international cooperation for the good of all humanity?

Dieter Klein's article continues the *WMR* discussion of whether capitalism can become non-aggressive and how a peaceful future can be secured for mankind. See: Victor Perlo, 'Can Capitalism Do Without Militarism?' in *WMR*, No. 7, 1988; and Jurgen Reusch, 'Capitalism and Peace' in *WMR*, No. 10, 1988.

Are there any objective conditions making this possible? What are the pros and cons of this approach to the issue? What new elements does this method contain?

Productive Forces of a New Type

Man's penetration of the microcosmos has made it possible to devise productive forces of a radically new type. Some of them (nuclear power production, genetic engineering, etc.) display a dialectical interconnection between the noticeable rise in labour efficiency and the unprecedented degree of responsibility for the application of these productive forces. They can become either a material and technological tool in the solution of man's vital problems or a means of his self-destruction. They can help civilisation flourish or perish. Therefore, the logic of the current phase in the development of the scientific and technological revolution makes it imperative to adopt a completely new attitude to the use of the productive forces and to the transformation of nature by man. Without it the danger to life itself, the threat of nuclear and environmental disasters, will grow.

In order to avert this threat, we need, above all, *universal peace which is absolutely essential to the normal and rational improvement of the world's material and technological infrastructure*. Besides, economic activity is to submit to the environmental imperative: new intellectual advances which enable us to see the diversity of nature's properties must give us an opportunity to improve, not destroy the environment. In turn, the responsibility of all countries for international security and environmental protection also calls for the establishment of worldwide and rational economic ties and correlations. Such are the new social parameters capable of directing the development of the productive forces along a channel which will be safe for the world community.

Socialism is particularly consonant with these demands of the times, and this is evident in its policy of *universal disarmament and environmental security*. At the same time, one must note that the new degree of industrial intervention in the environment is increasingly forcing bourgeois society, primarily the bourgeois state, to look for the means of offsetting the destructive trends innate in capitalist production and to emphasise the civilising aspect of the exploiter system. Is this possible?

To a certain extent, it is. The present stage of the scientific and technological revolution enables the bourgeoisie to find additional opportunities for profitable investment — waste-free technologies, the production of new types of raw materials and energy sources, the manufacture of medical drugs, etc. Paradoxically, these activities are connected with long-term social progress. This trend of modern capitalist development, which is in line with the complete or partial solution of global problems and which is discernible, in, say, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland and Finland, is also present, to a degree, in several other industrialised capitalist countries.

Meanwhile, one must not forget that in the developed capitalist world, the monopoly interests with close military-industrial connections are still dominant, and they seek to usurp advances in science and technology and to use them for aggressive purposes. The US policy of going ahead with

SDI and transferring the arms race to outer space is a case in point. This policy is clashing increasingly with the civilian economic interests of large sections of the bourgeoisie. The reason is that the diversion of research to military projects, the escalating secrecy of its results, the inflationary impact of military spending on the purchasing capacity of the population, and the destabilisation of international relations hamstring investment into new and promising branches of the economy.

It follows that militarism with its deep roots in modern capitalism is clashing ever more strongly with entrepreneurial interests. Therefore, one cannot rule out a favourable regrouping of different factions of the state-monopoly, monopoly and non-monopoly bourgeoisie and, as a consequence, the possibility that its realistic section would join us in the conversion effort and in the creation, on the basis of the latest technologies and of cooperation, of environmentally safe industries. In terms of its depth, scope and diversity of social effects, the present revolution in the productive forces is superior to all previous leaps in mankind's technological development; therefore, it makes new social practice possible.

The Role of the Subjective Factor

In reflecting on the ability of modern capitalism to concentrate on strictly civilian production, one inevitably wonders about the role of the subjective factor in this process. However significant the new economic circumstances or the objective laws, we know that, as Marx discovered, their effects take shape in the course of the clashes between different socially motivated actions — that is, in the course of the *class struggle*. For example, in analysing the dynamics of the rate of profit Marx said that "the fixation of its actual degree is only settled by the continuous struggle between capital and labour, the capitalist constantly tending to reduce wages to the physical minimum, and to extend the working day to its physical maximum, while the working man constantly presses in the opposite direction".¹ Engels also noted that "the struggle waged by the trade unions does not violate the law of wages. On the contrary, this law operates due to their pressure."²

This means that vigorous social action is one of the basic factors behind the operation of objective laws and development trends. The cases of the working class making gains while fighting for its interests in pitched battles with the bourgeoisie and in spite of desperate resistance of the ruling circles are far from unique — witness the entire record of the struggle waged by the working people for a shorter working week or for bigger social expenditures on education, health, etc. On the one hand, such gains were consonant with the demands of the unfolding scientific and technological revolution; on the other, they were compatible with the emergence of new investment spheres and objectively in concert with the interests of the bourgeoisie — the switch to the exploitation of labour of a better quality and greater complexity.

How do these conclusions relate to the subject under discussion? As we have noted, large sections of the entrepreneurial class are also aware of the grave risks involved in the emergence of the new type of productive forces.

However, they have their own approach to the problem of eliminating such risks: they seek to make the workers pay for industrial safety. That could be described as the essence of neoliberal economic policy. But a different solution is also possible — *the curtailment of the military-industrial complexes, conversion and the release of considerable public resources for peaceful purposes*. As emphasised earlier, the people will not have to fight a monolithic capital in the struggle for a new economy. Many factions of the bourgeoisie have a vital stake in the expansion opportunities offered by the creation of new and prosperous civilian industries. However, for modern capitalism to change its spots and make a definitive choice between the arms race and development, Left parties, trade unions and all those committed to durable peace and conditions worthy of man must exert powerful efforts. Today, it is particularly important for the pacifist, environmentalist and other alternative movements of the working people to advance new social demands in line with the distinctive features of the emergent productive forces of a new type. As Lenin foresaw, the role of the subjective factor is gaining prominence, and its rise is helping defuse the destructive trends of contemporary capitalism.

In this connection one is led to assume that the switch to a new type of productive force imbues the class struggle in the industrialised capitalist countries with a new content. Outwardly, it appears to stabilise capitalism, but essentially, it asserts the significance of universal human values with growing force. In this way, the class struggle continues to develop as a motive force of contemporary history.

Socialism Points the Way

Both world systems objectively influence the operation of the economic laws inherent in each of them. That is borne out by numerous examples. It is an organic aspect of the internationalisation of economic production in conditions of coexistence, an aspect which is now a property of our contradictory but interdependent and largely integral world. How can socialism stimulate the positive potential which, as we surmise theoretically, is growing within industrialised capitalism? Once again, I am referring to its ability to reorient itself to a policy of peace and joint solution of urgent global problems.

This socialist influence can take different forms. They are particularly well-defined in the concept of a 'common European home' to which GDR scholars have contributed noticeably too. The ideas of this concept, of a creative approach to the Helsinki process cover primarily the sphere of *military and political relations* between Europe's capitalist and socialist countries — common security ('the security of my adversary is my own security') ensured through disarmament, confidence-building and the elimination of the risk of unpredictable regional conflicts. Translated into reality from the Atlantic to the Urals, these ideas would produce substantive changes in the political climate and in the current practice of using the advances of the scientific and technological revolution. From a factor threatening life on Earth, this revolution would turn into a force capable of devising a pattern of a dynamic world order. Renunciation of the use of force as a continuation of politics by other means and, instead,

its continuation by the means of promoting all-round exchange of scientific and technological information (particularly on issues generating suspicion and tensions in international relations) are essential to the triumph of reason.

The 'common European home' ideas also include proposals encouraging the commitment of the business world to broad *trading, economic and ecological contacts with the socialist countries*. These initiatives are aimed at the joint implementation of several large-scale projects designed to further Europe's economic advancement and environmental recovery. Multilateral cooperation between the two communities — the CMEA and the EEC — in these matters would provide a tangible basis for a reappraisal by influential quarters in the capitalist countries of their attitude to the plans for West European military integration. After all, the elimination of the social maladies produced by arms manufacture and environmentally harmful technologies may become, for capital, a sphere of profitable long-term cooperation. At the same time, the mutual complementarity of the economic structures in Western and Eastern Europe would benefit the entire continent.

Finally, the concept of a 'common European home' comprises more active and broader *humanitarian cooperation* in the field of culture, education, people-to-people contacts etc. These social proposals are devised, generally, to destroy the myths that used to be cultivated for decades, the 'enemy images', the views that some nations are superior and others unimportant, the false interpretation of the socialist countries' foreign policy, specifically, the allegation that they have ulterior motives in their assistance to the developing states, etc. In the final analysis, humanitarian cooperation will enable West Europeans to form, without the help of the commercial mass media, their own picture of the socialist countries as partners in military and environmental security and in long-term economic and cultural international policies.

To sum up, the implementation of the ideas contained in the concept of a 'common European home' and their transformation into an effectively creative force would open a new chapter in European history and ensure the continent's contribution to the preservation and advancement of civilisation. Of course, the opponents of the 'common European home' idea are influential and many. Reflecting the interests of the military-industrial complexes, they would like to perpetuate tensions and block broad cooperation. However, an analysis of the issue shows that the advocates of new political thinking can win.

Socialism gives strength to those civic movements which can adjust the policies of capital and check its inherently aggressive trends and its predatory attitude to nature and man. Apparently, therefore, *capitalism is going through a substantially radical modification at the level of the economic laws which were typical of its entire previous history*.

Utopian or Feasible?

Today, Marx's words to the effect that the same economic basis may, under the impact of numerous factors and various circumstances (traditions, external influences, etc.), manifest itself in widely different

modifications are particularly topical. The foregoing paragraphs indicate that the factors exerting especially great 'pressure' on modern capitalism include a *triad of peace*:

- productive forces of a new type;
- the new role of the subjective factor in the industrialised capitalist countries;
- the socialist policy of building a worldwide edifice of peace and solving universal human problems.

A question arises in this connection: can the interaction of the elements comprising this triad lead to new (non-aggressive) versions of state-monopoly capitalism? Let us try and answer this question. In my view, two models of capitalism 'gravitating' towards peace are possible — a *disarmament-based, democratic-reformist one and a moderate conservative model*. Let us take a brief look at both.

Conversion opens great scope for new economic activities, for the use of the new type of productive forces to benefit all humanity. At the same time, this will call for considerable social change, for reform in the social structures and relations of contemporary capitalism. This change depends above all on the readiness of the working people to bring pressure to bear on the ruling quarters and to force the bourgeoisie to turn towards democratisation and a radical reshaping of the quality of the civilian economy. The direct connection between the attained level of industrial production and the involvement of broad sections of the public in a vigorous struggle for peace and environmental protection, as well as the realistic stance assumed by many Left forces (for example, the desire of most Socialist International parties to represent consistently the interests of the population) and the new course adopted by a number of trade unions (to combine economic demands with tasks common to all humanity) show that a disarmament-based, democratic-reformist version of capitalism is possible. It may prove to be more open to socialism and display a substantial interest in tackling the food problem and the backwardness of the developing world. In this way, inner economic and social stabilisation factors may be gradually built into the system, and they would ensure its development without reliance on an arms race.

Should the ruling circles be able to offset the working people's social pressure by resorting to partial concessions, a moderate conservative model may arise, more oriented on monopoly interests but with due regard for the modern realities — the political influence of socialism aimed at strengthening peace and, at the same time, the existence of a global threat to the environment. In matters of military policy, this kind of capitalism is likely to maintain that the defensive potential of each side should be far superior to its offensive capability.

How are we to view this version of state-monopoly capitalism? It compares favourably with the still dominant role of the military-industrial complexes in the structure of contemporary capitalism — entities preparing for large-scale offensive military operations. The adoption of this moderate conservative model by a number of industrialised capitalist countries may, to a certain degree, help improve the international political climate. However, in many respects it is inferior to the democratic-

reformist version: there is the pro-monopolist orientation of the former, its practice of consigning the interests of the working people to a position of secondary importance, etc. Besides, it is difficult to forecast whether moderate conservatism would be less egoistic in its attitude to the Third World and its economic security.

Would this version be capable of further evolution? One should remember that in the near future — say, before the century is over — the 'technotronic revolution' will produce dissimilar social changes and shifts in the industrialised capitalist world. Some of these changes (increased individualism, the polarisation of the highly skilled and therefore relatively better-paid sections of the population in opposition to the growing numbers of 'redundant' people, etc.) will, for a certain period, favour the moderate conservative model. Meanwhile, other factors will work against it: the record shows that in order to survive, bourgeois society also needs ties and contacts of solidarity, of collectivism. That is why it is quite likely for the *evolution of contemporary capitalism to swing, in several countries, from a moderate conservative to a democratic-reformist model*. However, in such forecasts it is better to confine oneself to raising questions and to remain open to different answers.

In reflecting on the possibilities of an evolution of state-monopoly capitalism and the weakening of its aggressive and destructive potential, one must not forget that this process inevitably implies a continuous struggle — to prevent relapses of the arms race and its switch to the new channels hollowed out by the tide of the scientific and technological revolution. The defence of peace is not a temporary tactical move but a strategy connected with the survival of capitalism. The latter aspect makes it incumbent on us to work tirelessly in the sphere of theory to enrich and deepen the ideas of new political thinking.

In this connection, major tasks also arise before *Marxist political economy* which is to contribute to our scientific knowledge of the world and of its objective laws. Among other things, we are to advance substantiated hypotheses about making irreversible the certain positive trends currently emerging in several industrialised capitalist countries. We are to work more seriously on the concept the socialist part of the world has put forward with regard to international economic security: the present international economic order gives rise to phenomena (the growing foreign debt of the developing countries, the sway of the TNC's, protectionism, etc.) which sometimes threaten life on Earth as gravely as do military and political realities. Thus, together with clearing up the issue of reducing the war threat, Marxist political economy is to provide the key to *help grasp the opportunities for ensuring the economic unity of our interdependent world and safeguarding the universally acknowledged and everlasting human values*. It is also important to examine the role of informatics and to find out how the new social communication channels it opens can help us build a common home for all humanity, a home which would be safe in all respects.

Such is my view of the next step in discussing the issues raised and in infusing the triad of peace with a new content. At the same time, we need a new methodological approach to contemporary capitalism, to its

contradictions and its capacity for development: we must understand what it will be like tomorrow, what it cannot be like either in the near future or in the long term, who we are to compete and cooperate with, and who we are to rely on (and how fully) in the struggle for human survival.

¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 72-73.

² Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 19, p. 253.

Commentary

A Year of Hope

ANOTHER year is now behind us. What legacy has it left? They say that time is the best judge; only history, after thoroughly sifting everything through its sieve, will assign each event its proper place. But, apparently, one can already say that 1988 was a year of hope and promise in the struggle for peace and international security.

Two breakthroughs were of particular importance — *first, the beginning of the elimination of Soviet and US medium- and shorter-range missiles, which ushered in a process of real nuclear disarmament, and second, the perceptible advances in the peaceful settlement of several armed conflicts in different regions.*

Above all, these developments marked a transition from the extremely dangerous situation that used to be dominant for almost a full decade to an improvement of the international climate. The transition has only just begun: it is yet to be completed. The resistance to this positive process on the part of powerful militarist and reactionary interests gave rise to numerous difficulties and, in some areas, slowed down the change for the better. Nevertheless, the ice is broken. A warm current is washing cracks in the Cold War iceberg.

Under these new circumstances, it is very important for the forces of peace, reason and progress to assess these developments realistically, to try and make the nascent disarmament process irreversible, and to consolidate and follow up on the favourable shifts and trends.

The meeting in Moscow between General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov and President Ronald Reagan was an event which symbolised the easing of international tensions. Its most important result — the exchange of the INF Treaty instruments of ratification — is difficult to overestimate.

The era of nuclear disarmament, long the dream of all those who are concerned over our planet's future, started its clock in August 1988. That

was when the USSR began to scrap the first batches of its nuclear missiles. Some of them had come fresh from their deployment positions at the heart of Europe in Czechoslovakia and the GDR. The United States started scrapping the Pershing missiles withdrawn from the FRG.

The visits exchanged by the heads of the Soviet and US military agencies, the agreement about contacts between the two countries' military in 1988-1990, the discussion of their strategic doctrines and the decision to set up working groups of military experts to allay tensions which may lead to conflicts all directly result and follow up on the dialogue conducted at summit level in Moscow.

The bilateral verification measures stipulated under the INF Treaty have assumed unprecedented dimensions. US inspectors have recently checked many Soviet missile bases, launcher-manufacturing factories, depots and other previously top secret facilities. Soviet experts have also visited bases and factories in the United States and the deployment sites of US missiles in all West European countries covered by the treaty.

Experts from both powers are jointly working to perfect the techniques of monitoring underground nuclear explosions so as to lower their yield. This would be a step on the way to the final objective — their complete prohibition.

To sum up, the fourth Soviet-American summit in the past three years gave a powerful impetus to progress in the struggle for nuclear disarmament. But the world expected a much greater contribution — specifically, with regard to halving the strategic capabilities. Had the US position on this issue not been negative, such an agreement could have been concluded.

There is a logic to this position — the US ruling monopoly interests' fear that disarmament may go too far. This fear permeates not only the far right or the military-industrial complex but also other factions of high finance and of the political élite whose thinking is still based on the notion of an external enemy and of armed force.

The signing, in April 1988, of the Geneva accords on settling the situation relating to Afghanistan was another important event of the year. It shows that regional conflicts can really be settled peacefully. The initiative of the Soviet Union which, after reaching agreement on this matter with the Afghan government, decided to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, was instrumental in the conclusion of the accords which, if implemented by all parties to them, are to bring peace to that long-suffering nation.

True, the United States and Pakistan continue to flaunt their unwillingness to honour their obligations, grossly interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, bolstering the counter-revolutionaries' positions there, and try to overthrow the progressive and patriotic national regime. However, despite the present sacrifices and difficulties, the mounting trend that favours peaceful settlement of regional conflicts, the acceptance of the policy of national reconciliation by great numbers of Afghans, and the exposure of the counter-revolutionaries' ties with imperialism and with several reactionary regimes further the cause of durable peace in Afghanistan.

In the summer of 1988, Iran and Iraq officially ceased hostilities along the entire front. The eight years of war took a toll of about one million lives, and the loss of property exceeded \$400 billion. Representatives of the two countries are continuing their negotiations in Geneva. These talks are proceeding along a tortuous path. Zigzags in the course of events cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, the way from war to peace has been opened in the Persian Gulf area too.

The opportunities for dampening the hotbeds of tensions in Southern Africa, Central America and Asia have increased perceptibly. Last year, a complicated but ongoing negotiating process was launched to end the South African occupation of Namibia and bring peace to Angola. The settlement of the Kampuchean problem and of the situation relating to Nicaragua is now on the agenda.

Some circles would like to create the impression that the positive changes on the world scene are a victory of the West and of the 'positions of strength' policy. One can hear clichés about 'Moscow's concessions' as a sign of Soviet weakness. One can hear calls for playing on this to build up armaments and advance political ultimatums. All peace-oriented initiatives of the socialist countries are being called into question. Henry Kissinger, a former US Secretary of State and a Western ideologue, spoke at length in this spirit in the September 19 issue of *Newsweek* magazine.

The Soviet Union has indeed made certain concessions and revised some aspects of its foreign policy. The course pursued by the USSR is based on new political thinking which stems from the recognition of the world as interdependent and of universal human values as having precedence over all others. In the past, world views often lagged considerably behind new realities, and military means of ensuring security were excessively emphasised over political ones — although the Soviet objectives always remained defensive. However, in its efforts to attain strategic parity, the USSR accepted the American 'rules of the game', often trying to match each new US weapon system. It was only later that the concepts of reasonable sufficiency and asymmetrical response matured.

All unbiased observers are aware of the changes that have recently materialised in the Soviet Union's political thinking and of the flexibility its foreign policy has acquired. Under the impact of these changes, a restructuring of international relations based on Cold War principles began and the image of the USSR as a cunning enemy waned.

What about the American side? It, too, will have to travel its part of the way. Pressed by economic problems and changes in public awareness, Reagan did take steps in this direction, even though they were not enough. But the credit for setting an improvement of the international climate in motion should first and foremost go to the leaders of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, to the non-aligned movement and to the growing forces of peace throughout the world.

The socialist community countries never tired in their search for peace or gave up in the face of the other side dragging its feet in matters of reciprocity. They are looking for and discovering opportunities to convince Western public opinion of their sincerity, of the mutual benefits inherent in their proposals, and of the dangers posed by continued militarisation.

At the Warsaw meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in July, the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation put forward new joint initiatives on reducing armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe. They suggest that substantial reductions be effected in *three stages*, the first stage already envisaging the attainment of roughly equal, balanced and lower levels of WTO and NATO armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe.

An additional impetus to the struggle against the nuclear threat came from the international conference on nuclear free zones in Central Europe and other regions, held in Berlin in the summer of 1988. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, together with the SUPG and the SDPG, proposed the creation of the nuclear-free corridor along the boundary separating the GDR and Czechoslovakia from the FRG. Arms reductions and greater security are also the objective of the Jaruzelski Plan and of Milos Jakes's proposal on the establishment of zones of trust, cooperation and goodneighbour relations. These and other initiatives of the socialist countries are aimed at promoting peace not only in Europe or the Western Hemisphere. They also apply to the Eastern part of the world, to Asia, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. In short, their ultimate objective is a universal system of international security.

The new atmosphere created by the policy of détente and the search for ways of attaining and consolidating world peace helped make the role of the UN noticeably stronger. One should particularly note its contribution to the cessation of the Iran-Iraq war and its current moves to settle the problems of Afghanistan, the Western Sahara, Cyprus, the Middle East, Central America and Southern Africa.

What are the principal lessons and conclusions that can be drawn from last year's developments?

The normalisation of the international climate and the process of disarmament will no doubt entail, as before, pitched battles. A great deal is at stake, and those who would like to perpetuate the arms race and international tensions have not laid down their arms. In the United States, work on the Star Wars programme is proceeding apace. NATO's reactionary quarters are responding to the entry into force of the INF Treaty with calls to 'offset' the loss of the missiles scrapped by increasing and modernising other weapons. They continue to wage ideological warfare and to sow mistrust and suspicion so as to upset the growth of international confidence and neutralise the steps taken so far to ensure universal peace. Imperialism stubbornly keeps interfering in the internal affairs of other nations. This happens not only in Afghanistan but also in Lebanon, Angola, Sudan, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines and other parts of the world. The objective is to destroy democratic popular gains, perpetuate dependence and destabilise the overall situation.

Naturally, much will depend on the future of Soviet-American relations. The 1988 election platforms of the presidential candidates in the United States differed substantially from the warlike rhetoric with which Reagan moved into the White House eight years ago. But what practical policies will the new US President pursue? That is something on which the international climate as a whole will depend in no small measure.

Strategic arms reductions and the renunciation of the militarisation of outer space are particularly important tasks in the struggle for human survival. Issues connected with reductions in conventional armaments and with the elimination of chemical weapons are also moving to the foreground.

At the same time, attention should remain focused on the entire spectrum of the struggle for peace and universal security. Take the already mentioned regional conflicts as an example. The degree of success achieved in the settlement of some of them gives momentum to the efforts of untangling others, specifically the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem as its core. The Israeli invaders stick to their expansionist positions and deny the Arab people of Palestine their inalienable national rights, including their right to create an independent state in the Palestinian territories overrun in 1967. In this, they are aided by the United States whose Mid-east policy remains essentially unchanged. Meanwhile, the PLO, which calls for an effective international conference on ending the occupation, creating an independent Palestinian state and bringing peace to all nations in the Middle East, pursues a realistic and flexible policy which enjoys the sympathy of, and exerts an influence on, very broad sections of world public opinion. Besides, the profoundly democratic and peaceful character of the Palestinian people's uprising against the occupation is making the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories and from Southern Lebanon, followed by the attainment of peace in the region, an increasingly feasible prospect.

The persistent search for political solutions to complex problems is motivated by the fact that an exacerbation of the international situation threatens to unleash a total nuclear war in which there will be neither winners nor losers. This also explains why it is imperative to study thoroughly the positions of the other side in the course of negotiations, in order to arrive at mutually acceptable ways of settling disputes. However, this does not call into question the prospects of national liberation against the background of the policy of settling regional conflicts peacefully. Obviously, nations will champion their legitimate aspirations for freedom and independence until the forces of imperialism and aggression retreat and demonstrate their readiness to heed the voice of reason and realism.

Peering into the future and setting concrete objectives the Communists do not evade the difficult issues arising before them. The congresses and conferences of several communist parties held last year have shown that new political thinking and the new political practice based on the observance of the principles of openness, democracy and independence benefit the parties' activities and help raise their prestige.

The Communists are inviting everyone to join their search for ways which could lead the human race into the 21st century without nuclear weapons or wars. Our emphasis on universal human interests in no way means that the class-based approach is ignored. For example, communist parties in the capitalist countries seek to combine the struggle for peace with the struggle for radical social transformations and with action in defence of the working people's socio-economic interests. They are

broadening their contacts and their alliance with other anti-war forces and new social movements.

We see the situation changing, new political thinking taking practical shape and the opportunities to curb aggressive military interests growing. The strength and the influence of socialism and the efforts of all those who fight vigorously against imperialism and the arms race and for peace have already produced substantial changes. The stake of the masses in nuclear disarmament, in the cessation of regional conflicts and in the elimination of foreign military bases is growing. People-to-people diplomacy is gaining ground. The peace movements of scientists, physicians, religious figures and environmentalists are converging in a single mainstream of struggle against the military-industrial complex, the motive force of today's militarism. All this instils in us the hope that the human race is immortal.

Our optimism is realistic. But the international situation remains quite complicated and contradictory. The world still faces the nuclear threat and many other dangers, grave difficulties and mounting global problems. The alarm of the planet's nations over environmental issues is increasing.

Still, there remains an incontrovertible truth: with each passing day and with each passing year, the movement of peace champions is growing, and new representatives of different classes and social groups are joining the struggle for a world without wars, weapons or violence. The future of the human race depends to a great extent on the way these forces will act.

The responsibility of the Communists for universal peace is now greater than ever. We are beginning a new year with an even more pronounced readiness to fight on for the worldwide triumph of trust, justice, and peace cooperation among nations.

Lumir Hanak

Central Committee member
Communist Party of Czechoslovakia;
CPCz representative on *WMR*

Mahmoud Shoukeir

Central Committee member,
Palestinian Communist Party;
PCP representative on *WMR*

The International Communist Movement

Facing The New Terrain

Dimitris Christofias — General Secretary of the CC, Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL)

I HAVE been asked to write for the December issue of the journal, so a brief mention of the highlights of the old year is in order, especially since this article will unfortunately reach the Cypriot reader only after the New Year has already 'aged' considerably.

In February 1988, our people elected a new president. This time they chose an independent candidate, Georgios Vassiliou, who was supported by AKEL and other democratic forces. The President does not belong to any political party and considers himself a progressive man, which we have no reason to doubt.

The outgoing year has also been marked by such important events as the resumption of direct top-level talks between the Greek and Turkish communities on our island — divided for 15 years now — which provides hope for the revival of a united, sovereign and non-aligned Cyprus as a federal state.

This year we have also suffered a bitter blow: Ezekias Papaioannou, AKEL's leader for almost the entire post-war period and an outstanding figure in the Cypriot and international working class movement, passed away. The party and its collective leadership continue the policy determined by the 16th AKEL Congress in November 1986, one of realism and loyalty to the ideals and of continuity and renewal, which meets the aspirations of the progressive forces and all working people of Cyprus.

In the international arena we have been heartened by the signing and ratification of the Soviet-American treaty eliminating intermediate and shorter-range nuclear missiles. The continuing Moscow-Washington dialogue, after the well-known Geneva agreements on Afghanistan, promises peaceful and just solutions to other local conflicts in different regions of the world, including ours.

One cannot but be pleased by the dynamic changes, especially in the political and cultural fields, which are occurring in the Soviet Union and other socialist states. Begun on the CPSU's initiative, the process of restructuring — or the qualitative improvement in socialism — is gathering momentum. It has not only inspired the Soviet people, but also the working men and women of all countries, who place their hopes on it for more stable and just peace, social progress and a better life.

Our opponents often ask us a 'trick' question: does this restructuring mean that you acknowledge the untenability of communist ideology and practice? Nobody is going to claim that the past was absolutely flawless. "The Party of the revolutionary proletariat," Lenin taught us, "is strong

enough to openly criticise itself, and unequivocally call mistakes and weaknesses by their proper names."² This is what the CPSU did.

However it's my belief that the *nature of previous mistakes and recently exposed flaws is not rooted in our ideology*. It is not mere coincidence that, in the restructuring drive, the CPSU and its leader, Mikhail Gorbachov, constantly refer to Lenin, his thoughts and his logic, which are as relevant now as they were then many decades ago. I regard this as evidence of the inexhaustible strength of our Marxist-Leninist world outlook. We do not need to 'overcome' it, as some advisers whisper in our ear, but to master it thoroughly and apply it consistently and imaginatively in practice. Our doctrine's viability is supported by the entire history of the communist movement. During Lenin's time it achieved its most outstanding victories, the greatest of which was the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Lenin's death set the communist movement on a contradictory path. Confronted by the fascist threat, it erred on the policy of alliances, developing the notorious thesis on social-fascism, a thesis that actually ruled out any possibility of cooperation between Communists and Social Democrats. But there was also the 7th Comintern Congress, at which Georgi Dimitrov called for an anti-fascist, democratic united front and anti-imperialist solidarity in the fight against colonialism.

These ideas at the new stage inspired both the Communists in the developed capitalist states and the peoples struggling for national independence. The United Front policy in the French and Greek anti-fascist Resistance, and in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and other countries which were later to take the path of socialism, brought the Communists and their allies success and ensured the defeat of fascism and profound changes on the world's political map.

The emergence of socialism beyond one country was accompanied by growing disagreement over methods of further development in specific national contexts. This disagreement had originated back in the 1930s and, compounded by Stalin's intolerance of any other opinions, and his urge to suppress them by brute force, led to the serious breaches in international communist unity. In the atmosphere of the Cold War imposed by imperialism, many fraternal parties sustained considerable losses, their membership diminished, and their influence among the masses declined.

Later, the Communists had to endure the debunking of Stalin's personality cult, which has in certain periods had a very negative impact not only on the life of the socialist states, but also of most fraternal parties. It was then that new difficulties, and fresh hopes, arose. But the purifying, creative potential of the 20th and 22nd CPSU Congresses soon ebbed, and so, too, in many cases did the dynamism and the focus on new approaches in communist theory and practice.

I would not like to make sweeping generalisations with which someone may rightly disagree, but I do think that *we should openly exchange opinions on the current state of our movement, and on the reasons for the involved and contradictory situation within it*, without fear of being accused of attempting to meddle in other parties' affairs. An open dialogue between communist and workers' parties is vital today.

Among the new and, for many, unexpected factors I would rank first the

ability shown by our opponent, capitalism, to respond quickly to the scientific and technological revolution, therefore to satisfy many of the secondary demands of the working class, thereby weakening its forward momentum. There have been profound structural changes occurring in capitalist society that alter the social base of communist parties and confront them with complex problems. Cyprus, like most Third World countries, has found itself facing the need to work for national democratic and socio-economic progress under capitalism.

On the other hand, a number of socialist countries have failed to meet the challenge of our time, both in economics and as regards improving people's living standards, democratising society, overcoming workers' estrangement from the means of production, and drawing the majority of the people into management, which Lenin called for. As a result of the stagnation suffered by the Soviet Union (and others) the example of existing socialism has lost much of the attraction that it derived from the Great October Revolution and the victory over fascism, and which fired the revolutionary spirit of Communists everywhere.

To the objective difficulties one should add the inability by some communist and workers' parties to make a timely and in-depth analysis of the new aspects of capitalist development, or of the new realities that are emerging at the close of the 20th century. This means that we have proved unable to inspire the masses with any slogans that would, to use Lenin's phrase, not "limp behind events" but "lead us forward, light up the path before us, and raise us above the immediate tasks of the moment."

Nor did AKEL avoid gross errors, and life taught us an object lesson in 1985 when the party supposedly marching in the vanguard of the people's anti-imperialist, anti-occupation struggle and traditionally commanding the support of a third of the electorate, gained only 27.4 per cent of the vote in the parliamentary elections (as compared with 32.7 per cent in 1981), lost three deputies' mandates and moved down from the first to third place in the level of representation.

The situation in Cyprus, and the conditions in which AKEL operates, are in many ways unique. It is a developing capitalist and non-aligned country with foreign military bases, 37 per cent of whose territory is directly occupied by Turkey. This specific character has been partly responsible for the expansion and steadfastness of anti-imperialist consciousness among the working class and the masses. For example, anti-American sentiments have been spread to sections remote from communist influence.

In such circumstances, a Marxist-Leninist party must be able to channel public opinion in the right direction so as to win more popular support. To this end, its main aim must be to show the real roots of our national tragedy, point out the culprits and find a solution. As long as we did that we were successful. In the 1983 elections, for example, the AKEL-supported presidential candidate, leader of the Democratic Party Spyros Kyprianou, got 57 per cent of the votes in the first round.

But then came misfortune. Faced by the then President's ambiguous policy on the Cyprus issue and his ending of DP-AKEL cooperation, the Communists expressed their disagreement but in doing so made a serious

error of judgement. AKEL pressed for an early presidential election, which the right-wing Democratic Rally party was also demanding, for reasons of its own. This naturally confused the people and had an adverse effect on the results of the 1985 poll.

This was another factor diminishing our position and influence. Anti-imperialist and anti-occupation struggles were our main concern, and we devoted insufficient attention to an analysis of social and economic problems or improvement in the forms of work among the various categories of working people within the new context. Both AKEL and EDON, the united democratic youth organisation, failed to recognise in time the influence of the propaganda and mass culture of imperialism on young people. Other mistakes were also made.

After a long, hard look at the reasons for our parliamentary setbacks, the January 1986 CC plenary meeting, and then the 16th AKEL Congress, drew up specific plans for change, and we examined seriously the new socio-economic phenomena and shifts in class structure. The Central Committee of the party approved the EDON leadership's 1987 analysis of contemporary youth problems, and its recommendations are already being implemented.

The worst is behind us now and our party is redoubling its efforts, and regaining its lost influence among the masses, and we can already see heartening signs of change. AKEL gained nine out of the country's 18 city mayorships in the May 1986 local elections, and, in February 1988, the AKEL-backed independent candidate won the presidential election, thanks to the immense work put in by all Communists and our new approach.

Other fraternal parties' experience, above all that of Soviet perestroika, is a valuable contribution to our own work. Rather than copying it mechanically, we try to be creative, recognising the different national context, and focusing in particular on a more democratic party life and the promotion of openness.

We are trying to make our primary cells, and each rank-and-filer more active. In our opinion, the decision for a grassroots review of the party candidates' lists before the local elections was the correct one. We did it again in the presidential election: 94 per cent of the AKEL members expressed support for Georgios Vassiliou's candidature during the party vote.

Secret ballots began to be used not only in the primary organisations, but in every echelon of the party as well. After Papaioannou's death, for example, members of the Central Committee were asked to propose the candidates for General Secretary by a particular date, with the result that three candidates emerged and this was announced in the party press. Then elections took place at a plenum after a constructive debate. In accordance with the constitution of AKEL, the winner of a secret-ballot majority became General Secretary.

As democratisation proceeds, some voices in our party (and in several others it would seem) began demanding an 'unlimited democracy' and insisting that the principle of democratic centralism was obsolete; they claim the right not only to disagree with democratically-adopted majority

decisions, but also to say so publicly, to speak out in the press against the 16th AKEL Congress line and the tenets of party policy, and not to recognise the authority of the elected party leadership.

When AKEL reasons with them that such behaviour is in violation of its constitution and the basic rules of party life, rather peculiar 'arguments' are heard in reply. These people claim that they 'represent the new thinking' and that they are 'putting the ideas of restructuring into practice' within the specific national context. This is certainly based on a misconception, or even involves a malicious distortion of the essence of Soviet perestroika. At any rate, we have not read any statements in the Soviet press that question the 27th CPSU Congress decisions or the principle of democratic centralism.

Of course, debate can and should be held within the party, both on previous mistakes and on the ways to correct them. A constructive dialogue, the spirit of criticism and self-criticism, a pluralism of opinions and openness — all this is indispensable. But *we cannot allow a revolutionary party to become a debating society*, depriving it of the ability to rally the masses.

In this sense, while upholding as we do the principles of democracy, we must not forget Lenin's instruction on how the discipline of a revolutionary party is to be maintained, tested and reinforced: "First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and — if you wish — merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people — primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the non-proletarian* masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, *from their own experience*, that they are correct."⁴ So long as the party bases itself on the tried and tested Leninist precepts on party discipline, no one has the right to question it.

History shows that a policy of alliances is the best way to make communist influence felt in political processes, and AKEL has amassed its own original and diverse experience in this field. Taking into account the specific features of Cyprus, our party stands for the *unity of action of all the patriotic and anti-imperialist forces*, not excluding representatives of the national bourgeoisie. Why, then, has an alliance on the left of Cyprus politics, particularly with the socialist party EDEK (National Democratic Union), which plays a definite role in national life and commands more than 10 per cent of the vote, not been achieved as yet?

Admittedly, the left-wing forces so far agree only that the restoration of a united and sovereign Cyprus, the biggest issue at present, should be achieved without imperialist interference. As to the ways and means, their views occasionally diverge. They assess the link between the internal and external aspects of a Cyprus settlement and the importance of inter-community talks in different ways. While AKEL has always said that only a peaceful solution is feasible, others on the Left have had their doubts. These are purely political issues, but, considering their significance for the

nation's destiny, an alliance of the Left is hardly conceivable without agreement on them.

There is also the area of social and economic questions, where it is easier to find common ground, although here, too, some actions on the part of our friends create obstacles. Yet we believe that time is on our side: before the presidential election we failed to agree terms with the EDEK on support for a common candidate, but in the second round when there was a dilemma over whether it should be the Right, or Vassiliou, the Socialist Party urged its constituency to vote for the latter, i.e. together with us.

As a party of patriots and internationalists, AKEL will continue to build up a national alliance of the Left, while at the same time helping to promote the interaction of left-wing, democratic and progressive forces on a regional and an international scale, most importantly in the struggle for peace.

It is significant that virtually everyone today, from the Communists to the conservatives, is for peace. The question arises: what do the forces acting in *working people's interests* mean by peace? Sometimes this question leads to juxtaposition of, or an attempt to link, peace and revolution, and debates even flare up on which is the more important.

A revolutionary transformation of society, and the socialist alternative to capitalism, obviously remain on the communist agenda as a *strategic aim*, but it is to be attained within the specific national context, without affecting the foundations of world peace or hindering the removal of the danger of nuclear war, any outbreak of which would render any ultimate aim pointless by ending human civilisation.

These are some problems, however, that can now be solved, almost anywhere, in the interests of working people, that is, most people. These include a guarantee of economic, social and political rights for every human being and nation, which means an end to unemployment, Third World backwardness, acts of aggression and regional conflicts, and the promotion of genuine democracy, equality and respect in international affairs.

To meet humanity's aspirations, to isolate the most reactionary, militarist, dictatorial and pro-fascist forces of imperialism — this is what the Communists must do to fulfil their historic and practical role in the peace movement today. A country's social order, is a matter for that country's people. Averting war and lifting the burden of military expenditure override class interests because they concern the worker, the farmer and the capitalist alike.

Does the fulfilment by the Communists of their mission in the struggle for peace and in working people's interest depend on a *stronger international communist movement and on its unity in diversity*? Yes, certainly — because the problems to be solved have become international; because the opponent coordinates his actions worldwide; because a constant exchange of opinions and experience is in everyone's interests and joint efforts are always more effective.

Those who disagree put forward their own arguments, which suggest, in essence, that the policy of international communist unity harms Left-democratic cooperation in individual countries, distracts attention from the

joint endeavour on issues of concern to particular regions, and adds to the difficulties of establishing a front of all those who stand for peace and democracy.

It appears to us that *any contra-distinction between international communist unity* (regardless of whether the term 'proletarian internationalism' is used or not) *and broader interaction of the Left, democratic and progressive forces*, locally, regionally and internationally is *unproductive*. We can and must strengthen the international communist movement, enhance its role in world development and, at the same time, promote relations with the Social Democrats, develop contacts between all the contingents of the working-class movement and other progressive, Left and democratic forces, above all on eliminating the threat of war and solving universal human problems.

We think the 27th CPSU Congress was right to draw the conclusion that the international communist movement is at an historic crossroads, successful negotiation of which largely depends on the ability of each party to reassess the fast-changing national and international terrain. Also we believe that our journal, the *World Marxist Review*, should ask the fraternal parties to tell us how the new thinking manifests itself in their theoretical work today, in their inner life, in the understanding and expertise of their vanguard role, in the strengthening of their links with the masses, in dialogue and interaction with their allies, and in the struggle for peace and solutions to global problems in the interests of working people. And, of course, they should explain how the national and the international questions combine in their daily activity, and what their approach is to the problems of strengthening the unity of the communist and working class movement and developing cooperation between all Left, democratic and peace-loving forces.

¹ The need for various translations and certain technical difficulties, unfortunately, mean that several national editions appear somewhat later than the publication date of the original in Prague — *Ed.*

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 172.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 153.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, pp. 24-25.

Reform And Social Progress

The Borderline

Willi Gerns — Presidium and
Secretariat member, German
Communist Party (DKP) Board

THE controversy over the relation between reform and revolution runs right through the history of the working class movement. Today, as in the past, Marxists have to fight on two fronts: against opportunistic reformism, which boils down to reforms, or which dilutes the revolution in reforms, and against left-radical revolutionism, which rejects the role of reforms in principle and erects insuperable barriers between reforms and revolution.

These problems are most acute at certain turning-points, when a harsher light is thrown on problems of the future direction of social development. It was no accident at all that this set of problems was debated by Rosa Luxemburg and Eduard Bernstein just when monopoly capitalism was taking over from free-competition capitalism at the turn of the century. Bernstein took a reformist approach: "For me, the end goal, whatever it may be, is nothing, the movement is everything." Luxemburg countered with the Marxist view then held by revolutionary social democracy. In her book *Social Reform or Revolution*, she wrote: "For social democracy, the daily practical struggle for social reforms, for improving the condition of the working people even under the existing system, the struggle for democratic institutions is perhaps the only means of leading the proletariat's class struggle and attaining the end goal: the taking of political power and abolishing the wage-labour system. From the standpoint of social democracy, there is an indissoluble connection between social reform and social revolution: for it, the struggle for social reforms is the *means*, and the social revolution, the *end*."¹ The different views of the relation between reform and revolution have become the dividing line between the reformists and the revolutionary working class movement.

We are now once again in a period of profound social shifts affecting individual countries and the world as a whole, with the processes of the scientific and technological revolution providing the material basis. They lead to far-reaching changes in the productive forces and the relations of production, in the class and social structure, in the life and labour of the people and the working class movement.

The STR has caused dramatic changes in the very conditions of mankind's existence, presenting us now with increasingly acute global problems. No previous generation has been forced to solve such formidable problems as removing the threat of mankind's self-annihilation

WMR's No. 11, 1988, carried a discussion on the role of reforms in the activity of the democratic forces and the struggle for social progress (Bert Ramelson, Jim Mortimer, 'Where do Reforms Lead?'), a problem which many communist and workers' parties believe to be an important one. We invite readers to take part in this discussion.

in war, the degradation of the natural habitat by the ecological crisis, and the dangers related to the ever more acute problems of the Third World.

Radical changes are under way in existing socialism, and these should lead to a qualitatively new state of socialist society. This is most evident in the perestroika in the Soviet Union. It will have a long-term and powerful impact on the conditions of the world revolutionary process.

All these radical changes compel us to reappraise many notions and think along new lines, with a fundamental reflection on the dialectics between reform and revolution in our day.

The struggle for democratic and social reforms has always been highly relevant to the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary working class movement, and it acquires an even greater significance and a qualitatively new content in the present conditions. Communists are now more clearly aware that the *transition from capitalism to socialism requires a much longer historical period*. Capitalism has proved to be more stable and more capable of change than it had been assumed, and its social structures have been markedly modified which affects the activity of the Communist party. Meanwhile, socialism, in consequence of the objective conditions and subjective errors, which have partially led to political distortions, does not yet present itself as the desired alternative to capitalism for a majority of the working class in the industrialised capitalist countries. These and other factors, together with the failings of some communist parties, explain why they do not have enough influence on the masses, and why there is such a serious lag in the development of the subjective prerequisites in the struggle for radical social transformations. This applies especially to the FRG.

If, however, it is a fact that we have to look to a long period of activity under the capitalist system, we must map out the ways of approaching socialism and a policy of moving closer to it. The DKP has set itself this programmatic task by elaborating a conception of anti-monopoly democracy, with a strategy of struggle for a turn towards democratic and social progress. The point is *to limit the omnipotence of big capital even under capitalism, to improve the condition of the working people, to extend their rights and freedom of action, and to make peace more secure through meaningful disarmament*. The turn towards democratic and social progress will alter the balance of forces in favour of the working class and other democratic forces and pave the way for far-reaching social transformations.

It is important now and in the foreseeable future to safeguard the gains of the working-class and democratic movements which were won in the recent period in the fight against the right-wing forces, and to halt the trend to the right on the basis of what has been achieved, so taking the first few steps to a turn towards democratic and social progress. This could, in principle, be formulated as follows: to replace the reactionary confrontation variant of state-monopoly capitalism with a peaceful variant more oriented towards reforms, so as to enlarge the framework for manoeuvring in conducting a progressive policy. The substance of the transition-period policy is ever more profound democratic, social and ecological reforms.

The growing role of the struggle for reforms is also connected with changes in modern capitalism under the impact of the STR. The economic and social perspectives are being increasingly determined by the mechanism of state-monopoly regulation on a national and supranational level. That is why it is ever more important to influence this mechanism for the benefit of the working people. Whether the more reactionary variants of development or those open to democratic reforms prevail largely depends on the balance of forces and the working people's struggle.

The STR makes increasing demands on the knowledge and responsibility of the working people, and this intensifies the urge for democratic participation in the management of science, technology and production, and the application of their results. New requirements tend to appear in such fields as education and the widening of knowledge, environmental protection, public health care, cultural leisure, the assertion of the equality of men and women and the development of the individual, and their satisfaction could provide an arena for conducting an alternative policy of reforms, so opening up fresh potentialities for the working class in the first place, and also for allied groups of wage-workers among the middle strata and the intelligentsia to join in the struggle for social progress.

The significance of the struggle for reforms is determined not least by the need to solve global problems, which have become so acute in some fields that their solution *cannot be deferred until capitalism is got out of the way. This applies primarily to the establishment of lasting peace, the prevention of an ecological disaster, and a total economic collapse in the less developed countries, mankind's reliable supply with energy, and so on.* The solutions to these problems will have to be found even under capitalism, i.e., in a world divided into opposite social systems.

When speaking of reforms, one has to bear in mind not only their growing significance, but also their new content. Qualitatively new demands tend to appear alongside the old ones, such as the demand for higher living standards and broader rights for the working people.

Take ecological reforms. It is important, even under capitalism, to transform the productive forces system so as to end the predatory attitude to Nature, and to preserve the natural foundations of life for the generations to come. Totally new tasks face us in view of the need to make the FRG capable of peace. The solution of global problems through international cooperation transcending the boundaries of social systems likewise presents a qualitatively new set of reforms. Finally, if the power of big capital is to be limited and the rights of the people extended, there is a need for radical anti-monopoly reforms assuring the working class genuine participation in running the enterprises, a democratic influence on the state-monopoly mechanism of regulation and on other spheres of life, and socialisation of the key industries and enterprises.

Lenin says: "The concept 'reform', is undoubtedly, the opposite of the concept 'revolution'. Failure to remember this contrast, failure to remember the line that divides these two concepts, constantly leads to very serious mistakes in all historical discussions. But this contrast is not something absolute, this line is not something dead, but alive and

changing, and one must be able to define it in each particular case.”

This idea of Lenin's orients us towards a concrete historical assessment of the relation between reform and revolution. There is always a definite borderline between the two. It must not be obscured, unless we want to land in the bog of reformism. But then it must not be set up as an absolute, if we are not to slide down into dogmatism. It is the concrete historical answer in each situation as to where the borderline runs. *In the present conditions there are grounds for believing that, given the right balance of forces, the structural forms of capitalist society can be broken up through radical, anti-monopoly reforms, by means of which it is possible to move closer to overcoming the system than in the past.*

The new content of reforms in this turning-point period also implies different approaches to implementing them. There is an obvious widening not only of the spectrum of political steps in the sphere of reforms, but also of the range of allies for tackling the various problems: from a coalition of the working people's forces differing in social, political and ideological make-up, to the possibility of partial cooperation with the representatives of big capital for coping with individual problems facing humanity. One should bear in mind that the capitalist forces with which there is an identity of interests on one issue could act as opponents on another. Thus, those who favour disarmament and conversion of arms manufacture could be on the other side on environmental issues. But it goes without saying that social, and especially radical anti-monopoly reforms aimed to limit and ultimately to overcome the omnipotence of big capital, can be effected only through the working people's confrontation with it.

While stressing the growing importance and new content of the struggle for reforms, we Communists never lose sight of the goal of building a socialist society, and strive to show that *partial successes will prove to be lasting only if they are continued and used for even more far-reaching transformations.* The DKP has taken into account Lenin's remark that “every reform in capitalist society has a *double* character”.³ It can be used both to bolster the capitalist system of exploitation and to subordinate the working class to this system, and to improve the positions of the working class in the fight to overcome the exploiter system.

It is especially important to remember this under present-day monopoly capitalism. A fundamental work published in Frankfurt-am-Main says: “In the present situation, capitalism can exist only if it continuously and ever more swiftly adapts itself to the ever faster changes in the productive forces and in the balance of social forces in the world. This makes it carry out reforms designed to ensure the functioning of the obsolete system. This can be achieved by reforms only if they are not arbitrary, but to some extent accord with the social character of the productive forces. This determines their somewhat double character: they not only strengthen the power of the monopolies, but simultaneously erode their foundations.”⁴

Consequently, state-monopoly reforms contain the starting points for democratic alternatives. Given the right conditions — if the working people's consciousness is raised, and the balance of forces altered in their favour — reforms could be given an anti-monopoly edge. But this two-fold nature of reforms, for its part, enables the advocates of state-monopoly

capitalism to vitiate the democratic content of the reforms, so that they are not necessarily progressive, and often merely help to stabilise the system.

On vigorous action by the working class and other democratic forces depends *which of the two aspects of reforms under capitalism comes to the fore and makes effective headway*. The main thing is whether "the masses are involved in independent mass economic and political struggle, which alone can give the workers authentic gains".⁵

Democratic, social and ecological reforms are highly important in themselves, but the struggle for these is, at the same time, an integral part of the movement for radical social transformations. "Only through democratic reforms and the use in practice of rights won through these by the working class can it be convinced of the possibility of changing and overcoming capitalism, of acquiring confidence in its own strength, organisation and class consciousness and the necessary experience and knowledge for transforming society".⁶

In the light of our country's concrete conditions, our party has formulated in its programme the approach to the balance between struggle for reform and fundamental social change: "The struggle for democratic reforms is highly important within the working class movement. The DKP firmly supports everything that serves to improve the condition of the working people, to extend their rights and the political sphere of their activity, and to create the possibilities of taking part in management and democratic control. It regards the carrying out of such reforms at the working people's demands as an important component part of the struggle for a turn towards democracy and social progress. It simultaneously regards these as providing an opportunity for improving the conditions of the struggle for profound social transformations.

"While advocating democratic reforms, the DKP rejects any attempts to use them as a cover for tying the working class to the capitalist social system and strengthening the state-monopoly system of domination. It opposes any attempt to confine the working class struggle to reform within the framework of capitalism."⁷

The point, therefore, is to support any transformations that go to *improve the condition of the working people, to weaken the power of big capital, and to create the conditions for successful struggle for peace and disarmament, and the solution of other important problems*. This enables the working people to increase their influence and to involve new forces in the movement for social progress, while producing better prerequisites for the struggle for socialism. In the final analysis, only socialism is able to create the conditions for basic social problems to be resolved in the interest of the working people.

To what extent reforms can be carried out is a widely discussed problem. They are necessary but, we believe, these two extremes must be avoided. First, to regard the reality of reforms solely in the light of the existing balance of forces. Since these keep changing in the course of the class struggle, any attempt to determine the scale and nature of the demands merely on the strength of their 'feasibility' in the short term leads to opportunism, and amounts to an abandonment of efforts to bring about radical changes in the balance of class forces and enlargement of the

boundaries of the possible. "Our programme," Lenin stressed, "must be feasible only in the broad and philosophical sense of the word, so that not a single letter in it will contradict the direction of all social and economic evolution. And since we have correctly determined this direction (in general and in particular), we must — in the name of our revolutionary principles and our revolutionary duty — fight *with all our might*, always and absolutely, for the maximum of our demands."⁸

In other words, Lenin linked the problem to the prospects for advancing class struggle up until the socialist revolution. The need for such a flexible approach is also emphasised in the DKP programme. When we put forward our demand in 1978 for the nationalisation of several industries under democratic control, it was 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness'. It was then still hard to anticipate that, in view of the crisis in steel and shipbuilding, this demand would soon become central to the discussions, at any rate, among the activists of the trade union movement.

The other extreme is, conversely, the formulation of immediate demands that are too far a cry from the actual possibilities, and the balance of political forces, since they proclaim objectives of future stages in the struggle and arbitrarily limit them to the tasks of the present day. Thus, there would be little use in our putting forward just now the socialisation of the whole of large-scale industry in the FRG as an immediate demand.

At the turn of the century, the differences on the issue of reform or revolution marked, when the revolutionary storm loomed ahead, the dividing line between the reformists and the revolutionaries. In our day, at this turning-point phase, the growing significance and new content of reform policy could bring various forces closer to each other and widen the field of cooperation.

Indeed, in the struggle for reforms there is much that unites the Communists and the other democratic forces, notably the Social Democrats and the Greens, and trade union leaders with a differing political and ideological orientation. It is important to make this unification the cornerstone and to act together, because that is the only way in which we can defend what has been gained and to advance. But when pressing for reforms, we cannot allow ourselves to lose our communist identity. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Communists have a special role in social transformations: to keep advancing them, to give them an anti-imperialist edge, to limit the domination of big capital, and to assert the class approaches.

Here the main reference points are *the problems of property and power*, and the possibility of *mounting mass movements for reform*.

In their *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels stressed that the "leading question" is that of property.⁹ In the context of the conditions in the FRG today this means that in all the schemes for reform there is the primary demand for ensuring a democratic influence on the state-monopoly mechanism of regulation within the national framework and on the level of the European Community, implying effective participation by the working people and their trade unions in management and control at enterprises, i.e., intervention in the right to dispose of property, and also in socialising some industries under democratic control.

Concerning the connection between reforms and political power, we attach special importance to the working people's participation in discussing and taking decisions on political problems, with the involvement of trade unions and civic initiative groups, national polls and referendums, and other forms of direct democracy.

The specific feature of the Communists' policy on reform is that they are acting as a force advancing democratisation in every sphere of social life, without creating any illusions and clearly explaining the limits of reforms under capitalism. It argues the need for going on to socialism even when socialist transformations in the country are not on the current agenda, as they are not, for instance, at the present time.

In June 1988, the party's Board adopted a draft document entitled *The Federal Republic of Germany in the Year 2000: the DKP's Proposals for the 1990s concerning Alternatives and Reforms to Ensure Peace and Democratisation*. This draft was put before the party and the democratic public for discussion. In working it out the Board was guided by our principled approach to the question of reforms and also by the new conclusions concerning the importance of the struggle for reforms at this critical juncture.

¹ Rosa Luxemburg, *Sozialreform oder Revolution?*, Vulkan-Verlag, Leipzig, 1919, p.1.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, pp. 115-116.

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 237.

⁴ *Der Imperialismus der BRD*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1972, p. 619.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, p. 27 (in Russian).

⁶ *Der Imperialismus...*, p.662

⁷ *Protokoll des Mannheimer Parteitages der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei*, Plambeck und Co, Neuss, 1979.

⁸ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 119-120.

⁹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 519.

The World Is One Family

Robert Mugabe — First Secretary and President of the ZANU-PF Party, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement

WE feel very greatly honoured that the Non-Aligned Movement considered us, a very young state, and me, the leader of a young country, eligible to lead the movement for three years. One reason why this choice was made and why the 8th Non-Aligned Summit was held in Harare was, I think, the desire to give the necessary impact to the revolutionary process in our region, to the struggle against apartheid and for democracy in South Africa and for Namibia's independence.

The Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement is required to attend to many issues arising before the international community. Some conflict

A WMR staff member interviewed Robert Mugabe in Harare, capital of Zimbabwe.

situations requiring our attention are connected with different regions — the Iran-Iraq war, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Southern Africa, or, say, the issue of US involvement in Latin America, especially in Nicaragua.

Our immediate task after the Harare forum was to bring the Harare Appeal to the attention of both the Soviet Union and the United States. The Appeal was motivated by a sincere commitment to encourage the world community to undertake new efforts for international peace and security. In October 1986 a copy of the Appeal was presented to General Secretary Gorbachov. Later, in November, President Reagan asked Vice-President Bush to receive our Foreign Minister with the Harare Appeal. We sought to draw the attention of both leaders to the need to reduce nuclear arsenals as quickly as possible and create a favourable international atmosphere. I must say that the Non-Aligned Movement is regarded with considerable respect both in the Soviet Union and in the United States. I am in constant contact with their leaders.

We Would Be Better Off Without Weapons

There is a very clear relationship between disarmament and development. This is obvious even in the case of a young country like Zimbabwe. We have had to build an army, perhaps out of proportion with peace-time requirements. But we were forced to do that mostly because we were fighting South African-sponsored bandit groups sent against Mozambique. This is diverting our resources which otherwise would have gone into development programmes.

The situation is similar at the international level too. The superpowers are building up their arsenals and, walking in their footsteps, emulating them, some developing countries have also tried to arm themselves, and some are even thinking of producing their own nuclear weapons. And we happen to know that several countries — far from wealthy ones — have, in fact, the capability to manufacture a nuclear bomb. In order to import new technologies, they are diverting resources which could otherwise have been used for the purpose of eliminating hunger and illiteracy.

As non-aligned developing countries, we appeal to the Western and Eastern blocs to create a *new international economic order*. We hope that within the context of this order, the economic resources available to the developed nations could be made to some extent available to the developing countries too — by way of grants, soft loans, investment, transfer of technology and the like. But because quite a great part of material, financial and other resources is being utilised for military purposes (primarily, for the manufacture of nuclear arms), the opportunities for assistance to the developing world are considerably limited.

That is why we are gratified to note that the Soviet-American summit talks have produced some measure of agreement. Even though the process has not gone far enough, we hope things will advance towards complete denuclearisation, towards a world without these terrible weapons. The destruction of Soviet and US medium and shorter-range missiles is a good beginning.

We also hope for progress in *conventional arms reductions*, for the

cessation of the manufacture of some of their types. That is a difficult field to tackle, but we must remember that conventional arms, too, require a lot of resources. We would be better off without them and have more economic resources for development.

The Non-Aligned Movement and the UN

The Non-Aligned Movement continuously appeals to the two world blocs — NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation — to give more attention to economic issues. The movement can play a tremendous role: its voice is the voice of 101 countries. Collectively, it is a considerable force which can mobilise public opinion within its nations and throughout the international community.

Non-aligned meetings have been quite effective of late, especially at the ministerial level, when the movement addresses various urgent questions and the attention of the world is focused on the position adopted by scores of countries on the whole issue of ensuring international peace and security and bringing about reductions in nuclear arms.

But the Non-Aligned Movement is not structured sufficiently to wield an influence consonant with its potential. At the 9th Non-Aligned Summit to be held in Belgrade in 1989 I intend to put across a number of general recommendations to review the movement's structure — if, as many people expect, it is to play a fundamental role.

Within these months, naturally, we will be working to ensure that the *political* decisions adopted in Harare come to fruition. We will have to report to the next summit on how they have been tackled, on how the Non-Aligned Movement has contributed to the evolution of the situation in Southern Africa, Afghanistan and Kampuchea. There has also been an *economic* aspect to our activities. We created an independent commission headed by Mwalimo Nyerere to study the economic problems of the South and devise measures to allay its dependence on the North. The proposals drawn up by the commission have prompted a round of discussion, and quite some documentation has been produced. We will report the results of this analysis to the summit too.

Today, the Chairman of the movement and his national government are expected to rely on their own resources for three years. If, for example, we want to do something about this or that conflict, including an armed conflict, it is our own Foreign Minister and our own team that must go into action. We do, of course, use the movement's Coordinating Bureau in New York which has been quite active. But that is not enough. We need a secretariat, a real *organic* structure.

True, some voices are raised against such a structure. Some countries say we do not need it. That is why this issue will also have to be raised at the Non-Aligned Summit. We understand why Yugoslavia has been chosen to host it: Marshal Tito was one of the movement's founders, alongside Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah and Makarios. Let the new leadership analyse how the work of the movement can be improved.

Our Movement does not take precedence over the United Nations. It takes a secondary role to the UN, invariably supporting any UN move to promote international peace and security.

On regional problems, we have worked very closely with the UN. I have consulted Secretary General Perez de Cuellar concerning his initiatives on Iran-Iraq, on the Western Sahara and on the settlement in the south-western part of Africa — the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and Namibia and the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 to bring about Namibia's independence.

We not only exchange ideas but also advance our own initiatives, providing all the necessary information to the UN Secretary General. As an illustration, I can cite our current proposal on having different sides meet and agree on some formula to bring peace to Kampuchea.

As far as South Africa is concerned, colonialism lies at the root of the situation there. It must be fought. Any colonial situation requires either a political solution, or a combination of political, economic and military methods, or a protracted armed struggle. That is how we look at it through the eyes of the Organisation of African Unity. We support the ANC¹ and PAC² and all progressive organisations within South Africa fighting against apartheid.

Today, little can be achieved by hoping that the South African authorities will one day get up and realise that what they have been doing is wrong. One cannot hope that a revelation will dawn on them and they will see things in a new way. That will never happen.

Shock therapy is what we need — a combination of a political fight, comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions and, of course, the armed struggle which is being waged by the revolutionary forces within South Africa. *The only way there can be peace is to defeat apartheid, establish a new democratic political system and secure independence for Namibia.* Only then can we, the neighbours of South Africa who have suffered so much from her destabilisation moves, really have any hope of peace and good-neighbour relations in the region.

The Concerns of a Young Republic

It is now the ninth year of Zimbabwe's independence, quite a stage we have come to.

From the outset, *peace for Zimbabwe* was our foremost objective. We had to bring together the disparate forces which had fought against colonialism (there were contradictions between them) and what we inherited by way of the Rhodesian forces in order to build an army of our own. We succeeded, and now we have our Zimbabwe National Army and our Air Force of Zimbabwe.

The political aspect of ensuring peace was connected with getting our people together through the modality of national reconciliation. We forgave the whites who had fought against us, the blacks who had been their stooges and even those who had committed crimes against the revolutionary forces. This was how we created among the people a commitment to Zimbabwe, a commitment based on a single nationality and the recognition that we were now one. This helped promote mutual trust among the previously rival forces and confidence among the whites

that we would not follow a policy of vengeance, that no one would suffer because of their past deeds.

Then we had to see to the *well-being of the people*. We gave land to the people who had been displaced during the war (of national liberation — *Ed.*). We resettled many of them, but the major resettlement programme is still ahead. It is encountering tremendous difficulties most of which are financial. Under the Lancaster House Constitution,³ we cannot take land away from farmers and hand it over to peasants without the farmer agreeing to sell his land. That has been the stumbling block to land distribution. We were never happy with this constitutional provision. It was a give-and-take arrangement. But we felt that this should not really stand in our way to independence and that we could always modify it later. We now plan to amend the constitution so that we can acquire the land more easily and resettle our people.

In the *economic field*, we have emphasised assistance to peasants and the creation of cooperatives. That was one of the reasons why in 1988 we had a real bumper crop. We have also revived our industry, mining and commerce. We do have a shortage of machinery, especially in the manufacturing sector. There is great demand for foreign exchange to boost economic development, but gradually, these problems are being solved too.

We are investing a great deal into the social services — education, health, social welfare, etc. Here is a typical example: we now have over 3 million children in school as against some 800,000 in 1980.

One must, however, admit that although we have made certain progress in the social and economic spheres, the ideological thrust of our efforts has been insufficient. We discussed that at the latest congress of our party. The need for socialist change is emphasised in our first five-year development plan for 1986-1990. We believe that, given the necessary skills and the development of our cadres, the next stage must see us socialised as much as possible by way of cooperatives and by way of taking over the vital industries. That is what we are working on now.

We are worried by two things. First, our socialist thrust is not gaining momentum because we still have a capitalist economy. Second, it is not a truly national economy. We still have multinationals operating in Zimbabwe-Lonrho, Union Carbide, Rio Tinto and others. Every year, they are scooping our resources to Britain, the United States, West Germany and other countries.

I think the first step is for us to *transform TNC controlled companies into national ones*. As we develop skills and the necessary managerial capability, we will move to have a substantial shareholding interest in them, 50 to 51% for a start. That will be the next phase after our 1989 party congress which will take stock of what we have achieved and prepare guidelines for the government on the next five-year plan.

As concerns party work, the main task at the moment is to bring about the *unity of ZANU and ZAPU*.⁴ When ZAPU finally agreed to Unity, ZANU had already embarked on the process of consolidating the party, of reorganising it structurally so it would be the most viable party in the country. But we have stopped this exercise because we now want this

consolidation to proceed within the context of our unity.

In 1976, at the height of our struggle as a liberation movement, ZANU and ZAPU representatives met in Maputo to consolidate the Patriotic Front. At that time we reiterated the Marxist-Leninist character of both parties. This means that we have no ideological differences and that we must work towards transferring the means of production to the people, to workers and peasants. Naturally, we take our history and the concrete situation into account. The rate of change will be determined by the realities of our socio-economic system. But the thrust must be seen in what we do, and what we do must reflect our ideology.

In the course of this process, we also want to consolidate our ideological commitment, and this is what the next congress will address. The fact is that not all our leaders have complied with the party's ideological requirements. Some have been attracted by bourgeois tendencies. They will have to be brought back into line, or else they must relinquish their leading posts.

I believe that *the world is interconnected, that it is one family*. Some members of the family may think differently from others, but there are areas of common concern, areas in which we must cooperate with one another. I hope that when we all realise that, military blocs, confrontation and diktat will disappear. The Non-Aligned Movement has undertaken an historic task — to draw the attention of both East and West to the fact that we are one.

¹ The African National Congress of South Africa, a mass political organisation founded in 1912 and banned in 1960. The ANC is operating underground. — *Ed.*

² The Pan-Africanist Congress, founded in 1959 and banned in 1960. — *Ed.*

³ Drawn up within the framework of the agreement on the settlement of the Rhodesian problem, concluded by the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front on the one hand and the British Government and the Smith-Muzorewa regime on the other in London in December 1979. — *Ed.*

⁴ In December 1987 the ruling ZANU-PF party and the ZAPU party signed a merger agreement. The single party is called the Zimbabwe African National Union — Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). — *Ed.*

the socialist way

Renewal Through Democratisation

Adam Lopatka — Central Committee member, Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), First Chair, Supreme Court of the PPR

THE Party Programme adopted by the 10th PUWP Congress (1986) says that "*in the socio-political field we shall persevere in our course for socialist renewal. This course is stable, deriving as it does from the nature of socialist development, and reflects the constant responsiveness of our socialist system to changing social relations, as well as the desire to correct previous mistakes. We shall consistently implement the policy of concord, struggle and reforms.*"

Our reforms are an integral, and in many ways an original, part of the programmatic changes in politics and the economy now being made by a number of fraternal states. Taking up the challenge of our times, socialism has entered a new phase of development. Poland's renewal drive is in keeping with Soviet perestroika and the aims towards which other communist and workers' parties are striving.

"The essence of perestroika lies in the fact that *it unites socialism with democracy* and revives Lenin's concept of socialist construction both in theory and in practice," wrote Mikhail Gorbachov.² The transformations are aimed at improving socialism, not abandoning it. They proceed from the fact that socialism has a vast, still largely unrecognised, potential for self-development, reform and for resolving the key problems of social progress.

The policy of socialist renewal has enriched our system with many new features, especially in the sphere of democracy. The many new and often innovative legal institutions have created an extensive network of openness, government by the people and self-administration. I would emphasise that these changes are the products of our own experience and soul-searching, and that they appeal to the national heritage, and meet the well-justified requirements and expectations of society. Some of them are a response to the demands of the work collectives who went on strike in 1980. Most, however, have their origins in the ideology of our party and are the result of its initiatives.

It is also gratifying to witness the changes brought about by suggestions from the other parties and groups cooperating with the PUWP. *These changes stem from the new perceptions of socialism, and the new vision of a role and position for the state* in national and international life. Their source

is faith in the strength of our system, one that has endured severe trials. They reflect the diversity in Polish society and the search for unity on key national issues.

There has appeared a new notion — *socialist pluralism*, the essence of which is respect for different opinions and world outlooks, a policy of agreement with all those who support the constitutional principles of our statehood and work for the development of Poland. Socialist pluralism signifies the primary role of the interests and views of the workers, particularly the advanced, highly-skilled and most class-conscious, and the same applies to the peasants and intellectuals. However, we do not identify pluralism with a 'free play' of political forces, attempts to undermine the supreme interests of the state, anarchy, or the struggle for power on anti-socialist, anti-constitutional terms.

The PUWP, which leads the renewal drive, is seeking to pinpoint and remove the contradictions between proponents and opponents of reform, between innovative tendencies and an adherence to the old schemes, and between, on the one hand, the need to broaden the scope for initiative, enterprise, self-management and public control, and on the other, the tenacious survival of overcautiousness and formalism. But the *party will not substitute itself for the state agencies*. It stands for the methods of political influence and wins support from the public by the force of its arguments and through ironing out differences. Profound changes have occurred in the party itself; it has become incomparably more democratic, and the role of the elective bodies has increased.

The activity of the *trade unions* is also merging into mainstream renewal. We remember how the social protest movement, which manifested itself so forcefully in 1980, was joined by millions of Poles full of the best intentions and guided by their firm belief: 'Socialism — yes, the distortions — no.' The trade union organisation Solidarity arose on this wave. But some of its leaders gave it a political anti-socialist thrust, spelling a degradation of the state and the collapse of the economy; there appeared the danger of fratricidal conflicts. However, the extremist line did not gain the support of the majority. Temporarily introduced martial law thwarted the plans of Western-backed anti-socialist forces.

The trade union movement was revived in 1982. In accordance with the law, the trade unions are independent. Their most important task is to defend consistently the working people's interests and rights. In particular, the law has confirmed the trade unions' right to strike if all other means of negotiation have been exhausted.

There have appeared professional grassroots organisations of the peasants, and several new associations and organisations have been set up. The Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth (PRON) has taken shape; it is the largest mass organisation of agreement which encompasses all the social and political forces based on constitutional principles. The religious groups now carry more socio-political weight, and are more numerous.

Socialist pluralism is also reflected in the *coalition method of government*. Our party regards this system as a constitutional and class feature of socialist construction in Poland. "We reject the method of 'conducting'," observed Wojciech Jaruzelski, adding that "it is relevant to

an orchestra not to politics. A genuine alliance calls on the partners to retain their distinctiveness, rights and duties, and demands that such traits as loyalty and mutual respect be a feature of their cooperation."³

The natural basis for the PUWP's alliance with the United Peasants' Party (ZSL) is our stable agrarian policy, and with the Democratic Party (SD) it is the sphere of handicrafts, individual production and services, and also some sections of the intelligentsia. But coalition power also presupposes cooperation in other areas.

The results achieved thus far cannot be judged definitive. Assessing this progress, the SD Central Committee's chair Tadeusz Mlynczak at the 10th ZSL Congress suggested that further improvements to this system should be founded on the 'separate responsibility' of each party for the sphere of Polish activity in which they put forward the best and most popular programme. The fact is that the ZSL and the SD want to strengthen their positions in the coalition system of government. This is justified as long as it is accompanied by increased responsibility for the development of the state and the ability to achieve public approval of its policies. Above all, it must lead to the greater effectiveness of the three-party alliance, aimed at consolidating economically efficient and inherently democratic socialism.

The coalition system of government, which underpins socialist pluralism in Poland, is open for its PUWP-sponsored talks with opposition-minded circles.

Our country has also seen major improvements in *relations between the state and the church* (religious organisations), reflected in a shift from the policy of stable coexistence to a policy of cooperation for the good of our Motherland. The Political Bureau's report to the 6th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee (1987) stated: "We shall continue to guide ourselves consistently by the principle of stable coexistence between the church and the socialist state, and by efforts to cooperate in the solution of national problems and for dialogue and debate on ideological and philosophical issues."⁴

The potential for jointly serving Poland and its citizens in this way is very great. Many of the precepts and moral norms, and some aspects of contemporary church thought and activity, are close to the social objectives of socialism. We appreciate, for example, what the churches do to foster in the believers respect for work, public property, the state and the law. However, progress in this field depends not only upon the state's policy and intentions. We are interested in providing a firm legal basis for relations with the church and religious organisations. Talks on the content of an agreement (convention) between Poland and the Vatican are currently under way, along with the drafting of laws on the principles for state relations with the Catholic Church in Poland, and other churches and religious associations. The sphere of manifestation of religious beliefs and the complete freedom of conscience has expanded dramatically.

Openness has taken root as a feature of socialist democracy in Poland and the diversity of publicly expressed views and opinions has increased markedly. The religious press, especially Catholic, is much wider and richer. The so-called independent magazines now also function legally, foreign publications have become much more accessible and radio and

television have begun transmitting religious services. Prepared in 1981 after nationwide consultation, the law controlling publications and entertainment provides, we believe, a real guarantee of freedom of speech. The activity of the press has been placed under public control, and so has the work of the journalists. Their right of access to information sources is guaranteed in law, and the legal responsibility of persons who might try to limit it has been established. We proceed from the premise that openness in public life is the foundation of democracy.

The positions of the *Sejm and People's National Councils*, vis-à-vis the government, have been strengthened. The Sejm is now in the highest measure a body influencing the entire complex of state policies. The role of the deputies to the Sejm, and to the national councils, has been legislatively enhanced.

Sometimes, however, the councils do not realise their statutory powers, due to lack of experience and the aftermath of formalism and paternalism. *Self-government at the place of residence* creates distinct possibilities of influencing the solution to the problems of common concern to people. Its organs — meetings of citizens, township and house committees, and village gatherings — expand the support base of the people's councils.

Over the last few years our legal system has been extensively modified. The role and authority of the *courts* have increased, and their competence has been substantially widened; now they examine, for example, some of the affairs of state enterprises, questions of control over administrative decisions and of press-freedom and entertainment, the work of lawyers, legal advisers and patents, complaints of electoral procedure violations, and so forth. Relations between the representative bodies and courts and the bodies of administration are now incomparably more orderly than a few years ago.

New *democratic bodies and constitutional institutions* are in place. The *High Administrative Court* has been functioning since September 1, 1980. Here one can lodge a complaint, for example, against an illegal decision by the state administration. The *State Tribunal* is highly important. It tries highest state officials if they have violated the Constitution in the course of their activity. We shall also mention the *Constitutional Tribunal* (since early 1986), which gives its opinion on the conformity of decrees, or other regulatory documents issued by the leading and central bodies, to the Constitution.

The institution of *Commissioner for Citizens' Rights*, operating since January 1, 1988, plays a very positive role. It investigates any possible breaches of legislation or of the principles of public life and social justice due to the actions or inaction of the bodies, organisations and institutions. In his activities the Polish ombudsman is independent of the other state bodies and is accountable only to the Sejm; moreover, the report on his work is subject to publication for the public's information. An important democratic gain is the subordination of the Higher Control Chamber not to the government but directly to the Sejm and the Council of State. The chamber has the right to contest the actions of the Council of Ministers as a whole and of each member of the government.

We have established the practice of holding public consultations and

referendums. The November 1987 national referendum — the first since 1946 — helped to identify people's various interests and views.

Of great significance is the way the status of the lawyers' profession and their self-government has been shaped. The adoption of a law on legal advisers, and creation on its basis of their broad self-government, has been an important step towards stronger law and order in economic activity and the functioning of state agencies.

A considerable reallocation of decision-making powers from the *centre to the localities* has taken place. The self-government and autonomy of voivodships, cities and districts have expanded, even though not sufficiently as yet.

Various institutional forms have emerged for the participation in social life of persons who are critical and distrustful of socialist construction and remain in opposition to specific decisions and methods of action but are at the same time patriotically motivated in their behaviour. To study their opinion and overcome social disunity, an *Advisory Council* was set up at the end of 1986 under the auspices of the Chairman of the Council of State of the PPR. It is made up of lawyers, economists, historians, philosophers, doctors, engineers, journalists, actors, sociologists and Catholic priests — persons representing every political and ideological current. The Council examines processes occurring in the country and suggests decision variants which serve the interests of the Republic. Some voivodships have Conventions, which are bodies similar to the Advisory Council. We continue the search for involving opposition-minded persons in the Polish political system so that their civic concern and activism would help the solution of important national problems.

Socialist democracy, in our view, has political, economic and cultural manifestations. In the economic field it shows itself primarily through the growing influence of work collectives on plant management and operation, and considerable progress has already been achieved here. The economic reform, announced by the 9th Extraordinary Congress of the PUWP (1981), has brought about a growth of *plant autonomy*, in spite of inconsistency in its implementation. Workers' self-management has taken shape, and headway has been made in the self-financing of economic units. Now, more than ever before, the fate of enterprises is determined by their own managements, self-management bodies and party, trade union and other organisations, as a result of the changes in planning, and of the very profound government steps. The transfer of a part of enterprises under the control of voivodship, city and district authorities, has increased the possibility of local-authority influence on their functioning.⁵ A constitutional enshrinement of this influence has been the creation of a new category of public ownership — that of communal ownership.

The programme for carrying out the second phase of economic reform, approved by the Sejm in February 1988, envisages the development and consolidation of all forms of *self-management*, especially territorial and work-collective. The state will retain the right to influence these processes by predominantly economic methods, but without meddling in the everyday work of enterprises. The principles of the reform guarantee them, both in the state and the cooperative or individual sectors, the

freedom of choice and the freedom to conduct economic activity at their own risk, autonomously and by means of self-financing.

In political philosophy a new concept of the *socialist state's* role is now taking shape. People perceive more clearly the need for a global approach to political issues, not simply a national or regional one. The effect of international factors on every country is stronger now than ever before. Solutions to global problems inevitably require the cooperation of all states, at least in some fields on a global, and in others on a regional scale. This may change the approach to the concept of sovereignty. It is becoming more obvious that the state is not omnipotent, inasmuch as certain tasks transcend the boundaries of its potential. The fuller its participation in international life, and the more creative elements the state introduces here, the stronger its position.

Also in relations between the state and citizens a new view of domestic policy is emerging. Undoubtedly, the state remains society's principal organisation in this country. But we are recognising its *limited ability* to solve certain vital civic problems. People now ask: What can and must society achieve with state participation, and what in non-state forms? The socialist doctrine has always rejected the thesis that public life must be completely etatised. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the state should relinquish its decisive hold on the important tasks of social, political and especially economic life. The state's presence in the daily life of society is considered excessive, and we believe that it is necessary to expand the living room and responsibility of the individual, and particularly the sphere of non-state forms and manifestations of public life. This arises directly from the need to increase economic efficiency.

The socialist state has until recently used a high degree of centralised decision making. Life demands that we should take a new look at what must necessarily be centrally decided, and what can and should be decided at local level, by territorial units, enterprises, educational establishments and other organisations. This concerns every sphere of political, economic and social life. We believe that *more decision-making power and responsibility should be transferred to the local bodies*.

We are also to clearly define the sphere of matters on which citizens pass state decisions directly by way of a referendum or through official consultations. It has been customary to view the socialist state as the instrument of domination by one part of society over others, but now there is a growing need to see it as an *organisation of all citizens* which must primarily help society to solve its major problems.

The survey of the changes that have become apparent in the political system of People's Poland allows us to state that the new features of socialist democracy are now an integral element of our life, and that, at the same time, this is a starting point for further steps towards socialist renewal. We can claim, justifiably, that the *renewal processes in Poland have gone further than in some other socialist countries*. Our restructuring has already been institutionalised and backed up by the appropriate laws, and is widely reflected in the structural changes within the state and legal system.

A new law on *social organisations* is to be passed. It must provide a new

democratic procedure for their creation, with the authorities simply determining whether their aims correspond to the political and legal principles of our system and the Constitution: control over the organisations' activity will extend only as far as assessing their observance of legal norms and their own charters. The right to lodge a complaint in courts against registration-denying decisions, or those on suspending or terminating their activity, should be granted. It is hoped that the new law will facilitate the transfer of public organisations of some of the functions of the state apparatus.

In this case it is a question of creating more favourable conditions for the activity of existing, and simplifying the procedure for establishing new organisations. This will make for the growth of civic initiatives and the realisation of the people's basic right to freedom of association. One should constantly remember that new organisations are often born out of people's dissatisfaction with the existing ones, with the bad climate and with the unsuitable methods of work in some of them.

In our opinion, a further expansion of the possibilities for the exercise of fundamental civil rights and freedoms must occur.

It is increasingly apparent, however, that the kind of socialism laid down in the 1952 Constitution of the PPR, despite its numerous amendments, corresponds less and less to the new realities. Wojciech Jaruzelski took note of this fact in his report to the 10th PUWP Congress. There is an obvious need to make changes in accordance with the process of socialist renewal.

The content of the decisions on constitutional changes not only reflects the reform plans of the PUWP and its allies. To a large extent, it depends on the economic situation in the country, social consciousness and the situation in Europe and the world. The fact that the *anti-socialist opposition* remains a constant factor, due to class watersheds and political battles in the modern world, is highly significant. This impedes the process of reforms. There can be no mutual understanding between us and the proponents of such views who go against the current of history, and because of this an ideological and political struggle is under way. Socialist renewal narrows the field of activity of this opposition and gradually deprives it of its support in society. It cannot be denied, however, that the anti-constitutional forces are trying to use broad democratisation for their own purposes. That is why, when any initiatives are conceived, we seek to ensure that they do not allow these circles any advantage.

The opposition elements draw their strength mainly from the backing of the capitalist world. They are trying to find — and do find — support and protection in some quarters of the Roman Catholic Church, displeased with the clergy and hierarchs who come to terms with the authorities of the PPR and show civic responsibility.

For the anti-socialist opposition the ideal is the destruction of socialist democracy, not its improvement. Therefore the question Lenin asked remains valid: "Democracy — for whom? Freedom — for whom and from what?"

The profound changes in the PPR's body politic show how pointless the theses of the opponents of socialism about its being unamenable to changes

really are. *Socialism needs reforms, they are a real alternative to crisis and stagnation, and an indispensable element of self-development and self-perfection.* The reforms being carried out in our country help strengthen the new system.

Socialist renewal is proceeding in a struggle on two fronts. Above all, as Wojciech Jaruzelski told the 7th Plenum of the PUWP Central Committee, against those who under the cover of reformist phrases and from a standpoint actually destructive to Socialist Poland are seeking to undermine the elementary conditions for effective reforms: order, tranquility, work and public dialogue. It is also the struggle against those conservative elements at all levels of state power who are trying to block, retard and distort the renewal process and even to paralyse it. We are advancing, despite the actions of both these camps of opponents.

¹ *The Programme of the Polish United Workers' Party*, Warsaw, 1986, p. 18 (in Polish).

² Mikhail Gorbachov, *Perestroika — New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, Moscow, 1987, p. 31.

³ Wojciech Jaruzelski, *Speech at the 10th Congress of the ZSL*, *Tribuna Ludu*, March 22, 1988.

⁴ *The Political Bureau Report at the 6th Plenum of the PUWP*, *Rzeczpospolita*, Supplement, November 18, 1987, p. 10 (in Polish).

⁵ In the first quarter of 1988 alone, 229 enterprises throughout Poland, which had been subject to ministries, were transferred to the voivodships; their production capacities and budget-payments must become a strong economic mainstay of the people's councils. There are plans to place nearly half of the country's factories and plants under the council's jurisdiction. — Ed.

Politics: Contradictions and Alternatives

Tibor Polgar — Hungarian political
scientist

DURING the past ten or fifteen years social development in some socialist countries has slowed down, and several have been in a state of pre-crisis or even of crisis. Adverse trends have accumulated in the economy, in education, culture, science, public health, and even in politics, the result of inherent contradictions which, as Hungary's experience shows, cannot be resolved by half-measures. *Socialist society can be renewed only by a consistent and radical process, directed towards the dialectical negation of existing structures.*

An in-depth reform of the political system is an organic part of these transformations. In some socialist countries this requirement is evidenced by the fact that the efficiency of administration and management has declined, despite the prevailing use of political methods in the organisation and development of society (and of its individual spheres). Without an

For earlier articles in this series on contradictions under socialism see Nos. 8 and 11 of *WMR* for 1988.

understanding of the contradictions, and their origins, within the system of political institutions, I think any reforms will be inconsistent. There is, regrettably, a paradoxical situation in which such studies yield inadequate and superficial recommendations for practice despite the place of politics in society (and perhaps because of it). We are particularly backward on research into the characteristics of the political system of socialist society, and the general contradictions in its operation.

Legacy of the Past

Social transformations in Eastern Europe have not been easy. In contrast to the West European countries, the *absolutism* which emerged here in the 18th century was either finely balanced between the bourgeoisie and the gentry, or involved the incorporation of feudal structures into its system, in an effort to preserve the existing relations. Whereas absolutism in Western Europe tended to support the development of capitalism indirectly, in Eastern Europe it did so directly, mainly through the establishment of manufactories at the same time preserving feudal relations, thus producing a symbiosis of old and new, bureaucratic and organisational connections. Meanwhile, the political power-élite remained loyal to feudalism.

Attempts to win national independence and break the chains of absolutism failed mainly because of the undeveloped state of social relations. Most of the states in the region were founded on the ruins of empires after World War I, and the boundaries between them were drawn by imperialist peace treaties. This intensified the *nationalism* of the ruling classes and led to a peculiar distortion of national consciousness and of social thought among workers and peasants.

The main feature of the bourgeois revolutions in Eastern Europe was that they did not radically alter feudal relations, which meant that power was not wielded by the bourgeoisie alone. Although parties of the working people, primarily of the workers, themselves emerged together with a shaping of their class consciousness, they could not operate effectively within the political system of these countries and were at times forced underground. This produced sectarian intolerance and puritanism, a revival of the messianic and bureaucratic versions of political and organisational inflexibility. The working classes, and the majority of the people, were forced into political anonymity and subservience, or utopian radicalism.

One important result was that the struggle for the working people's interests spontaneously developed in the cultural sphere, primarily in literature, and this increased the progressive role of the *intelligentsia*. Another peculiarity of bourgeois transformations was the gradual dominance of capitalist relations of production (highlighting the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the working class), while relations of the earlier stages were preserved in part.

Consequently, capitalist development was slow and contradictory, and failed to provide any consistent solution to many essentially capitalist problems. It was natural, therefore, that the sharpening social tensions in the region led to revolutions — in Russia during World War I, and in the East European countries after World War II — which developed into

socialist revolutions. The new forces strove to resolve the contradictions of delayed capitalist development, while swiftly and radically carrying out socialist transformations of backward social relations.

Alternative to Transformations

Depending on the international situation and the historical conditions of the internal balance of forces, socialist revolutions were either won by force, or by peaceful means. These revolutions not only radically altered the political power relations, but variously and fully or partially eliminated the old property and class relations, providing solutions to the problems that had not been solved by bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

They produced the political conditions necessary for the transformation of economic and social relations, and at the same time, for the historical process of property socialisation, a real dialectical negation of the particular nation's inherited social organisation (of which government and the system of institutions are a part). Under these conditions the economic, social and cultural backwardness of some countries would be eradicated.

I believe that the socialist countries had the chance, both *in practice* and in principle, *to modernise society autonomously and organically along national lines*, above all in Russia, within the framework of the New Economic Policy, but also for a brief period and in varying degrees, in some of the East European states, when the people's democratic revolutions were being completed. This alternative included, in general terms, the gradual transformation of small-scale production into socialist production based on commodity-money relations, aiming at the subsequent integration of the national economies, the growth of their various spheres (on the basis of their own laws), and the self-organisation of society. There was also, in this context, the possibility of developing a democratic system of government, with a rational division between the functions of the party, and those of the state.

But this alternative was not realised in any of the socialist countries, and another path of development was chosen. Priority was given to increased industrialisation, particularly the growth of heavy industry. This required the excessive centralisation of economic administration and management in societies with few resources available at the time. This necessitated the creation of mechanisms through which political power could concentrate and redistribute capital, and exert a direct influence on production and distribution. In addition, a sizeable chunk of the national income went into accumulation. It seems that such an approach failed to reckon with the economic and natural conditions of the existing industrial culture, or of development trends in each of the countries.

What is more, industrialisation was of an *autarkic character*. The state was able to develop international product specialisation and co-production only by political means, and mainly on the basis of natural connections. This tended both to 'reproduce' in a peculiar way and to strengthen the role of the state as the actual manager of the economy. Let us also recall that significant numbers of working people moved from the rural economy to the factories and plants. They did not have either a high standard of workmanship in industry or the requisite skill training.

The command-planning system, based on physical indicators, and the state functions of distribution and redistribution in the process of production, markedly reduced the sphere in which socialist commodity-money relations operated. One could say that the state assumed the role of market in most of the countries. This tends to reproduce an overt or covert shortage of producer and consumer goods and to bolster a legalised or illegal 'shadow economy'.

The creation of this system of economic management was paralleled in other spheres by the entrenchment of a similar command-based *paternalistic administration*, noticeably limiting the development of some important sectors of social life on the basis of their internal natural processes, as our own experience shows.

Politics came to prevail everywhere, and its administrative and redistributive role had a direct effect on society as a whole, and on its institutions. There came a point at which political rationality became a rationalised bureaucracy. The concept of the dominant and excessive concentration of power within government and decision-making led to *a sharp increase in the size of the apparatus wielding definitive influence*, both within the party and within the state.

The role of state agencies is to this day largely confined to the execution of instructions handed down from above, while political and social organisations serve as a kind of transmission belt in this process. The party found itself performing government functions in running the country. The importance of elective institutions declined, and there was a growth of formalism and organisational fragmentation in their activity. The role of social organisations and institutions was reduced to encouraging the masses to fulfil the tasks set from 'above'. The actual correlation and articulation of interests were expressed, to a limited extent, only within the institutional framework.

Distinctive informal ties and negative trends appeared as the people's interests were proclaimed, but not realised. Now and again private — individual or group — interests were expressed in various forms of corruption. The problem here is that, under such a system, either no true articulation of the society's interests is possible, or they become an object of policy only to a limited extent, so making their integration ungovernable.

Thus it is not by chance that at times the exercise of directive functions by elective party bodies comes down to a legalisation of propositions and proposals agreed in advance, mainly with the apparatus, or to a show of decision-making. This intensifies the ritual features of these bodies and suppresses the activity and responsibility of their members.

With the party-power concept, such a situation paradoxically creates, along with a semblance of its omnipotence, the conditions for political voluntarism. With an excessively centralised directive system, the responsibility of elective institutions tends to decline, especially on the local and intermediate level. Party members and these institutions have less independence, and their main task is to carry out decisions taken without their participation. But the role of the apparatus tends to grow: by delaying the issue of information or handing it out selectively, the

apparatus can slow down or distort the decision-making process. The unwarranted growth of the prerogatives of the apparatus leads to an invariable desire to maintain the informal and fragile equilibrium of interests and power, which is, in fact, the origin of voluntarism. It also tends to produce a fear of change, i.e., conservatism, because in a different situation with a new balance of interests the status quo could be upset.

On the other hand, I think, this system tends to increase, disproportionately, the role of the executive bodies of the highest party echelons and their leaders. It is no accident that the autocratic exercise of power and personal dependence and loyalties are to be found in some socialist countries. Sometimes hierarchical relations based on excessive loyalties are reproduced, and this has led to the personality cult. Such an approach to power, and the excessive centralisation, intensify, not least, the bureaucratic centralism which prevents the party and the society from being democratised.

The potential for such a development in our day has, fortunately been, or is being depleted, because of the accumulation of serious contradictions which defy resolution by the existing system and its mechanism. These are the economic and social consequences of the scarcity economy, the unbalanced development of the individual sectors, bureaucratic practices, etc. Conformist views, official loyalties, and utopian radicalism are reproduced in varying form and degree in the political culture of the several strata, groups and individuals — both subordinate and superior — while political anonymity and facelessness continue to characterise a substantial part of the population. The record shows, moreover, that this variant in organising socialist society in some countries does not encourage a swift and flexible response to changes in the world economy, or to the challenges of the scientific and technical revolution: it may follow along in fits and starts, making great material sacrifices, but to little effect. All these contradictions demand radical reforms, which simultaneously offer the possibility of renewing socialism. Meanwhile, the transformation of individual spheres and their institutions can do no more than temporarily defer stagnation in society, the exacerbation of the contradictions and the emergence of a crisis, and can only compound the failings in the administration, organisation and functioning of the state.

Which Way?

The renewal of socialism, I believe, implies a qualitative change, involving an actual straightening out of the present 'historical' deviation. Some countries, notably Hungary, can do this by pursuing socialist modernisation. The preconditions for this exist in the developed socialist countries which make use of the market mechanism, and take into account the distinctive organisation of society based on an inherent contradiction, reproduced over a long period. The potential of this process, and its pace, are determined primarily by the communist parties' capacity for radical reform, while the unique features of the national way are mainly determined by concrete, historically-rooted conditions.

Reform of the political system, a critical restructuring of the system of political institutions in society, above all the deconcentration and

decentralisation of power, are an important component of faster development. One must be aware that the reality is complex and that there is a pluralism of interests. Political unity is not invalidated by diversity. Social consensus can and must be maintained by conscious and steady effort.

Where does this kind of reorganisation lead? I think that it helps to make the individual social spheres more autonomous, with their development dependent on their own laws.

Consistent *economic reform* should be regarded as the key element in our country at the present stage. Modernisation implies the attainment of a technical level comparable with the world level, higher labour productivity, and more efficient use of social material resources.

The dismantling of the existing economic administration systems is a prerequisite for developing commodity-money relations and boosting economic growth. Reduction in the size of enterprises and creation of parallel lines of production does away with monopolism in industry. As the relations of production reflecting the growth and concentration of the productive forces evolve, it will become possible to draw a clear-cut distinction between the interests of the owner and of the wage-worker, while strengthening self-management in the economy. On the other hand, the greater role of commodity-money relations and the law of value will require a solution of the 'proportional prices' problem, identification of principles in the remuneration of labour in accordance with its social efficiency, and a resolution of the contradictions arising in this area.

In Hungary, for instance, labour incomes now depend, to a greater extent than in the past, on the results of the work of each person. We believe that it is important to encourage every person to higher performance, and higher quality workmanship, and to stimulate enterprise, dynamic thinking, a sense of responsibility, and independent effort in organising labour and management.

The main function of the political power in this sphere is to create the necessary conditions for the country's overall development, the pursuit of an economic policy based on the priority of social policy, the use of differentiated and flexible management methods, and stimulation of technical growth and structural change in the progressive sectors of the economy. While democratically distributing a part of the surplus-value, it is important to ensure the material prerequisites for the development of the other spheres as well on the basis of their own internal laws, the functioning of the nation as a political society, and also of expanded reproduction.

The resultant articulation of interests, above all in production and place of residence, is institutionalised within a framework of social organisations and agencies. It also creates mechanisms for identifying and resolving any conflicts between them.

Renewal will produce a *political power exercising efficient administration and regulation*. Its deconcentration and decentralisation will make it possible to set up a system of mass organisations in an atmosphere of glasnost so as to give fuller expression to the interests of the people as a whole, and of individual citizens. Democratisation of political power also

means a rational distribution of duties between party and state organs and their conversion into genuine centres of leadership, administration, decision-making and control. This reduces the weight of the apparatus, and professional rationality comes to the fore in its activity. The work of party organs can be made more democratic and effective through social control, helping to improve the selection and rotation of personnel and leaders.

We believe that the political reform will become an organic part of, and a catalyst in the development of democracy within the party and within society, and the restructuring of the existing system of institutions. The party's leading role will be exercised in the process of social transformations and socialist modernisation of the economy.

The evolution of democracy will pave the way for the active participation of everyone in effecting the reforms, thereby promoting the simultaneous implementation of two historical trends: the national development of the socialist countries, and their political integration based on economic cooperation.

the party

Communist Congresses

Towards Advanced Democracy

Rene Mauge Mosquera — CC
General Secretary, Communist Party of Ecuador (PCE)

THE 11th Congress of the Communist Party of Ecuador, held in Quito in July 1988, has marked an important milestone in the political development of our party and the country. It took place at a very particular moment for national, continental and international life. In Ecuador we had seen the first electoral triumph for Social Democracy, to which the Communists contributed, backing Rodrigo Borja in the second presidential round. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the correlation of forces is changing rapidly in favour of self-determination, sovereignty, democracy and social

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progress. Everywhere in the world we are witnessing the increasing authority of the socialist system as it corrects its mistakes and shortcomings. The struggle for security, disarmament and peace is gaining ground.

July saw the last days of the right-wing regime of Leon Febres Cordero (1984-1988) — a brainchild of the monopolies, representative of the omnipotence of the big bankers, industrialists and agro-exporters — a government submissive to the directives of the International Monetary Fund and to the neoglobalist policy of US imperialism. Four long years of hunger, poverty and suffering for most Ecuadorans, as well as of repression, killings, state terrorism and the denial of democratic freedoms and guarantees.

The congress analysed a sharp deterioration in the country's economic crisis over the past decade, especially the last four years, something that has affected every sphere of public life, laying the blame for it on the policies pursued by reformist governments and the oligarchic Right at the bidding of the IMF, the World Bank and other monetary organisations. It is the nation's worst crisis, and its origins can be traced to the crisis in the world capitalist system, of which we are a part. The system is reflected in, and continues to deform our dependent and backward economic structure, and its internal contradictions entail serious social and political consequences for an underdeveloped country like Ecuador.

This unprecedented and very rapid capitalist development during the 1970s, when Ecuador began to export oil, has slowed down this decade; the foreign debt has swollen, inflation now runs as high as 60 per cent and the rate of unemployment, full and partial, is about 65 per cent. It is obvious that this situation has affected the broad masses of people, even the middle classes, and benefited only a privileged oligarchic minority and the monopolies.

Under Febres Cordero, transnational capital (mainly US) increased its penetration and plundered more of Ecuador's wealth. The dollar empire was intensively subjugating our country economically, politically, diplomatically, militarily and culturally.

The 11th PCE Congress took note of a series of changes that have occurred at the level of social classes since the previous decade: changes in their economic situation, composition and political role at one time or another. These facts have to be considered when determining short-, medium- and long-term policies.

Advances of the Unitary Process

In the face of the crisis and the oligarchy's stranglehold, the attitude of the working people has, by and large, been militant; their consciousness rose, the unity of the working class grew, and its alliances with non-proletarian sections and progressive parties became stronger. The involvement of the Catholic Church, which aligns itself with liberation theology, of the patriotic military, of the majority of the urban and rural population and of the Indians in the fight for democracy and a better life for the people marked an *invaluable advance towards unity as the strategy and tactics of the Ecuadoran revolution.*

Following this line, the PCE came to its 11th Congress enriched by an intense participation in political and social life. The prestige and influence of the Unitary Front of Working People (FUT)¹ had increased, many large trade union centres had joined in the strike movement, and the politically successful Progressive Parliamentary Bloc had firmly resisted any abuses of power by the Cordero administration. The United Left Front (FIU) had also been set up and, under its auspices, the Communists had put up their own candidates in the 1988 general election. We regard Left unity as the nucleus of *a much broader alliance of all democratic, patriotic and anti-imperialist forces*. Finally, the Social Democrats' coming to power opens up new opportunities, while also bringing new challenges which our party is seeking to deal with effectively.

In the face of the present administration the PCE intends to act by considering each of its steps carefully and by pursuing a policy of defending the interests of the country, the factory and office workers, employees, peasants, the Indians and the people as a whole. Our party is of the view that, due to the character of certain forces which supported Borja in the elections and are now a part of the bourgeois-reformist Democratic Left government, the new regime will be contradictory. We are for unity and cooperation on a number of issues so long as this government pursues democratic reforms to limit oligarchic and imperialist power, but we will resolutely oppose any steps against the national interest, or the class interests of the working people, given the revolutionary and proletarian character of the Communist Party of Ecuador. The PCE will also seek to consolidate and expand the legitimate representation in parliament and other state institutions of the Left Broad Front, of the factory and office workers, peasants, school teachers, artisans and the Indians.

To the government's initial call for 'unanimity', the PCE responded that *it would stick by its commitment* to defend democracy, not in an abstract but in the most concrete way. Our party flatly rejects any attempts at class reconciliation that seek to demobilise, split or fragment the popular forces or to limit the organised struggle for their rights and legitimate demands.

We are exposing the position of certain sections of the Left which would like us to support the new regime's platform fully and unconditionally. The PCE tactics will be to regroup the left-wing and progressive forces around the working people, to achieve immediate anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly and anti-oligarchic changes envisaged in the minimum programme, and to mobilise forces in favour of the project for social and national liberation and people's power.

So what concrete measures do we demand of the Social Democratic government right away? Only those which have already become the banner for the struggle of the masses and democratic parties in the last few years; today their implementation is necessary and possible. We have set them out in the *People's Programme for a Democratic and Revolutionary Way out of the Crisis*. The pivotal idea of this document is that, in order to ensure Ecuador's independent development and protect the interests of the people, the following measures are required: a four-year moratorium on foreign debt repayments; the saving of export receipts; the consolidation of the state sector of the economy; an increase in wages and

their purchasing power; agrarian reform and the recognition of the social, ethnic and cultural rights of the Indian nationalities; the strict observance of democratic freedoms and human rights; the promotion of a New International Economic Order; and a policy of peace and cooperation with all states.

Thus, what we offer has nothing to do with the 'solution' to the problem advocated by Febres Cordero, who, while seeking to please the local oligarchy and his North American bosses plunged the country into hunger and laid it open to plunder. Our programme is about democratic, agrarian, anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist transformations, and the drive towards social advancement.

Neither the Communists, nor any other left-wing party should monopolise this process. It should encompass all those who associate their future with the people. On the certainty, firmness and audacity with which we carry out this policy of alliances will depend, in great measure, the establishment of a powerful and invincible Front for Social and National Liberation, under whose banners millions of Ecuadorans will march towards their second and definitive independence.

The 11th Congress approved a new edition of the Party Programme which defines with great precision the objectives of the current revolutionary, national democratic process, taking into account the neocolonial dominance of imperialism and the level of oligarchic capitalist exploitation. We do not set ourselves the immediate objectives of accomplishing either a socialist or a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Our goal is to win an advanced democracy which would ensure the on-going development of the revolutionary process. Only the achievement of the interlaced anti-imperialist, agrarian and democratic tasks at this first phase will set the stage for shortening the period of transition and for laying the foundations for socialist construction.

As an essential question of the national democratic revolution, we are putting forward the task of *winning political power and instituting a revolutionary-patriotic multi-party government*, with a broad social base and deep roots among the masses, a government whose main guiding force will be the working class in close alliance with the peasantry, around which the majority of the people will rally.

The national democratic revolution is to continue the democratisation of all the spheres of political, economic and social life. The economy will have to orient itself towards replacing the current structures and towards ending the dominance of monopoly capital and latifundism. It will also have to aim for an increased standard of living, a solution to the acute problems of the country, and guaranteed respect for the rights of the Indian nationalities, and access for all Ecuadorans to education and culture.

The Congress also examined the factional activities of Alfredo Castillo, Jose Solis, Leonardo Vicuña, Enrique Vacas and Vladimiro Oña, former CC members who had betrayed the party and been expelled in October 1987. This group, deemed by the CC to be made up of right-wing opportunists and abolitionists, altered the PCE strategy for mass unity and our parliamentary line, and subsequently became a source of disunity among the left forces in Ecuador. The delegates unanimously agreed

disciplinary action and approved measures designed to improve organisation and maintain communist unity.

A Truly Significant Event

The drafts of the documents prepared for the Congress — theses, a new edition of the Programme, and changes to the Rules — were not only widely discussed by all primary organisations of the CP, but were also sent officially to the left-wing and democratic parties, to institutions such as the Catholic Church, the armed forces, universities, research centres, and to prominent persons. In many cases we received replies containing important points. Corresponding round-table discussions also took place, the results of which were widely covered by the media. All this helped our Congress to become a conspicuous event in the political life of Ecuador even in its preparatory stage.

The forum, attended by almost 400 Communists from the country's 20 provinces, aroused considerable interest locally and abroad. Delegates from 15 fraternal parties, and the representatives of both left-wing and centrist forces, were present. The sessions were held in the Republic's Palace of Congress and were broadcast nationwide. As a result of elections half the Central Committee was replaced, a third of the present CC membership now coming from the working class.

During the Congress there was an atmosphere of a great Latin American fiesta in Ecuador. The arrival of Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega, and the delegations from 67 states and 43 international organisations, for the inauguration of President Borja, which took place a fortnight later, turned Quito into the capital of continental anti-imperialist solidarity.

Fidel Castro, who was visiting South America after a 16-year break, found himself the centre of national and international attention, evoking signs of great affection for the first free territory in the Western Hemisphere.

Daniel Ortega was given proof of mass support for the Sandinist Revolution, with the new President, Rodrigo Borja, signing a decree to restore diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Nicaragua, broken off in 1985 by Febres Cordero. Ecuador raised high the banner of internationalism and solidarity with the fraternal peoples of Chile, El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti and Panama, who are fighting for democracy, national sovereignty, human rights and social progress.

For our part we Ecuadorans also felt the warm embrace of our continental brothers and those in the rest of the world. Under the new conditions this is particularly important for us because our first Social Democratic government was being inaugurated, a government which has formulated a programme of reforms that we, Communists, are going to support and assist because they further democracy, national independence, and the struggle of the masses to defend themselves, for the right to live and for social progress.

We harbour no illusions, yet we will not stand aside from the process just because Social Democracy is not the ultimate solution or in order to justify ourselves later, blaming any mistakes and sins on 'others'. No one can deny the communist involvement in Ecuador's current political life: *in spite of*

the strategy of imperialism and the Right, we have succeeded in avoiding isolation.

It is clear that our intended path is not an easy one. The monopolies and oligarchy will try to torpedo any advance that impinges on their privileges. A reactionary onslaught can only be kept at bay if all the people mobilise to support the measures taken in their interests. We also face a direct confrontation with the extremist attitude of 'all or nothing', with those who are unable to comprehend the historic significance of our times for humanity and our country.

¹ The United Front of the Working People, established in the 1970's, includes the three largest trade union centres in Ecuador. — Ed.

The Communists and Elections

Will The Good Signs Become A Tendency?

The WMR Commission on the International Communist Movement and Exchanges of Party Experience asked leading members from a number of fraternal parties to share their experiences of national elections and describe their electoral tactics and strategy. The materials received comprise the book *The Communists and Elections: What is the Way to Success?*, to be brought out by Peace and Socialism International Publishers in 1988. Some of them have appeared in the pages of the WMR: articles and interviews from Venezuela, Greece, Italy, Canada, Morocco, Portugal, El Salvador, Senegal, France and Sweden. (See WMR, No. 11, 1987, and Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 11, 1988).

Answers were also received from **Jean Spielmann**, General Secretary of the Swiss Party of Labour (PST); **Rene Theodore**, General Secretary of the CC, United Party of Haitian Communists (PUCH); **Walter Baier**, member of the Political Bureau, CC, Communist Party of Austria (KPO); **Rolf-Jurgen Priemer**, member of the Presidium and Secretariat of the Board, German Communist Party (DKP); **Michalis Poupouris** and **Donis Christofinis**, members of the Political Bureau, CC, Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL); **Santiago Alvarez**, honorary member of the Central Committee, Communist Party of Spain (PCE); **John Peck**, member of the Executive Committee, Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB); **Donald Ramotar**, member of the CC, People's Progressive Party of Guyana (PPP); **Henri Millan Gonzalez**, member of the CC, the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) MP; **Guillermo Herrera Montsinos**, representative of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP); and **Jose Regato**, member of the CC, Communist Party of Ecuador (PCE). Their replies form the basis of the Commission's survey, given below.

IN terms of strategy, most of them see elections as a major vehicle for the coming to power of a democratic government relying upon the working masses. Communists allot a primary role to electoral activity in the struggle to transform society, regarding it as a *powerful means of activating the masses* and promoting party policies and advanced ideas.

The once-prevalent view that the political education of the working people during elections is more important than the poll itself is now being overcome, and it is acknowledged that the poll in countries with an established democratic structure does give a certain idea of the degree of communist popularity or the voters' trust in these parties. Although the poll is not a precise barometer of communist influence, nevertheless it helps to identify strengths and weaknesses in their policy, and serves to indicate whether they have got their bearings right and how broad and firm their links with the masses are.

While some parties, especially those in the developing countries, realise the importance of involving themselves in elections, there is still *the question of expediency*. For instance, repression and election rigging may force the Communists to urge the masses to boycott a predictable election farce.

Many fraternal parties, particularly in the West, have suffered *electoral decline* over the last 10 to 12 years, and those hardest hit include such large and influential parties as the Italian — from 34.4 per cent in 1976 to 26.6 per cent in 1987; the Spanish (1979 — 10.8 per cent; 1986 — 4.6 per cent); the Portuguese (1983 — 18 per cent; 1987 — 12.1 per cent); and the French (1981 — 16.2 per cent; 1988 — 11.3 per cent). The Danish and Belgian Communists have lost their parliamentary representation altogether, and in other countries they also face great difficulties.

The objective reasons for this have much to do with the rapid change in the *social structure of capitalist society* brought about by the scientific and technological revolution, exemplified by increases in office and managerial staff, and reductions in the shopfloor workforce. This leads to a narrowing of the communist parties' traditional election base. Considerable differences also exist among the growing service-sector workforce due to the type of job they do. The class-consciousness here is usually not high, and this hampers the Communists' work.

Increasing prosperity in most of the industrialised capitalist lands, among the workers as well, is another factor. In Switzerland this mainly accounts for the *decrease in the workers' political militancy* and their apathy in fighting for social change, which have affected the position of the PST.

In Spain, with rapid capitalist development, a broad stratum is growing that ranks below the middle classes but follows their lead and shows political moderation during the elections. The consumer society, with many private cars and usually fairly good housing, generally encourages conservative sentiments, even among those who do not belong to the avowed Right.

Britain's voters are displaying less stable political attachment than before. The workers no longer only vote Labour, most notably since the Liberals and the Social Democrats united in an election bloc. Thatcherism now also commands definite working class support. The only ones who

have not benefited from increased voter instability are the Communists, because *they are not considered a real parliamentary alternative to the major parties*, and only rarely accepted as such at local level. The decline of the old industries has dealt a heavy blow to the social infrastructure of the CPGB, which always found support in working class districts with a high concentration of industry (for example, among the miners of Scotland and Wales).

During the 1980s communist parties in capitalist states have also felt the effects of the socio-economic offensive launched by conservative forces. Attacks are being made on the social welfare of working people, on their employment rights, and on their democratic gains. Under these conditions, an essentially *defensive posture* characterises most labour contingents, and the left-wing forces have found themselves in a difficult position.

There has been a reactionary offensive on the ideological and political fronts. The huge propaganda machine has been mobilised against socialism, both as an idea and as a reality. The *Western perception of the socialist states* has certainly detracted from its appeal and at times *pushed away from the communist parties* their potential supporters.

Thus, many people in Britain explained their refusal to vote communist by referring to the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979, the declaration of martial law in Poland and the authorities' treatment of dissidents in the Soviet Union. Even when British Communists clearly explained their position on these issues, the voters still rejected them in the elections.

Their *own shortcomings and mistakes* figured among the subjective reasons for the diminished electoral standing of the communist parties. In Spain, for example, during the 1982 election campaign the PCE put forward the slogan 'Nothing must stop', insisted on by its former General Secretary, Santiago Carrillo. At a time when the Spaniards were eager for change, this slogan became a political absurdity. It gave no idea of the changes which the PCE stood for, and spoke only of continuity.

By their own admission, the Swiss Communists' basic error lay in their preoccupation with the traditional socio-political struggles. They failed to realise the deep changes in working people's psychology or the significance which issues like environmental protection, the quality of life, nuclear plants, urbanism, ethics and morality have now acquired. Consequently the ecologists, who offer a new vision, and in some cases the Social Democrats as well, have taken the initiative. On the other hand Communists failed to channel working people's discontent, or the growing mood for social protest, in the direction required for the progressive forces. The Far Right took advantage of this dissatisfaction, making political capital by blaming immigrants for economic problems, housing shortages and unemployment, thereby provoking racism and xenophobia.

Whilst acknowledging a narrowing of their social base, and self-critically analysing their own mistakes and weaknesses, Communists emphasise that one cannot judge the extent of their influence in society solely on election returns, as the bourgeois authors do.

For all its significance election involvement is only one of the areas of communist activity, and not always the most important. The Communists'

opponents tend to view all political struggles through the prism of the parliamentary process, and often disregard the phenomena that lie outside it — for example, the communist parties' position in the trade unions, and in the mass anti-war, democratic, and national liberation movements. By 'ignoring' the masses' potential political influence, the bourgeois press usually provides a *distorted appraisal of the Communist potential*.

There is also a considerable gap between the fraternal parties' authority in the various mass democratic movements and labour organisations, on the one hand, and the number of votes they receive in the elections, on the other. This gap is due to the fact that the electoral process, even in countries with firm bourgeois-democratic traditions, has been affected by a number of factors which *do not allow the real influence of the revolutionary working class parties an adequate reflection in the election results*.

Among these factors are the great difficulties, and the discrimination, faced by the Communists when they try to gain access to the mass media, particularly television, which exert an enormous influence on the election outcome. The *unjust, anti-democratic character of the electoral laws* plays a very negative role in several countries.

Thus, if proportional representation had been operating in Spain, the PCE would have received 42 seats in the national parliament instead of 20 in the 1977 elections; in 1979 — 46 to 48 instead of 23, and in 1986 the United Left coalition, of which it was a part, would have got not 7 but 14 to 16 deputies' mandates. The present legislation, however, helps the major parties by 'punishing' the minor ones.

The majority system adopted in Great Britain, whereby the winning candidate (usually a representative of one of the leading parties) is considered to have received all the constituency's votes, mainly affects the smaller parties, including the CPGB. The Communists, like some other political forces, have been working for the introduction of proportional representation. They also demand the abolition of the deposit required in nominating a candidate for parliament'. However, the struggle for more democratic electoral laws has been as yet unsuccessful.

Lastly, there is the practice of '*tactical voting*', which almost all the communist parties inevitably face. It involves potential supporters backing not the communist candidates, but the representatives of other forces which have the best chances of defeating the right-wing forces. Such a situation is typical of countries with strong Social Democratic Parties, and is widespread not only in Europe, but also, for example, in Peru where it has become known as the 'lost vote'.

'Tactical voting' is closely associated with the anti-democratic provisions of the electoral system. In the FRG, for example, some people sympathetic to the DKP, in the belief that it will be unable to surmount the 5 per cent barrier in the land or federal elections, vote for the Social Democrats, whereas in the municipal elections, with such fears much less pronounced, the Communists receive greater support, and it is easier for them to expand their permanent vote here.

The number of votes a party wins is even less of an indication in countries where the activity of opposition parties is banned or a campaign of terror is being conducted against left-wing forces. But even against such

odds the Communists sometimes achieve widespread popularity among the voters.

Colombia is a case in point. Hundreds of patriots, mainly Communists, have been assassinated and violence again marked the country's first local government (alcaldes) elections in March 1988. Against the odds, the Patriotic Union (UP), within which the PCC operates, has strengthened its position by winning an important victory: 105 out of the total of 1,008 alcaldes were elected from the UP in a coalition with other parties.

Haiti provides yet another example. The Duvaliers ruled as dictators for thirty years, but in the first elections to be held after their overthrow, in November 1987, the Communists received a great deal of support from the population. The popularity of the PUCH's presidential candidate, Rene Theodore, proved so great that the party believed he had a chance of victory or, at least, reaching the second round. That was partly the reason why the reactionary forces, with US backing, disrupted the vote by staging a bloody massacre at the polling stations.

Haitian Communists believe that to secure honest elections, the popular movement has to rely on certain state power, a part of the army, for example, or to form *powerful force of its own* which could guarantee a free expression of the people's will.

After party-wide discussion the board of the DKP has concluded that the Communists' lagging behind in elections to the Landtags and the Bundestag, and the slow growth in their municipal vote, can no longer be tolerated. Between 1968 and 1978 the Party's room for manoeuvre was very limited — it could only put forward its own candidates in the parliamentary elections — but since then the *potential of non-parliamentary movements has sharply increased, and the political conditions have changed*. New opportunities have arisen for united action and democratic alliances, not least in the struggle for seats in the parliaments.

"It is now possible to nominate DKP candidates on the lists of other democratic forces, and to nominate their candidates on DKP lists," the theses of the party's Hamburg Congress (1986) declared. "As to alliances concluded in a period of election, they can be given shape both as alliances of individuals — with the inclusion of Communists — and as a bloc — with the participation of the DKP. Attempts to conclude democratic electoral alliances do not contradict the efforts by the DKP to nominate its own candidates."² This is the direction in which it intends to act in the elections at all levels.

Following an intense party debate in the first half of the 1980s, new elements have appeared in the Austrian Communists' electoral activity. In the 1986 elections the party advanced the slogan: 'Elect the Left — KPO', and linked it to concrete social, political and democratic demands. The aim was, taking into account the conservative stand of the leadership of the Socialist Party of Austria and the conflicting nature of the actions and slogans of the Greens, to ensure that the *concept of the 'left'*, broad and vague in itself, *should be associated in people's minds precisely with the KPO*. Three focus groups of voters were defined: working class sections directly affected by the crisis; members of the Socialist Party disenchanted

with the policy of its leadership; and the left part of the new social movements.

British Communists are confident that they could obtain more general-election votes if they were more active and consistent in local elections, and put up candidates and began canvassing earlier, without limiting themselves, as they so often did in the past, to the brief election campaign.

At its last congress the CPGB made it the responsibility of each party branch to put up its own candidate and conduct its own campaign in local elections. Election work is now seen as part of the long-term programme that envisages active involvement in the constituency, efforts to resolve local problems, and alliances with other organisations. *By strengthening itself in the localities, the CPGB expects to create conditions for the election of Communists to Parliament.*

The Swiss Party of Labour has substantially altered its political line and electoral policy. In the October 1987 parliamentary elections it put forward a platform that took into account the *new problems* and formulated proposals on the issues of ecology, urbanism, the quality of life, nuclear plants, culture and morality. Swiss Communists are anxious to renew the language in which the party speaks to the masses and bring its election campaigns as close to the real needs of the population as possible. The feeling exists in the PST that their image as a party aiming for a radical transformation of society frightens off potential voters and that this has to be reckoned with. Of course this does not involve any abandonment by the Communists of their principles or strategic aims, since that would entail a loss of identity and, eventually, a retreat. *A timely response to the specific issues of concern to the people* is much more valuable.

The importance of effective slogans has also been stressed by other authors. For example, the 1988 local elections in Colombia have shown that problems of daily life interest the voters far more than political issues and party rivalry. The aim now is *not to give any empty promises*, but to advance realistic proposals improving the position of working people in enterprise, district, quarter or city.

Excessive promises, the Communists believe, are unnecessary and harmful to their parties. Slogans should not only reflect party strategy, but also respond to the real interests of the working class and broad popular sections. They must have form, and the method of delivery must be considered, for even the best slogan, if presented unskillfully and unattractively, can become uninteresting and incomprehensible.

More active electoral cooperation with other progressive and democratic forces is now common policy among Communists operating in the most diverse conditions.

The Swiss Party of Labour defines this line as an integral part of its policy of openness in relations with all political and trade union organisations which represent the working class, and working people as a whole, and with new social movements, above all, ecological groups. This course implies various kinds of electoral alliance with other left-wing and democratic parties (e.g., the Social Democrats, with whom the Communists already have previous experience of cooperation).

In Ecuador the Party's involvement in the election processes was very

complicated. The 10th Congress of the PCE, held in November 1981, which outlined a broad policy of alliances, defining it as a process of consolidation, was a turning point. At the centre stands the working class with the United Workers' Front, other trade unions and the organisations of Indians. The policy of unity extends to young people, women, creative intellectuals, Catholics, progressive circles in the armed forces, etc. At the political level, it presupposes contacts with democratic parties. The Progressive Parliamentary Bloc, formed by them in 1984-1988, and comprising six parties — from centrist to left-wing — successfully withstood the pro-imperialist, rightist policy of former President Leon Febres Cordero.

In parliamentary and local elections the Communist Party of Ecuador, and its permanent allies in the Left Broad Front, have been receiving 6 per cent of the votes on average. In the 1988 election campaign the Left forces united (in the Front of the United Left, which included, in addition to the Left Broad Front, the Popular Democratic Movement, and other organisations) on the basis of a programme of struggle for an anti-imperialist, democratic government. They regard this alliance as the core for a wider union open to all progressive Ecuadorans, regardless of political affiliation, status or creed. The objective here is to carry out a strategic programme for national and social liberation.

The realisation of the unitary line of the CPE is not without difficulties; obstacles exist in the camp of left-wing forces and within the Communist Party itself. Among individual members of the allied parties, anti-communist prejudices linger on. The Communists themselves are fighting the remnants in their ranks of sectarianism in all its forms.

To amass strength and develop a broad anti-imperialist and democratic movement is the objective the Peruvian Communists have set for themselves in their electoral work, concentrating in particular on the activity of mass fronts. They are convinced that a political organisation based on the Left Unity (of which the PCE is a co-founder) could become the revolutionary alternative to the regime. This perspective presupposes the creation of a favourable alignment of forces for the popular masses and the employment of all the forms of struggle that a concrete situation may require.

In Guyana, to force the regime to hold free and just elections, the Communists worked for the unification of *all the supporters of political democracy* against it and, in January 1986, formed the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy. Within it, the PPP cooperates with the Social Democrats, three bourgeois parties, trade unions, farmers' and religious organisations, and intellectuals. PPP regards the daily upholding of democratic freedoms, a struggle for the observance of constitutional guarantees, and the promotion of pluralism and parliamentary democracy as its objectives. Despite difficulties in working with ideologically different forces, the PPP sees the coalition as a new feature in the country's political culture. The coalition is now concretising a common political platform for the 1990 elections. At the same time the PPP, as a strong force in the country, is conscious of the need to maintain its independence and constantly keeps in mind the limitations of such coalitions.

The Communists of Cyprus have experiences of their own. In the presidential election of 1983, AKEL campaigned in alliance with the Democratic Party (DK) led by Spyros Kyprianou, proceeding from the premise that *cooperation between parties with different class affiliations*, if it is based on certain principles that allow each side to retain its independence, is both admissible and indispensable in the efforts to free the country of foreign troops and ensure a peaceful, just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem. The DK-AKEL candidate, Spyros Kyprianou, won a convincing victory, thus blocking the Far Right's advent to power, and although in 1984, DK renounced the democratic cooperation agreement with AKEL, the Communists believe that, by and large, it has acquitted itself well, not least in the area of election struggle.

In the 1988 presidential election AKEL decided to support the independent candidate Georgios Vassiliou, who was prescribing a democratic, patriotic programme. The main thrust of the Communists' election campaign, just as it had been in 1983, was a *unification of patriotic and democratic forces* for a resolution of the Cyprus issue. Therefore AKEL's slogans had as their aim not so much the advocacy of the party's ideological standpoint as the creation of a majority which would speak out in Vassiliou's favour. The course of events has shown the realism of this decision. All attempts by conservative circles to turn the elections into a purely ideological confrontation failed; apart from AKEL, significant political and social forces supported the independent candidate and he won, having received over 51 per cent of the vote.

To put the dilemma 'socialism or capitalism' centre-stage would have made no sense, according to AKEL, whose decision against fielding its own candidate for the presidency was also completely justified. Only when the country has traversed the stage of national liberation, will its transition to socialism become the order of the day; it is then that AKEL intends to put up a communist presidential candidate who will offer a programme of trenchant reforms.

In practice election coalitions that are founded on the unity of action of the broad democratic sections and bear a programmatic character, rather than being based on inter-party relationships, are the most productive politically.

Yet in many cases the prospect of concluding electoral alliances depends *not only on the Communists* and their policy, but also on *the degree of willingness shown by other left-wing parties and democratic forces*. Such willingness is usually determined by how much they *need* cooperation with the communists.

So what are the prospects? Answering this question, the representatives of the fraternal parties from Western Europe stressed that *there is at present a real possibility of enhancing the Communists' electoral standing*.

In the course of non-parliamentary struggles a new potential is emerging which directly influences the election outcomes and the correlation of political forces in parliament. The issues of war and peace, labour, democracy and the environment have come to feature more prominently in election campaigns. It is possible to draw millions of peoples into campaigns against the policy of conservative governments on all major

problems, from unemployment to nuclear disarmament. Anti-imperialist solidarity movements, especially among young people, are also developing. The credibility gap between the state, parliament and major political parties, on the one hand, and a significant part of the population, on the other, keep widening.

However, these processes entail mixed consequences for the Communists. The crisis of trust in the political institutions extends to the communist parties as well. In a number of countries they are looked upon as the 'traditional' organisations, lacking dynamism and incapable of offering the voters anything new. The persistent anti-communist stereotypes add to this image. So a complex task faces the communist parties: to raise their profile and bring it up to date, while at the same time retaining their identity as revolutionary working class organisations.

As regards changes in the mood of the masses, the example of Spain is indicative. A high incidence of conflicts in the area of labour relations, the radicalisation of fairly broad sections and the heightening of anti-nuclear sentiments have all been observed here during the past few years. But this has not yet led to any considerable growth of electoral support for the PCE. Although the United Left made gains in the 1987 elections to the European Parliament, and to local and regional bodies, the results have shown that it does not yet represent a true alternative to the ruling Socialist Party. A similar situation obtains in a number of other West European countries.

Most authors regard Soviet perestroika as an important factor in the possible consolidation of communist parties' electoral positions. As the appeal of socialism grows so does the interest in it. As a result the media in Great Britain and Switzerland, for example, gave the voters more information about Communist programmes and proposals during the 1987 elections. The impact on the public of the supposed 'Soviet military threat' is also diminishing thanks to the changes now occurring in the USSR and to its peace initiatives.

New thinking, or the 'Gorbachov factor' as it is often called, is evoking responses in the hearts and minds of people in the non-socialist world, and is influencing the electorate's mood. However, the fraternal parties are convinced that it is *their own policy that primarily determines their electoral successes and failures.*

By speculating about the inevitable or predetermined nature of the communist parties' electoral setbacks, their opponents engage in wishful thinking, as they underestimate the depth of the roots that link the Communists to the working class and indeed all working people, their ability to learn from their own mistakes, elaborate new approaches and mobilise the masses to support their proposals.

Developments indicate that in a number of countries the communist parties' declining popularity has already bottomed out and that they are gradually beginning to stabilise and consolidate their electoral standing. This is true of Spain, Switzerland, Austria and Japan; French Communists in the parliamentary, and then the cantonal elections of 1988 achieved better results than in the preceding presidential election and, indeed, better than in any since 1981. In September 1988, Sweden's Left Party —

Communists succeeded in increasing its representation in the Riksdag (Parliament) from 19 to 21 deputies.

These are encouraging signs of the times. Whether or not they become the dominant tendency of the late 20th century largely depends on world political trends and on the ability of the fraternal parties in the non-socialist countries to correctly respond to the new terrain and make use of the favourable opportunities that are presenting themselves.

¹ The election deposit is £500. If the candidate polls less than 5 per cent of the vote, he or she loses this deposit. The parties with limited financial resources suffer most from this practice.

— Ed.

² *Thesen des Hamburger Parteitages der DKP*, 1986, pp. 92-93.

INFORMATION

In Brief

NEWSPAPER FESTIVALS

A TRADITIONAL festival of the Communist Party of Spain and its organ, the newspaper *Mundo Obrero*, has been held in Madrid. Tens of thousands of residents of the capital and workers of its outskirts acquainted themselves with the displays presented by regional party organisations. As part of the festival, seminars and colloquiums on different aspects of domestic and international life, as well as performances of Spanish and foreign artists took place. Delegations of communists and workers' parties and national liberation movements from many countries attended the festival.

The annual festival of *Akahata*, the Japanese Communist Party's central organ, has taken place in Tokyo. It was timed for the 60th anniversary of the foundation of this newspaper and featured in particular exhibitions devoted to the JCP's work among the masses and struggle against the militarist, anti-democratic policy of government and the conservative forces, in defence of the democratic rights and vital interest of working people. Foreign guests representing communist newspapers also participated in the festival.

ANGOLA

The National Agostinho Neto Party School has been reconstituted as the People's Republic of Angola's first higher party institute of learning, which will function as a department of the CC MPLA — PT and be responsible directly to the CC Secretariat. It focuses on raising the political and ideological level of the cadres of the party, state apparatus and mass public organisations, guiding provincial party schools and the centres of political enlightenment, and coordinating research on political issues and the theory of Angolan society's development.

FRANCE

In the first round of cantonal elections, the French Communist Party's candidates got 13.39 per cent, and those of the Left as a whole, 47.86 per cent of the vote. Where their candidate's inelectability was becoming clear, the Communists urged their constituency to vote for the Socialists in the second round. As a result, in the second round the PCF candidates polled only about 10 per cent, but the Left as a whole over half the votes.

HUNGARY

The HSWP's membership has dropped by 7 per cent after the September exchange of party cards which ended in September 1988, reported the newspaper *Nepszabadsag*. During individual interviews all those wishing could, without any unfavourable consequences for themselves, turn in their cards and refuse to accept new ones. A third of those who did so referred to ill health or family cares, and at the same time 10 per cent gave political reasons. The average age of the HSWP members is now 46.6 years. In a sum-up of the exchange results, the CC Plenum noted with concern the fall of the party's prestige among the young.

INDIA

The leadership of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India — Marxist (CPM) have rejected the calls to form together with the ruling Indian National Congress (I) a national progressive front to counter the National Front (Rashtriya Morcha), created by seven opposition parties. CPM General Secretary E. M. S. Namboodiripad has called the INC (I) the 'class enemy' against whom the Communists have been waging a struggle for the past four decades.

In his statement Mukum-Uddin Farooqi, member of the Central Executive Committee and of the Central Secretariat of the CPI National Council, has emphasised that the INC (I) is making concessions to the transnational corporations and is not resisting the curtailment of the public sector of the economy. The Left parties are working for cardinal changes in the economic policy of the government. And although they have nothing against its foreign-policy course, they cannot support its 'anti-people policy'.

ITALY

The 1989 elections to the European Parliament and the creation of a single European market in 1992 were the focus of a discussion between the General Secretary of the PCI, Achille Occhetto, and a delegation of the Communist Party of Spain led by its General Secretary Julio Anguita. The sides recognised the need to carry out preparatory work in connection with these events, and elaborate an appropriate communist programme and initiatives which could result in new, more advanced forms of cooperation among all the Left and other progressive forces of Europe.

PERU

Delegations from the provincial organisations of the Peruvian Communist Party, representatives of other political parties of the country, and the

envoys of fraternal European, Afro-Asian and Latin American communist parties and liberation movements attended the formal meeting dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the PCP.

TURKEY

The process of a fusion of the Communist Party of Turkey and the Workers' Party of Turkey has been completed. At the first congress of a United Communist Party of Turkey in Oberhausen, FRG, Nihat Sargin was elected its Chairman, and Haydar Kutlu its General Secretary. They are both on trial in Turkey, which is causing protests all over the world.

SWEDEN

The ruling Social Democratic Party has received 156 out of the Riksdag's 349 seats (three fewer than previously) in recent parliamentary elections. The Communists have increased their representation from 19 to 21 mandates. The Miljopartiet (Ecology Party) has for the first time got into Parliament by winning 20 seats. In the communal elections, the Social Democrats lost about 150 mandates, while the Left Party (Communists) gained 25 new ones.

SWITZERLAND

By a majority of votes (37 to 6) the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Swiss Party of Labour has taken a decision to dissolve the Basel section of the party because of disagreement over the key issues of party policy. The PST leadership invited the Basel Communists to form a new section open to all who support the general line of the PST, defined by the 13th Congress (1987) and developed in the subsequent resolutions and statements of the CC.

International Contacts

For Deeper Cooperation

In September-October Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, had talks with the visiting leaders of the LPRP, SED and PCR, Kaysone Phomvihane, Erich Honecker and Nicolae Ceausescu. In particular, an exchange of opinions on inter-party cooperation took place.

IN a joint press statement on the results of Erich Honecker's working visit, the CPSU and SED leaderships give a high assessment of the more dynamic bilateral ties and the overall progress in implementing the agreement to upgrade cooperation. The intensive, diverse and fruitful meetings and exchanges of experience between party and state officials, including the top leaders, play an important role in this.

The sides felt it essential, stresses the document, to expand the practice of mutual consultation on the issues of domestic and foreign policy at Central Committee and CC secretary level. They also expressed themselves for the further extension of contacts between the two parties' local bodies, organisations, and research and education centres, the deepening and enrichment of their cooperation with new forms, and the improvement of its practical effectiveness.

After exchanging opinions on the state of cooperation between the CPSU and the LPRP, Kaysone Phomvihane and Mikhail Gorbachov expressed satisfaction at what had been accomplished in this field of late. The Lao leader noted the international significance of Soviet perestroika, on whose experience the LPRP draws in its own restructuring drive. Along with economic reforms, it does a lot to educate the people in new political thinking.

During the talks between the CPSU and the PCR, the sides said they were fully satisfied with the ongoing development of their relations. The joint communique notes that they attach great importance to enhancing the parties' role in improving interaction between the two countries. They will go on working for a richer content of inter-party ties, promoting the mutual interest in exchanges of opinion and experience, and tapping the vast potential for the development of contacts between local party bodies. Agreement has been reached on setting up a joint social sciences commission which is to help deepen ideological cooperation.

The sides also noted the special importance of greater unity and cooperation of the communist parties in their drive to resolve key issues of today. They reaffirmed their determination to widen contacts with the communist and workers' parties on the basis of full equality, independence, non-interference in internal affairs, international solidarity, and the right of each party to define its own political line and revolutionary strategy.

exchange of views, discussion

From The Caucasus To Quebec: National Problems Today

A *WMR* international round table has discussed some current aspects of the nationalities question. Among those who took part were **Jean-Pierre Michiels**, CC member, Communist Party of Belgium; **Gerry Van Houten**, CC member, Communist Party of Canada; **Albert Farhat**, CC member, Lebanese Communist Party; **Dapo Fatogun**, Editor-in-Chief, *New Horizon*, the journal of the Nigerian Marxists; and *WMR* staff member **Yuli Oganisyan**, D.Sc.(Hist.) of the USSR. Below is a summary of the exchange of opinions.

Oganisyan. We represent countries with such specific and distinct national problems that it is a real challenge to find a common line of discussion. Frankly speaking, there is also the rather delicate question of Nagorno Karabakh¹ and other seats of national tension. Presumably I am expected to explain the causes of the dramatic events here. Is that not the case?

Michiels. The interest is a natural one. As a rule, we learn of such developments as they are presented by the bourgeois press. We now have here what could be a first-hand account of them.

Farhat. The starting point of the general line of discussion is evident: in our countries, the nationalities problem is fairly acute. I think that the same is true of any group of countries taken at random, and, indeed, of any country. The external aspect of the nationalities question, if not the internal one, is a politically pressing one everywhere.

In Retrospect: 'Father of the Peoples'

Oganisyan. Let me stress, first of all, that the solution of the nationalities problem in the USSR is an incontestable achievement of socialism. Within a short period of time, the backwardness of many ethnic groups was overcome, the social and political roots of national animosity were removed, and the ideas of internationalism, equality and rejection of any form of oppression were established in society. The Soviet people, united in their basic interests and goals, took shape as a new historical entity.

Michiels. If that is so, why have national conflicts flared up in Karabakh and some other areas of the USSR?

Oganisyan. I spoke merely of the fundamental, historically irreversible gains in the solution of the nationalities problem, and they now determine

its substance and role in society. Friendship between the USSR's big and small nations is an objective reality, not propagandist fiction, as some Western Sovietologists claim. But for this reality, there would have been no victory over Nazism nor any other recognised achievements of our country.

Internationalism has long been a fact of the Soviet people's daily life and an element of their mentality. In a country where virtually every work collective and territorial entity consists of men and women of different nationalities, the conditions of production and everyday life require not just mutual tolerance (although it is also necessary), but precisely friendship as an indispensable feature of community living.

I think, however, that we have met here today to examine some unresolved problems, and in the context of Comrade Michiels' question, I have one of my own: What do you know about Stalin's theory on the nationalities question?

Michiels. Let me say quite frankly that I have no idea of what you mean.

Oganisyan. What you have said aptly demonstrates that time deals harshly with dogmas. Those who began to study Marxism when Stalinism as a doctrine had already become a relic of the past (at least on the international level) tend, as a rule, to ignore it. But the fact is that whole generations of Marxists in various countries learned 'Stalin's view' of the nationalities question (and many other questions, of course). Meanwhile, in the USSR he had become not only the highest authority on this question, but also 'the leading light of all the sciences' and an object of worship as 'the father of the peoples', all of which were facets of his personality cult.

Fatogun. I well remember Stalin's definition of a nation, the basis of his concept of national relations, which comprises the famous four features: "The nation is a historically shaped and stable community of people arising on the basis of a community of language, territory, economic life and mentality, as expressed in the community of culture."²

Oganisyan. What does that definition lack from a Marxist point of view? The class approach, the dialectics of national development; and the historical concreteness. In other words, all the distinct features of Lenin's doctrine of the nationalities question, which links, in particular, the origin and development of nations and national relations with the development of capitalism.³ This four-term definition can be applied to any socio-ethnic entity, from the simplest cell in a Stone Age tribe, for instance, to the most intricate entity emerging from a socialist revolution, like the Soviet people.

Fatogun. That is why it cannot be used to elaborate a Marxist policy for each given entity. I can't see how it could be applied to Nigeria, where people are coalescing into a nation, and yet it comprises numerous ethnic groups. National policy must be substantiated by a concrete analysis of the concrete situation, and not by some dogma, or abstract theory.

Oganisyan. That is quite true, but dogmatism can acquire a monstrous force when combined with state policy. Stalin's concept of a nation became, by virtue of its abstractness, a convenient cover for the arbitrary policies which he pursued in practice. He himself decided whether an ethnic entity was to be regarded as a nation, where it was to live, and what

degree of autonomy it was to enjoy. The 1926 Census registered 190 peoples. In his report on the draft Constitution 10 years later, Stalin reduced the number by two-thirds, and not just on paper: the brutal deportations of the Ingushes, the Chechens, the Kalmyks, the Crimean Tatars, and other peoples jeopardised their very existence.⁴

Stalin's distortion of socialism also either conveniently forgot or misrepresented the principles of Lenin's nationalities policy. In defiance of Lenin's idea that the nations should move closer together on the basis of "complete confidence" and "absolutely voluntary consent", and that socialism should be built with "the greatest patience and circumspection",⁵ Stalin decided to step up the forced suppression of national distinctions. By the mid-1930s, he had abolished such forms of ethnic group autonomy as national districts and national rural Soviets, of which there had been thousands in various regions of the USSR. Alien traditions and customs were imposed on them under the pretext of 'paternal' concern for the peoples. The economic and social development of republics and regions was warped. A policy of suppressing national characteristics, involving mass repression, obliteration of the unique identity of peoples and falsification of their history, was conducted under the banner of internationalism. No nation, including the Russian nation, the largest in the USSR, escaped the oppressive impact of this policy. Its negative consequences have also told on the tense situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the nationalities issue in the USSR as a whole. Today changes are in evidence everywhere. New approaches, glasnost and democracy are spreading to this sensitive area too. But the wounds inflicted on national feelings and national consciousness take a long time to heal.

Farhat. Is it right to establish a direct link between these phenomena and Stalin's policy? After all, there was the 20th CPSU Congress which condemned the personality cult and took decisions to overcome its effects.

Oganisyan. That Congress did play a great role in reviving Leninism, including the nationalities policy. Many distortions have been eliminated, and the way was opened for a return of deported peoples to their homelands. National statistics were to some extent corrected too. According to the 1959 Census, the number of peoples in the USSR 'increased' to 109. But the Congress resolutions and the relevant practical steps were, regrettably, inconsistent, and were altogether abandoned in that period of 'stagnation'. While the nationalities policy shed the most odious features of Stalinism and became known as 'Leninist', there was still a continuity with the old policy. To this day, textbooks, dictionaries and many books on the nationalities question reproduce Stalin's concept of the nation, without, as a rule, mentioning the author.

However, many of those who actually ran social life in the localities paid little attention to the nationalities theory anyway. A mood of national strife was fostered by local 'leaders' in some republics, behind slogans about friendship of the peoples. Unresolved social problems, nepotism, protectionism, corruption and breaches of socialist legality — in short, everything the CPSU has emphatically condemned, and which Soviet society now steadfastly contests — had a negative effect on relations between nations.

There is good reason why the resolution On Relations Between Soviet Nationalities passed by the 19th CPSU Conference equates the shortcomings produced by the personality cult and by the years of stagnation. Perestroika has exposed the negative phenomena which accumulated over decades, ignored and internalised for so long, and has created the necessary conditions for their democratic solution. An objective analysis determines these as the reasons for the complicated relations between nations in the USSR.

Class and Nation

Farhat. The Soviet record shows that the victory over the old socio-economic system does not automatically result in a solution of the nationalities problem. One is certainly bound to take the class approach here. A document on this issue adopted by the 4th Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party says: "The Marxist-Leninist doctrine asserts that all the political programmes worked out for the solution of the nationalities question are class-oriented. Consequently, the bourgeoisie, the working class and various groups of the petty bourgeoisie each have their own programmes."

It is quite clear that each class determines its own approach to the nationalities problem. It is also true that the working class shows the most profound and comprehensive approach because it strives to liberate not only itself, but also the other classes and groups. However, my own view is that, generally, it is not right to reduce things to class factors. The nationalities question has many other aspects which often turn out to be crucial in social life.

Van Houten. That is also my view. The class stand by itself does not put an end to the national question. It is only the starting point, not the end of our efforts and research.

Oganisyan. The class approach implies the consideration of the facts and phenomena of national life in concrete terms, in their entirety and in the dynamic. Precisely in this manner the CPSU is now tackling the nationalities problems, and correcting the mistakes of the past. The current reform of the political system considerably extends the rights of the constituent republics and the autonomous entities by clearly defining the purviews of the party and the Soviets, decentralising power, devolving administrative functions, and giving republics greater independence and responsibility in economy, social life, culture, and environmental protection. Increasing significance is also being attached to providing the ethnic groups, either living outside the boundaries of their state territorial formations or having none of their own, with wider opportunities for realising their national cultural requirements, especially in education, contacts, folk arts and crafts, the creation of cultural centres, the use of the mass media and fulfilment of their religious needs.

Farhat. I don't think that the problem lies in the class approach as such, but in the need to find a form that is relevant to the specifics of the nationalities question in any particular country. Therein lies the main difficulty, one which our party was unable to overcome for a long time. In the colonial period we believed that a solution to the nationalities problem

in Lebanon was mainly a matter for the bourgeoisie, while the working class and the Communists remained an auxiliary force which would only play the primary role during the struggle for socialism. It was also held that the people were incapable of liberating themselves through their own efforts and would have to wait until the proletariat in developed countries, former colonial masters, had liberated itself and was in turn able to help the colonial countries win freedom. In this way our party yielded to the bourgeoisie the vanguard role in the national liberation struggle.

The 2nd Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party in 1968 reviewed this position both in theory and in practice, and decided that the Communists should put forward their own programme for solving the nationalities problem, and become the vanguard in the struggle for national liberation, linking it to the struggle for socialism. It added that the leading role of the working class, far from excluding the patriotic forces of the other social strata, in fact implies an alliance with them. The specific national situation in Lebanon means that the religious factor have a vital role to play. As atheists, for a long time we tended, consciously or unconsciously, to ignore it. Yet many of the country's acute problems stem from this factor, and our party now attaches primary importance to it.

Oganisyan. The bourgeois press often claims that the endless flare-ups of the civil war in Lebanon, and the effective partition of the country are basically the result of hostility between the Christians and the Muslims, between the groups and trends within the main denominations. How true is that?

Farhat. The communal and religious strife certainly has a strong impact on the Lebanese crisis, but its roots lie elsewhere in the intervention by imperialism and Zionism, in league with internal reactionaries. This is the major cause of the religious animosity. Our party believes that the national democratic way is the only way out of the crisis.⁷

Van Houten. When considering the national question both in democratic and political terms, one must always have its class nature in mind. Under capitalism, it is the working class that can, if not solve it, then at least show the way to solving this problem in the common interests of the working people.

The national question in Canada has a long and involved history, going back to the British conquest over 200 years ago, during which two nations emerged: the French-speaking nation in Quebec, and the English-speaking nation in the rest of the country. For a long time, nationalism in Quebec was an attempt to preserve the Francophone people's identity, and was closely connected to the Catholic Church. Major changes took place in Quebec in the 1960s. The bourgeoisie, particularly the petty bourgeoisie, assumed the leadership of the national movement, using the state to develop French Canadian monopoly capital.

Bourgeois political scientists, especially in English-speaking Canada, refuse to recognise that Canada is two nations, saying, for instance, that it is a country of several cultures because it has a large number of immigrants from Holland, where I was born, and from many other countries such as Italy, Greece, the Caribbean, and Asian countries. Immigrants do not constitute nations in Canada. In our society, most of them are assimilated

in the first, second or third generation with the English-speaking majority. But we have only two fully developed nations.

Oganisyan. This situation seems to underline the theoretical and political importance of having a truly scientific concept of what a nation is.

Van Houten. Indeed, this question is politically very important in Canada. Thus, when the draft Canadian constitution was discussed, the country's leaders refused to recognise that there were two nations in Canada. The federal and provincial governments adopted the Meech Lake Accord, under which Quebec is a distinct community, but not the homeland of the French Canadian nation. For the Liberal government of Quebec, this small concession and the devolution of some additional powers to the provinces was enough for it to put its signature to the constitution, something the previous Parti Quebecois government did not do. The new changes in the constitution proposed by the Mulroney Cabinet could lead to Canada's balkanisation, without recognising the French Canadian nation as such, or Quebec's right to self-determination. The Meech Lake Accord ignores the interests of the working people of both nations. Opposition to it helps to unite the two contingents of our working class.

In fact, our 27th Convention, which took place on May 20-23, 1988, foresaw a resurgence of the national question in Canada's political life. This time, however, it would be more closely connected to the fight for a new socio-economic policy in the interests of the Canadian working people and in the interests of Canadian unity.

Our 27th Convention also paid great attention to the unique and special place that native peoples have in Canadian society. It reaffirmed our long-standing position that the native peoples' right to self-determination, including their rights to their land, to self-government, and to the promotion and development of their own culture, must be recognised constitutionally.

Michiels. I agree with what has been said here, that the socialist revolution does not mean the automatic solution of national problems. This is a protracted process and, as the Soviet experience shows, it continues under socialism. In Belgium, new developments have also confronted the Communists with challenging problems. Our proposals go way beyond what has been done in the country up to now to tackle the nationalities question. I want to stress that this is a tough problem, and that our prime concern is the people's profound aspirations, not political imperatives alone.

What does that mean in concrete terms? Let me try to explain briefly. The nationalities question in Belgium has often been reduced to a linguistic problem, which itself was considered only from one angle. It is, in fact, much more complex than that, touching on the political, economic and social spheres as well. There are two communities in the country, generally constituted on the basis of two peoples: the Walloons and the Flemings. In the 1960s, federalisation entailed demands for anti-capitalist structural reforms, and these were made both by the Communists and the left-wing forces of the Socialist Party and the trade union movement.

These demands were most obvious in the powerful wave of strikes in

1960 and 1961. A quarter-century later, these have, in a sense, faded, i.e., while the idea of federalisation has remained strong, it has now lost some of its class content, to the extent that it no longer goes hand in hand with anti-capitalist economic and social demands.

Defence of regional interests implies alliances going beyond the framework of left-wing alliances, and the latest evidence has come from the emergence of a broad pluralistic movement, Wallonia — A Region of Europe, which the Walloon Communists have decided to join in order to give it an economic and social content, as an alternative to the neoliberal policy of the country's present leadership.

The way of federalisation is long and tortuous. Thus, last August, the Belgian Parliament voted for a state reform project. We are moving towards the establishment of a federal state in which certain powers will be devolved to regions and communities. This also applies in the financial sphere. But it would be illusory to expect a class front, comprising a cross-section of Belgium's constituent entities, on the nationalities issue. The Communists in Flanders, in Wallonia and in Brussels will have to bear this in mind, unless they want to find themselves cut off from the active reality of social life.

Fatogun. It seems that our respective countries' national problems are so unique that, apart from their seriousness, this is all they have in common.

Oganisyan. I should like to add a third basic aspect to the discussion: our fundamentally unified approach to this problem. I think there are also some common objective elements in the problems we are discussing.

Fatogun. It all depends on your point of view. In the modern interdependent world, each country's national problems appear as specific versions of a common problem, and this enables Marxists to work out common principles in their approach. The experience gained from various solutions to this problem is generally relevant, and here the experience of the USSR is of particular interest. Its positive significance is not invalidated by the after-effects of Stalin's policy, nor by the tragic events in some Soviet republics. The Soviet example has shown Nigerians and others that all kinds of nations and ethnic groups can be united peacefully on the basis of democracy and equality. This example is truly invaluable for multinational Nigeria.

We have specific problems, like other countries, many of which are the legacy of colonialism, which left a time-bomb in the form of national strife and inter-tribal hostility. At one time, they acted as detonators of the civil war, which caused the people untold suffering. The economic contradictions between the tribes, the result of conditions created by the colonialists, helped to preserve tribalism, which tends to slow down the formation of nations in the country and the cohesion of its people as a whole. Tribalism impedes the social development of the working class, which has the ultimate mission of becoming the leading force in solving the problem of nationalities, a problem that has been greatly exacerbated by inter-ethnic contradictions, religious animosity between Muslims, Christians and believers of traditional creeds and, not least, by neocolonialism. The main task now facing the Nigerian Marxists is to raise

the working people's class consciousness, if a democratic solution to the national problem is to be found.

The Internationalist Approach

Oganisyan. Our exchange of opinions is a reflection of the objective dialectics of the general and the particular, without which it is simply impossible to solve the nationalities problem in any situation. Let us consider the political rather than the theoretical aspect of the connection between the national and the international.

Farhat. This problem is unique in each country. In a multinational state, it is often exacerbated by divisions arising from national distinctions within the working class and within other progressive movements. In Lebanon, where the population is ethnically homogeneous, these divisions do not spring from national, but from religious and communal distinctions. We also have a specific external aspect to the problem. For instance, when Lebanese patriots consider support for the struggle of the people of Palestine, we do not call it international, but national solidarity, because both peoples are Arab. And this is true of all Arab countries. We regard solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of other countries as international. There is also another specific feature: in the anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist struggle, we do not see any contradictions between internationalism, patriotism and nationalism. But we do, of course, draw a distinction between nationalism, on the one hand, and national fanaticism and chauvinism, on the other. These concepts, while they have a different ideological and political content, also have a common one, namely, their anti-imperialist tendency.

Oganisyan. While such a unity may be justified in that situation, in the USSR nationalism is ruled out as an element of this triad. It cannot have any progressive content in our country, and any manifestation of it is seen as an ugly deviation from patriotism and internationalism. This was pointed out at the 19th Conference of the CPSU, which stressed that any action tending to divide the big and small nations, any attempts to infringe the rights of citizens, whatever their nationality, must be regarded as unacceptable and a violation of the interests of the Soviet state.

Van Houten. This is also a specific problem in Canada, because of the attempts by the ruling circles to integrate the country with the United States militarily, economically and politically. This is being done through the free trade agreement with the United States, which satisfies many Canadian monopolies, but threatens the country's sovereignty and independence. From this angle, the struggle against this agreement and the Meech Lake Accord is a patriotic duty of Canadians.

Our bourgeoisie is, in a sense, more closely knit than the working class movement, a result of the trend towards integration within the world capitalist economy, and the free trade agreement is a reflection of this. It concerns the 'internationalisation' of profit, whereby the Canadian bourgeoisie wants to gain access to the US market so as to make more money by selling Canada's natural resources. The internationalism of the working class movement was held back for a long time by the fact that the

so-called international trade unions, of which US and Canadian workers were members, were controlled by US labour union leaders, who, as a rule, were highly conservative and even reactionary. Having won greater independence, Canada's trade union movement demonstrated its capacity to give international support to oppressed peoples, while fighting for the independence of its own country from the rule of the transnational corporations, particularly those from the US.

Fatogun. The fact that the monopolies sometimes have more intense international ties than the progressive forces is especially evident in African and other developing countries. The cooperation between the national contingents of the working class and national liberation movements in the Third World is extremely weak, whereas the international coordination of the TNCs' policy operates as an efficient machine, because capitalism in our countries is much older and is better organised than the working class movement. That is why international problems must be borne in mind when tackling national problems.

Michiels. Belgium's record also shows that the interplay between national and international problems in each country is a distinctive one. The nationalities question in our country has a profound effect on all institutions and parties, including those participating in the working class movement. Most of the parties have split, each section being entirely autonomous and taking the very opposite stand on certain issues, especially the nationalities question. The CPB has resisted this tendency to split. At its extraordinary congress in July 1988, it made amendments to the Rules envisaging a federalisation of party structures, with very broad organisational and political autonomy. But it has retained single organs empowered, in particular, to work out the Belgian Communists' foreign policy.

We are internationalists, and we have no problems when it comes to solidarity with the fighting peoples, but immigrant workers in Belgium have recently posed a new problem. The bourgeoisie has managed to incite among Belgians xenophobia and racist attitudes, directed against these workers, and it is this that is at the root of a very sensitive problem. Chauvinistic propaganda has an effect on the working class, and some of our comrades have also been influenced. As internationalists, we find this intolerable. So we often have to swim against the tide.

The bourgeoisie has become aware of the need to go beyond its narrow nationalism and to become 'international', while the working class of Western Europe finds it hard to practise its inherent internationalism. Thus, the European Trade Union Confederation was set up not long ago, but, to my mind, its international demands are very weak. The trade unions make no effort to coordinate their action or to work out a common strategy to confront capitalist integration measures in Europe.

This also, regrettably, applies to the communist movement. We spent years discussing Eurocommunism, and how to adapt communist strategy to national realities in the West, which, I believe, was in itself a correct thing to do. We have underestimated the scale of the tasks posed by the existence of the EEC too long, such as working out the principles of cooperation between the communist parties, arranging ties between them,

and trying to determine a strategy for solving some common problems. It is now even more obvious that there is a need to cooperate on the international level, i.e., to take a common stand for the working people's national (and regional) interests within Europe, where the internationalisation of production has assumed proportions that we simply cannot ignore.

Farhat. These problems are also reflected in the world communist movement. This may be connected with the fact that for a long time they were not open to discussion. History does not like to play hide-and-seek, and it tends to take revenge whenever problems are ignored or glossed over. I think that there is no better way than open discussion for solving these problems and ridding our movement of their negative effects. I am not saying that all the problems will go away once we get the discussion going, but a broad and honest discussion is vital.



The *WMR* Commission on the International Communist Movement and Exchange of Party Experience examined the results of the round-table discussion and said that the publication of this report presents a set of obviously pressing problems that are, in a sense, new ones for *WMR*. It also indicated that some of the relevant theoretical and practical questions were only mentioned in passing or were not dealt with at all in the discussion. Among those that need to be worked out in depth are Lenin's concept of the nation, and its application and creative development under socialism, under developed capitalism, and in the Third World; different interpretations of nationalism; what Marxists mean by the class approach to the nationalities problem; the relations between theory and the practical solution of the problem in the political, economic, social and ideological spheres; the importance of a true understanding of the specific problems of nations, nationalities, ethnic and religious groups, national minorities, immigrant workers, and the struggle against misinterpretations by the class adversary.

The Commission invites the fraternal parties, our contributors and readers to continue the *WMR* discussion of the questions raised in this report, both in general theoretical terms and in the light of concrete experience.

¹ The Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region (NKAR) was formed in 1923 within the boundaries of the Azerbaijan SSR. It has a territory of 4,400 sq. km., and a population of 180,000, almost 80 per cent of whom are Armenians. Since the beginning of 1988, the NKAR Armenians have staged rallies and demonstrations to demand the annexation of the region to the Armenian SSR. The growing ethnic tensions led to various excesses, including strikes. Armenia's Supreme Soviet proposed that the NKAR should be included in the republic. The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet met last July and considered the matter in an atmosphere of democratic discussion. In the light of the USSR Constitution, it ruled that it was impossible to redraw the national territorial boundaries of the constituent republics. It noted that, along with unquestionable successes in socialist construction in the NKAR, there has long been neglect of problems affecting the national interests of the Armenian population, especially those in culture, education and cadre policy. Its constitutional rights were violated. These negative phenomena were allowed to accumulate, instead of being dealt

with promptly. In order to correct the situation, large-scale measures are being taken to develop the economy and culture, to improve the living standards in the NKAR, to strengthen socialist legality and public order, and to intensify the internationalist education of the population in Armenia and Azerbaijan. — *Ed.*

² See: J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 2, p. 296 (in Russian).

³ See: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 155, Vol. 21, pp. 72-73.

⁴ There is now a Checheno-Ingush and a Kalmyk autonomous republic within the territorial structure of the USSR. — *Ed.*

⁵ See: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 293.

⁶ *The Fourth Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party. Report of the Central Committee*, Beirut, 1979, p. 144 (in Arabic).

⁷ For details see the article by Georges Hawi, *WMR*, No. 12, 1987.

Communists in Western Europe: Retreat or Build-Up of Forces?

The views of leading members of the communist parties of Greece and Italy on the development, problems and prospects for the communist movement in Western Europe were presented in *WMR* No. 10, 1988. In the present issue leading members of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE) examine the historical past, which has largely determined the present state of the movement.

The View From Spain

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Santiago Alvares — CC honorary member, Communist Party of Spain

OUR party has long held the view that the communist movement is in a state of crisis. This is most obvious in Western Europe, where it is frequently expressed in declining electoral support for the communist parties, reductions in party membership, collective passivity, disarray and lack of any common political initiative among the Communists. It is not just a crisis, but a profound crisis, because there is no immediate prospect of escape.

This does not mean, however, that the position is irreversible, or that there won't be a new accumulation of forces in the near future. What is more, there are signs that the objective conditions for this are in the offing. But if these are to be used, the subjective prerequisites have to be created. The objective and subjective factors, which have led since World War II to the present state of the communist movement in Western Europe, are closely interrelated and are determined, in our view, by the following:

— from 1945 on, the region became an area of US influence because of the presence of US and British armed forces;

— the West European economies were rehabilitated with the aid of the US Marshall Plan. The United States, which had evolved into an economic world empire, imposed its own political terms on these countries;

— following Churchill's Fulton speech in 1946, it was evident that Britain and the United States were intent on leaving the anti-fascist coalition and conducting a cold war policy, which implied the exclusion of the Communists from democratic and coalition governments (as in France and Italy); this led to the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and, in turn, brought about the creation of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and the military bloc policy;

— the US course aimed at limiting Communist influence in Europe in order to 'defend freedom', was concealed by its participation in the fight against Nazism. This restricted communist party work among the masses and helped to isolate the Communists from their fellow-fighters in the anti-fascist Resistance: Socialists, Social Democrats, and others;

— finally, in the post-war period there was a split within the worldwide mass organisations, and the West European communist parties entered an exceptionally difficult period of isolation and retreat.

There were other factors besides these objective ones. After World War II, the revolutionary wave, which had inspired the Resistance movement and helped to rout Nazism, began to subside. From 1946 and 1947 on, revolutionary development in Western Europe was held in check by certain alterations in social structures, and by insurmountable obstacles such as the presence of allied armies in some countries, where their mission, after the rout of fascism, was to defend the basic interests of the ruling classes.

The post-war evolution of Western societies, and the relative stability attained by capitalism, led to the disappearance of unemployment, an economic upswing and a certain amount of affluence, all of which undermined the struggle for radical social change. Having suffered during the war, millions of people simply desired peace and prosperity.

The communist parties, which fought so courageously against Hitlerism, were steadily losing not only the prospect of coming to power, but also of the working class taking any part in running society. They were confronted by the most conservative bourgeois circles, aided and abetted by US-led world imperialism. The Communists' former comrades-in-arms in the anti-fascist struggle also turned against them.

This situation, created by imperialist forces, was worsened by developments in the Soviet Union. On the one hand, its people worked rapidly and with admirable perseverance to restore their utterly devastated country, and were remarkably successful in post-war reconstruction. On the other hand, freedom and democracy were curtailed. Stalin, fearing another war, continued a policy of harsh repression and centralisation of government.

Stalin's views influenced many communist parties in Western Europe, which began to conduct a policy that was more sectarian and exclusive than

during the Popular Front and Resistance period. The result was a loss of political influence, even greater isolation and dwindling support from the masses.

In 1948, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union said that the world was divided into opposing camps locked in class struggle. In effect, this was a departure from the policy of peaceful coexistence, and it merely served to intensify international tensions. It led to a weakening, if not to an abandonment, of the communist parties' strategy of alliances, confronting them with a new version of the 'class versus class' line that had prevailed before the popular front idea was formulated in 1935.

The Cominform, an international centre for communist parties (none had existed since the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943) was set up on Moscow's initiative. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia was soon expelled because Josip Broz Tito and the party he led had refused to bow to the dictates of Stalin, the self-styled supreme leader of the socialist world.

Communist leaders accused, among other things, of nationalist deviation, were tried and executed in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other people's democracies.

The 20th Congress of the CPSU inspired new hopes for change. Several ideological propositions approved by the Congress — an emphasis on Lenin's idea of peaceful coexistence, a denial of the fatal inevitability of war, and the possibility of reaching socialism through a combination of mass action and activity in parliament — promised newer and greater opportunities.

The Cominform was dissolved. The then Soviet leader visited Yugoslavia to correct the mistakes made with respect to that country and its party in the Stalin period. However, information concerning the crimes committed in the USSR, to which many party leaders had fallen victim, and which were made public in Nikita Khrushchov's 'secret' report, came like a bolt from the blue for the Communists, many of whom never recovered from the terrible shock they received when Stalin's personality cult was exposed.

At that time, imperialism, never missing a trick, struck while the iron was hot. In 1956 the events in Hungary occurred, causing divisions within several West European communist parties, and prompting many intellectuals to leave other parties.

In 1957, the CPSU attempted a regrouping within the communist movement by calling the Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties from the socialist countries, at which Mao Zedong insisted on the need for a leading centre and a leader-party. The fact that no agreement was reached was due, among other things, to the objective differences between the parties.

It was already perfectly obvious to us at the 1960 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties that socialism and the communist movement had entered a period of grave crisis, manifested in the split within the emergent socialist camp, and the confrontation between the USSR and China. Millions of Communists were alarmed by the subsequent armed clashes between them on the Ussuri River. The existence of a crisis was also

evident in the obvious 'contrasts' between the individual socialist countries, and in their failure to recognise their respective internal contradictions, which amounted to a denial of materialist dialectics.

It became increasingly clear that socialism was incapable of utilising fully the new scientific and technical achievements, already used in military research, to maximise industrial development. There was a genuine contradiction between the realities and the achievements of socialism on the one hand, and the theoretical Marxist thought, then in a state of stagnation, on the other. It turned out that the Communists were unable to develop their theory, explain new phenomena or solve new problems, including those arising within socialism itself.

The victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 — not directly connected with World War II — so close to the United States, the subsequent defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam, and the process of decolonisation, showed that the world revolutionary movement was continuing to grow and extend to new countries, despite the difficulties and the defeats of its individual contingents.

The conclusion must be that *the crisis of socialism and of the communist movement in that period was a crisis of growth, whereas the crisis of capitalism and its offspring imperialism, deprived of its colonial periphery, was a crisis of lost historical perspective.* Clearly, however, capitalism is still viable, and remains a serious and dangerous adversary. In economic terms, it even appears more dynamic than socialism.

These historical factors were the basic reason why the outcome of World War II did not result in radical social changes in West European countries. These factors were also crucial in allowing imperialism to maintain the Franco dictatorship in Spain and the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship in Portugal until 1974-1977.

Besides these unfavourable conditions, *subjective mistakes* likewise had an effect on the development of our movement.

After the war, the communist parties hoped for a common 'long march' with the other anti-fascist forces, and believed that it was possible to set up coalition governments with popular support in order to achieve major social transformations and establish advanced democracy. The Communists were deeply shocked when this road was closed to them.

People were tired of the war and the long years of suffering, and yearned for peace, bread, work and democratic freedoms. At that time, the fulfilment of these desires was promised by the bourgeois governments which had monopolised power, in many cases with the help of Social Democrats and the so-called socialist parties. Under these conditions, the Communists' struggle for profound social change was transferred to the sphere of parliamentary democracy. Many communist parties were weakened, and some of them split up.

The emergence of parallel communist parties should not be regarded *a priori* as a result of their weakness, or of a lack of perspective on the future, although in some cases these factors could be said to have produced several groupings among the Communists.

Over the past forty years, divisions within communist parties sometimes occurred as a result of the national reality, but also as a result of the

differences between the socialist countries, or the support by one of them for groups within a given party, allegedly for the benefit of the common cause. Yet experience reveals that *any division weakens the communist party concerned and eventually the international communist movement as well, while the breakaway group, although apparently Marxist-Leninist, fails to win mass support.*

Nowadays, a split in any party, where temporary differences encourage the establishment of a group or party laying claim to greater orthodoxy, means not only making a political mistake but also harming the communist movement as a whole. This conclusion is based mainly on the experience of the Spanish Communists, but we also keep in mind what is happening in other parties too.

The reconstruction, under the sway of US imperialism, of the West European countries after the war, together with clear indications of increased labour productivity and industrial development, chiefly as a result of the STR, seemed to have guaranteed a long period of stability for the capitalist system.

This gave rise to the notion of 'neocapitalism'. But theories claiming that classes and the class struggle showed a tendency to decline within neocapitalist society were flatly contradicted by reality, particularly by the events in France in May and June 1968.

However, it must be admitted that the left forces failed to use those conditions to stimulate any profound social or political changes with a view to progressing to socialism.

Meanwhile, Spain had suffered the anti-fascist war of 1936-1939, which ended in the defeat of the democratic forces and the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, which lasted for forty years. That is why the political struggle in Spain pursued its own course, differing from that in the other countries of Western Europe, and so requires a different analytical approach.

When considering the retreat of the Communist parties in Western Europe, we showed that the events in socialist countries had a profound influence on this retreat, an effect which has since been proved again and again. As long as socialism, despite its highly important gains (the right to work, education, medical care, etc.), fails to provide a standard of living comparable to that in the most developed countries of the West, it will not be attractive enough to millions of working people. A socialist society must also have a system of freedoms ensuring mass popular participation in the affairs of government, and a much more full-blooded political, social and cultural life than exists in the West. For objective historical reasons, and especially because of the serious errors, socialism has not yet fully acquired these features. It still hasn't revealed its full potential or demonstrated its capacity to surpass capitalism in many vital spheres.

That is why perestroika in the USSR and other socialist countries inspires hope. We believe that revolutionary change within socialism will effectively help the communist parties in the West to restore their dynamism and influence, and regain the support of the masses: Millions of working people — the unemployed and those expecting to be sacked (since technological progress under capitalism leads to structural unemployment)

will once again look to the new society, to the system that not only guarantees working people jobs and meets their material and spiritual needs, but also promises a life of peace without the threat of thermonuclear war. We believe that world socialism, with its orientation towards new political thinking, will be able to restrain imperialism and ensure peace.

It is often much easier to diagnose a disease than to cure it. The immediate prospects for the European communist movement as a whole are, in our view, far from radiant, and the same applies to Spain, although in both cases it is largely up to each communist party, and to all of them together, to alter the situation. This would depend on their ability to exploit the possibilities created by radical reform in the socialist countries. If the situation is to be altered, first there must be a correct analysis of the deep-seated problems (on national scale, and in Western Europe as a whole), and of the effects of modern developments on working people, who constitute the absolute majority within society. Society which is pluralistic not only in class terms, but also in the diversity of views and political, philosophic, religious and other ideas.

Stalin was demonstrably wrong in claiming that we were "men of a special cast and of a special seasoning". Marx and Engels said, in their *Communist Manifesto*, that "the Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties", but that they are "on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement".¹ Oughtn't we to remember this, and try to put it into practice?

The Communists of Western Europe should first ask themselves: what is going on, here? Which forces prevail? How can the political situation be changed? Conservative circles are now dominant in many countries, and there is still no alternative in the form of sweeping changes. Can't this situation be overcome by working for essential readjustments in Western society?

Despite some progress in ensuring peace, there is still a nuclear threat here, and military budgets are still bloated. There are over 17 million unemployed in the European Common Market. Over the past several years, the purchasing power of wages in most EEC countries has declined in relation to gross domestic product, and there is a widening gap between wages and prices. Working people's incomes have dwindled, while the profits of big capital have soared. There must be some way of putting forward basic demands capable of mobilising the masses. It is our duty to drive home to millions of workers and other citizens that ecological problems, for instance, will not be solved as long as profit remains the be-all and end-all of the existing political system. Consequently, the fact that West European Communists lack any real prospects for rapid progress does not imply that changes themselves are unrealistic. Everything depends, we repeat, on the communist parties' approach to the situation

and to the possibilities of changing it. The following objective conditions help:

- the Soviet-US INF Treaty and the negotiations on halving the strategic nuclear arsenals consolidate peace and détente, thus creating more favourable conditions for mass action in order to satisfy numerous demands in other spheres of life;

- the need to resist the policy of rearmament conducted by the new Paris-Bonn nuclear axis, and the problem of an independent national policy free from US tutelage in Western Europe, create a broad basis for the activity of the Communists, even if they disagree among themselves;

- for obvious reasons the main demands of the masses have not been and cannot be satisfied either by the conservative or right-wing forces in power in some countries (a fact that opened up prospects for more vigorous political activity by Communists and other left-wing forces);

- neither the socialist nor the social democratic parties, whether in power or in opposition, can provide, acting in isolation, any positive response to these mass demands, for if these are to be heard and partially met, the Communists, together with other left-wing forces, must give a lead to action by workers and other social strata, unite the people in the fight for their just objectives, and formulate and put forward the relevant alternatives;

- among other factors, national capital is in thrall to transnational monopoly and finance capital, with various consequences. The communist parties have no right to remain in isolation from each other in this situation.

What can be done? First of all, we believe, the communist parties have to establish contacts for an exchange of views and a discussion of common urgent problems: the prevention of nuclear war; the preservation of peace in Europe and throughout the world; the millions of people who go hungry while surpluses are being destroyed in the EEC countries; Europe's relations with the Third World in the light of the latter's mammoth external debt; the contradictions between the Europe of the monopolies and the Europe of the peoples; and the changes in the sphere of production and in the condition of the working class under the impact of the STR.

How can the efforts of the people be combined in the face of greater enslavement by world capitalism? How is one to drive home the fact that the only solution to these problems is a collective one?

We believe that all communist parties in Western Europe must act in concert and maintain constant contacts with fraternal parties in socialist countries and other parts of the world. *It would also be important in solving these problems to reach agreement on the possibility of restoring the communist movement as a whole, but without the establishment of an organisational centre, or the adoption of mandatory directives.*

There is plenty of room for theoretical study, the formulation of political problems and mass action. Proper advantage must be taken of these opportunities. We have no doubt that our present position can be improved along this path. No contradiction exists between the unity and concerted action of the communist parties, and cooperation with Socialists,

Social Democrats, and Christian Socialists. Whatever views they hold are no bar to contacts and collective efforts by Communists, or for ties with other broad mass movements.

WMR could also do much to promote this unitary process by reporting on research into these problems, and by arranging meetings and discussions on all these issues.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 497.

The Anatomy Of Dogmatism

Hector Mujica — Central Committee member, Communist Party of Venezuela

Cleansing our theoretical thought of stagnation was the subject of 'More Marxism, More Creative Effort' by Narciso Isa Conde, General Secretary of the Dominican Communist Party (*WMR*, September 1988). It is also the theme of the following article.

IN reflecting on the crisis of modern civilisation and on issues of human survival, I keep recalling Albert Einstein's letter to a group of Soviet scientists. In it he said: "We should not make the mistake of blaming capitalism for all existing social and political evils, and of assuming that the very establishment of socialism would be able to cure all the social and political ills of humanity. The danger of such a belief lies, first, in the fact that it encourages fanatical intolerance on the part of all the 'faithfuls' by making a possible social method into a type of church which brands all those who do not belong to it as traitors or as nasty evildoers. Once this stage has been reached, the ability to understand the convictions and actions of the 'unfaithfuls' vanishes completely. You know, I am sure, how much unnecessary suffering such rigid beliefs have inflicted upon mankind."¹

There was Savonarola. There was the Spanish Inquisition. There was the persecution of heretics. All these are familiar examples of obscurantism and intransigence. But it is only today that I have realised how profoundly topical Einstein's ideas on this score are. I have long known that blind faith and fanaticism — products of ossified thinking — are disgusting; that they inflict suffering on vast masses of humanity and lead to retrogression. That is precisely why, since my early years, I have been committed to the ideology of the advanced class, an enemy of all obscurantism. But can the thinking of the revolutionary forces, too, grow ossified and, having lost the ability to accept the world in its diversity, become a source of evil and undermine their own moral prestige?

The battles against the fascist plague in Europe, against the 'gorillas' in Latin America, against imperialism and the US 'military-industrial

monster' are unlikely to have made us intransigent and narrow-minded. I know from my personal experience that neither the years you spend in prison, in exile or underground, nor the memories of your comrades who have perished in the struggle impair your theoretical faculties. Nor is political 'tunnel vision' something one develops when blinded by one's ultimate objective. Rather, the microbe of dogmatism is nurtured by a euphoria about the progress achieved and by an uncritical acceptance of the absurdly high price paid for these achievements — suffice it to recall the record of Stalinism. The absence of a proper moral evaluation of this and other negative phenomena killed revolutionary enthusiasm and stifled revolutionary thought which lagged behind the substantive changes occurring in the world.

Complacency and inertia in theoretical thought were compounded by *the international communist movement's one-sided interpretation of the course of the competition between the two systems, an interpretation biased in favour of socialism*. Specifically, the events of 1968 revealed a failure to live up to the spirit of our advanced doctrine, the lack of a revolutionary urge to constantly look for and discover new elements of social practice and to translate previously unknown phenomena into the language of science. At that time, the unprecedented rise of pacifism in the United States and Western Europe and the powerful wave of democratic protest and student unrest in France, Italy, Mexico and other countries were seen as fitting the conventional patterns of the class struggle. Such was also our initial reaction to the upswing of the environmentalist movement which had responded to the alarm sounded by the Club of Rome, not by us. As a result, we missed the emergence not only of new social subjects as makers of history (the forces of science and culture) but also of a radically new social situation in the world.

It took us a long time to arrive at the conclusion about an interdependent world, to correlate in a properly Marxist way the tasks of the class struggle with the realities of the nuclear age, and to call for a new way of thinking and a new approach to the assessment of social progress and of the potential possessed by different forces and revealed in the course of the struggle to save civilisation. However, one cannot say that, having taken a step in the right direction, we have advanced significantly in overcoming the stagnation of our theoretical thought. What, then, are the obstacles that impede our progress?

First and foremost it is, I believe, our *insufficient attention to the analysis of society's intellectual and cultural dimensions* — something which takes a backseat to the study of material factors. This is why some parties obviously underrate the role of the intelligentsia in social practice and, paradoxically, there is a suspicious and sometimes even hostile attitude to culture. In fact, this attitude stems from a dogmatic interpretation of the idea that problems of culture can only be resolved after political power is secured. In other cases, it is rooted in a crudely primitive view of the intellectual and cultural sphere which is allegedly far removed from the vital interests of the working class.

Moreover, the effort to master Marxism-Leninism and its method is often reduced to reading various popularisations or simply memorising

slogans which do little to develop one's political thinking or moral and ethical requirements. Many such 'students' have no idea about Hegelian dialectics or Feuerbach's views, to say nothing of modern currents of philosophy and political thought. In the final analysis, such people arrive at the fallacious conclusion that Lenin's *Collected Works* are an integral body of knowledge offering ready-made answers to all possible questions, and that the important thing is merely to learn to find a proper quotation in each case. Nothing is done to make people see Lenin's works as a laboratory of creative thought. Such scholastic training and education of party cadres canonises the founders of scientific socialism.

Some parties are little aware of the concrete contribution made by major figures of the international communist movement such as Antonio Gramsci, Gyorgy Lukacs or Che Guevara to revolutionary theory. Conversely, some of them are at times treated as apostles. On the one hand, there is often practically no proper understanding of the positive elements contained in the ethical protest expressed in terms of theory by Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Max Horkheimer and Jean-Paul Sartre, or of the positive aspects of social reformism. (Take, for example, the Austrian Marxism of the 1930s which raised a number of topical issues such as the correlation between the class-based and the general democratic factors, between reform and revolution, or between the scale and the character of revolutionary violence. Socialist-oriented forces in advanced capitalist countries still concentrate on these questions.) On the other hand, there is inadequate awareness of the distinctive features of the developing world and its political structures. Our assessment of them is sometimes simplistic, arising as it does from the immediate working-class requirements only and ignoring the interests of other social strata.

Our usual attitude to our ideological opponents is that since they are not Communists, they cannot think dialectically, that is, rationally: so why waste time on them at all? This reminds me of the 'philosophy' of Venezuela's Caribbean Indians who, in the pre-Columbian era, believed that only they were the true human beings. But the modern history of the world's humanistic thought (and the Latin American contribution to it — for example, 'liberation philosophy') shows that *the social sciences which are developing outside the Marxist framework produce results too*. It follows that we should also study other methods of knowledge instead of dismissing them, and that we should display a greater sense of responsibility when we apply materialist dialectics to the interpretation of new phenomena. A more responsible interpretation does not result from references to or quotations from the classics: it stipulates a specific, in-depth and all-round Marxist analysis of current developments.

The low academic and general cultural levels of our cadres is the anatomy of today's dogmatism. Politically, it manifests itself in the tendency to evade a broad ideological dialogue within the social framework, and in self-isolation. This stewing in one's own juice creates an atmosphere of petty politicking and intolerance to others' views. Narrow-minded people gain the upper hand, and 'faithfuls' appear who are leaning towards either formalism or pseudo-revolutionary demagoguery. The

latter is dangerous because it confuses the masses and wastes their revolutionary energy.

How can such negative phenomena be overcome? Only one solution suggests itself: *we must win more intellectuals over to our side and establish broader and closer contacts with the academic and artistic community.* Without such an alliance, we will not cope with dogmatism. Naturally, this is not a new problem. Certain experience in resolving it has been gained by the socialist countries and by several West European communist parties. But the world's completely new social situation also calls for a reappraisal of our established attitudes. Of particular interest in this connection is an idea advanced by Mikhail Gorbachov (even though he spoke about the problems of Soviet society): "Still, the most important thing for all our society is to overcome dogmatism in our thinking because that is something from which neither political activists, nor men of letters nor research workers are free. All those who are connected with intellectual pursuits are tainted with it, and this is what largely shapes our theoretical analysis, policy-making and the like."²

In other words, it is now imperative not only to raise the overall cultural level of the party cadres or to involve new sections of the intelligentsia in the activities and policies of communist parties but also to look for ways of overcoming conservative trends in our creative endeavours. Without it, the influence of our movement as the leading force cannot grow. We hold that the Communists must not produce the impression of lecturing others. The political role they play in society should help liberate its intellectual potential, revise traditional class-based values and stereotyped thought patterns which hold us back, and put this potential into the effort of changing the world. That is how I see the up-to-date style of work a Leninist party should adopt. It will help us shake off the hypnosis of past experience and advance to new frontiers.

The gigantic historial task of rallying the new subjects of social progress together is in some ways comparable to and in others different from the work of the Bolsheviks in the early decades of the century. To accomplish this task, the Communists will have to raise dramatically the level of their political and cultural thinking. The important thing is to understand and assess objectively the positive aspects of those methods of knowledge which differ from ours. After all, we are not the only ones concerned over the future of the human race. If hundreds of millions of people embrace new political thinking, it will become a *material force behind the effort to save civilisation.*

All kinds of unexpected turns fraught with relapses into dogmatism and stagnant thinking are possible as we move along this new revolutionary path. To search, to doubt and to search again is, I think, the only right way of fathoming the critical essence of our doctrine, ensuring an effective impact of our theory on social practice, and developing Marxism so as to tackle today's global problems.

¹ *New Times*, No. 16, 1988, p. 20. The letter, written in 1947, is reproduced there in full. — Ed.

² *Pravda*, May 11, 1988.

viewpoints

The World of Labour in the Computer Age

White- and Blue-Collar Workers Today

The Changing Structure Of The Working Class In Finland

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OUR party has kept a close watch on the structural changes in the economy and class make-up of the Finnish society under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution (STR). Once an agrarian country, Finland rapidly developed into an industrialised state. Until the 1940s, most of the population was engaged in agriculture and forestry, but, in a relatively short period after World War II, there was a radical shift towards a modern capitalist industry and the services. The activity of state and local authorities was extended accordingly, and there was a marked increase in the share of wage-workers among the population: from 58 per cent in 1950 to 86 per cent in 1980. This means that the life of the overwhelming majority of the Finns now depends on the state of the labour-market.

Employment in *various sectors of the economy* has changed, and is still changing. An idea of its depth and consequences is given by data prepared by the Finnish Statistical Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour. There has been a sharp drop in the number of people employed in agriculture: from 35.6 per cent in 1960 to 11.5 per cent in 1985, while the industrial workforce has correspondingly increased from 21.8 per cent to 26.2 per cent. In finance the increase has been from 1.7 to 6.1 per cent, and in the services, from 14 to 27.4 per cent. By 1995, these two areas are expected to account for over 40 per cent (8.1 and 32.5 per cent respectively) of those in work. There will be a continued outflow of labour from agriculture, down to 10.1 per cent, and to a lesser extent from industry, to 24.9 per cent.

Changes in the *social composition of work force* are even more pronounced. As in other developed capitalist countries, the number of industrial workers in Finland has been declining, and the number of office

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workers growing, due to the introduction of new technologies, new professional standards for those employed in industry, the more widespread use of computers and other electronic devices in production, finance, management and the services, and the growth of the public sector. In Finland, this accounts for one-sixth of the Gross National Product, but government and municipal services employ a quarter of the able-bodied population. The potential for new jobs in public health and social security is especially great.

One should note, first of all, the trends affecting industrial workers. In 1960 they made up 27.3 per cent and in 1970, 31.2 per cent of the workforce since the country was rapidly industrialising. Once a start had been made on the application of STR achievements, the share of industrial workers dropped to 24.6 per cent in 1985, and within the following 10 years it is expected to go down by a quarter, to 17.6 per cent. But since the total number of persons employed in industry is not expected to change markedly, the implication is that there is a shift towards occupations requiring more serious special training. These statistical data, however, do not include workers in building, communications, transport and other sectors of the economy.

Nowadays, 'office employee' is not such a clear-cut concept as it was in the past, when, those who worked with their brains were known as 'white-collar workers', and those who worked with their hands as 'blue-collar workers'. The functions of a wide spectrum of working people assumed new forms as a result of the changes in production and social life under the impact of the STR, the appearance of many new trades and professions, and the widening of the sphere of administration, management and the services. The old boundary line between mental and manual labour ceased to be impassable. Strong trade unions emerged among office workers, but the former protection against sackings has been noticeably weakened, and unemployment is fairly commonplace. All of that has substantially reduced the earlier distinctions between salaried employees and the rest of the labouring population.

Over the past three decades there has been evidence of a steady growth in the number of working people in technical, research and humanities occupations and professions, and also of office workers and managerial personnel. The share of both groups has more than doubled in 25 years, from 1960: from 8.2 to 20.6 per cent, and from 6.8 to 15.9 per cent, respectively. By 1995, the former groups are expected to become the largest within the occupational structure of the population, accounting for up to 29.6 per cent, while the latter is expected to decline to 12.8 per cent by 1995, as computers displace office workers.

Finnish statistics draw a distinction between two basic groups of employees: a lower and a higher. The typical employee of the first group is a working person, often a woman, without any special education, or with a minimal secondary training, engaged in monotonous and poorly paid work. Employees of the higher group generally retain the old privileges of this social stratum: a better education and higher salaries, opportunities for promotion, and a voice in any decisions relevant to the labour process. While the distinctions between the lower-group employees and the other

working people with regard to education and pay are negligible, there is a sharp difference between the higher-group and the lower-group employees.

I have been dealing with the professional, occupational and social structure of Finnish society on the basis of official statistics, for whose purposes 'employees' are a statistical and not a class concept. *The Communist Party of Finland approaches the analysis of the class composition of Finnish society differently, and does so in the light of Lenin's definition of classes.* He says that different groups of employees relate to different classes "by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it".¹

We regard the majority of office employees as an important and growing part of the working class. In capitalist society they are assigned a subordinate role in the social organisation of labour. Their pay is determined by the value of the labour-power on the labour market, and differs little from the wages of industrial workers. They are fairly well organised and make use of the strike weapon in the fight for their interests, now and again taking action together with all the other working people.

Up to one-third of the employees belong to the middle classes, and, objectively, their class status is a contradictory one. Some of them, in intermediate positions in the social organisation of labour, merely pass on to the point of production the orders coming from above, and see that these are carried out. Others work in government and municipal agencies, the mass media, education and public health, and the content of their work objectively serves to keep the existing social system going. At the same time, they are akin to the working class and join it in standing up for their interests, although they are subjected to the heaviest pressure from the bourgeoisie, which seeks to keep these classes attached to itself.

A small number of senior employees (2-3 per cent of the total) belong to the bourgeoisie. These are executives in industry, organising the entire process in which the working people are exploited; they are dependent on the owners of capital, but are well paid. Among them are the senior government officials, whose main task is to ensure the functioning of the entire apparatus of capitalist reproduction, and also those who run the repressive agencies, which see to the preservation of the social system.

On the basis of Finnish statistics, we believe that the working class section of the population (industrial workers and office employees) went up from 57 per cent in 1950 to 70 per cent in 1980; that of the middle classes (farmers, small businessmen, and some categories of office employees) fell from 41 to 28 per cent, while the share of the bourgeoisie — 2 per cent — remained unchanged.

Within the working class itself, workers proper (those in industry, transport, building, etc.) now make up just under one-half of the total, which means that office employees make up over one-half of the working class. Only 16 per cent of government employees work in the administrative apparatus, most of them being linked to spheres of the reproduction of labour-power, and employed in executive positions.

The active involvement of women in the labour process is an important

feature of the structural changes: women now make up almost 60 per cent of the working class, and nearly three-quarters of those in the services, marketing and finance. This means the Communists must bear in mind the specific needs of the female workforce, while ensuring they do not contradict the common interests of all the working people.

Various factors have shaped the *class consciousness* of the traditional and new groups of the working class in different ways. Social origin plays an important part. In Finland, 42 per cent of workers come from the working class, and the rest from other social strata, with approximately one-half coming from farming backgrounds. All of these, quite naturally, hold their own views in many respects. Those who come from the commercial stratum, for instance, tend largely to ignore class contradictions in society.

The class consciousness of class antagonisms is most pronounced among the industrial workers, especially among those who work less than a full day or have lost their jobs altogether. However, a study of the response to class antagonism has produced somewhat unexpected results: the industrial workers turned out to be far from the most militant group among wage-workers.

Finnish studies of the structure of the working class have considered the question of its *core*: according to the various methods used, it includes from 3.5 to 15.3 per cent of the workers. In the former case, they are confined to the monopolistic sector of the economy (mainly metal-working and the paper industry). In the latter, the core includes workers at enterprises employing over 500 persons, and this should be taken as the more correct approach. But we find that this core is more passive than the rest of the working class, although it has a higher level of class consciousness than other groups. Without analysing this phenomenon, one has to state that the *existing core of the Finnish working class does not accord with the traditional Marxist concepts*. But it would be wrong to assume that it has been integrated into the existing system; it is simply somewhat passive.

When analysing the class consciousness of office employees, one will note that many of them do not identify themselves with the working class, although they do belong to it objectively. At the same time, employees have a characteristically strong urge to organise (mainly in trade unions) and to use the methods of working class struggle.

Under the STR, the intelligentsia has a greater role not only in creating new industries, but also in developing society as a whole. There is a growing sector of specialists with a higher education in various fields. Finnish studies have not identified any special type of consciousness for the intelligentsia. It is formed under the influence of its place in social reproduction, and is in many ways akin to that of the managerial personnel. That is not to say, however, that it is identical with the bourgeois consciousness, because intellectuals occupy a different position in social hierarchy, and to them apparently applies Gyorgy Lukacs's well-known observation that only individual intellectuals can become revolutionaries, because joining the working class struggle, is going beyond their social group.

The relatively low level of class consciousness among the new sectors of wage-workers, who have no traditions of class struggle, implies that the Communists must carry on education work among them in order to explain that it is not the STR as such that is the source of negative social consequences, but the capitalist use of scientific and technical progress for intensifying exploitation and maximising profits.

How do the changes in the character of labour and the social make-up of the population affect the *differentiation among the working people*? Is there merely a divergence of interests among the various groups, or do the old common interests remain and new ones arise? The processes under way here are evidently multi-faceted and call for serious theoretical study. Assessments of these processes have not yet brought about any essential changes in the strategy of the Communists, although the need to do so is there.

The stratification of the working class is caused by the operation of various objective and subjective factors. The capitalists seek to split the working people by using various forms of organisation and remuneration of labour. The social conditions, pay and all manner of benefits in some companies differ from those in others, and are made available selectively to groups and even to individuals. This ranges the working people against each other and makes them dependent on the 'goodwill' of their employers.

Automation and computerisation of labour and managerial processes, which alter the professional demands made on personnel, have been having large-scale consequences. The disappearance of monotonous mechanical operations leads to a growth of unemployment among unskilled labour, but skilled workers also tend to lose their old jobs and are not always capable of adapting to the changed demands. They also join the army of the unemployed. Automation and computerisation simultaneously create many new workplaces requiring not only high skill standards and special training, but also the performance of further monotonous and fragmented non-skilled operations. As a result, workers are increasingly divided into well-trained personnel, with permanent and high-paid jobs, and poorly trained and casual personnel. Together with those who have lost their jobs, we find great distinctions between those who are fairly well off and those who have been marginalised.

Finnish industry is still at the initial stage of computerisation, and progress there can be expected to increase unemployment as it makes more and more workers redundant. Specific problems arise from the use of high technology in office work, since the labour of employees — mainly women — becomes increasingly intense and less meaningful, thus producing alienation and dissatisfaction.

Some Marxist students of these processes of differentiation have suggested that the working people are being *disqualified*, implying that automation under capitalism is a step towards the elimination of high professional skills. It is assumed that the simplification of operations in the spirit of Taylorism, which makes labour meaningless in content for the worker, allegedly results from some general strategy of the employers. There is, in actual fact, no such coherent strategy, and, on the contrary, the

owners of enterprises have very different methods of managing production in the face of capitalist competition. Nor is it right to say that the lowering of professional skill standards is a prevalent trend, for it relates to a limited range of occupations, mainly involving manual labour at a definite stage in modernisation. The organisation of production on new lines makes greater demands on skill standards. Whether and how the displaced or new groups of working people can acquire the necessary skills is a different matter, depending on the strength of their trade unions and the political situation in society.

Finnish scientists, among them Matti Kortteinen, Anna Maija Lehto and Pekka Ylostalo, have shown that computerisation has most negative effect on the lot of the lower echelons of office employees, who lose their qualification and their jobs, while computers make the work of the senior employees more independent and responsible.

New chances of dividing the working people have appeared in recent years. The assembly of components, or office work, for instance, no longer have to be tied down to a definite place. Computers linked up to information networks make it possible for the work to be done at home or in small centres away from the main enterprise or office. The credit-card system makes it possible to arrange the service of clients outside bank premises. The trade unions regard this organisation of labour as posing a grave threat to the working people because it isolates them from each other, makes them more dependent on their employers, reduces labour protection and social security, and creates uncertainty of earnings, especially when there is a switch from wages and salaries to the payment of fees.

The differentiation within the working class connected with the objective development of material production under the STR does not imply the *automatic prevalence of the specific interests of individual groups over the common interests of the working people. There is nothing inevitable about a division of the working class.* The task is to combine correctly, the working people's particular and general interests in each concrete case, and the working class has had such a mechanism for a long time, in the form of the trade unions, and it has proved its effectiveness. The trade union movement has won a whole system of labour contracts, concluded with the employers on behalf of the collective. These contracts assert the collective interests of the working people. It is no secret that the influence of some communist parties in West European countries, including Finland, is based on their positions in the trade union movement, where they have acted as the champions of the working people's interests.

Our party has tried to take account of the structural changes in the labouring population, to meet its needs, and to draw conclusions for its own activity. We have continued to pay the closest attention to the traditional demands of the working class for higher wages, better working conditions, and the fight against unemployment, and these will continue to be significant in the future as well. At the same time, our party is aware of the *new problems produced by the STR and seeks to raise these to the level of nationwide demands.* It is encouraging that many of these problems have been written into the programmes of the Finnish trade unions. One of the

primary tasks is to give the working people a say in the introduction of new hardware and technologies and control over these processes, so as to ease or avert their negative effects. Here we see a close connection with the well-known demand for the working people's participation in the management of production and its spread to today's crucial spheres of activity. This is a fully realistic way of making the labour process democratic, and includes the demands of collectives for some influence on the rhythm and pace of shopfloor operations, the reversal of the workers' alienation from production, and an increase in the creative content of labour.

Education, training and retraining become increasingly important in the STR, because large numbers of redundant workers depend on them. Training in new skills must be more than their personal business; it must be the concern of society as a whole, involving funds from the state and the employers.

The ecological effects of ill-conceived schemes to develop production in the drive for profits are a cause of alarm, and that is why environmental protection has recently become a vital demand of the working class. Among the common human interests are not only ecological matters, but also the problems of overcoming the backwardness of the less developed countries, ending the arms race and using the funds thus released to turn out civilian products.

The record shows that various contingents of working people can act together as much in their specific interests, which are determined by their place in the process of reproduction, as in the interests of humanity as a whole.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

When The Green Revolution Fails To Reach Its Goal

Ajoy Roy — CC Secretary, Communist Party of Bangladesh

BANGLADESH, one of the world's least developed and a peripheral country of the world capitalist market, has been experiencing vigorous efforts of development of dependent capitalism since the middle of the 1970s. Needless to say, the state has the key role in this drive. Here we will try to analyse the process associated with the green revolution in agriculture since, apart from the features peculiar to Bangladesh, it possesses characteristics typical of other Third World countries.

Capitalist relations had been at a very low level before present Bangladesh became a part of Pakistan (after the partition of India) in 1947, though in agriculture shoots of capitalism were in clear evidence, and the natural economy was in the stage of disintegration.

There was a limited capitalist growth since then, only to be thwarted in 1971, when Bangladesh became an independent republic nationalising industries, banks, insurance companies and foreign trade on a large scale. But taking advantage of the patronage of the state, a section of *nouveaux riches* developed operating mainly in the sphere of circulation and services. Links with imperialist houses, mainly as commission agents of their products, helped their enrichment.

All through this period in the field of agriculture the strategy of green revolution has been pursued with the goal of attaining food self-sufficiency; it has thus become the main vehicle of spread of capitalist relations in agriculture in present-day Bangladesh.¹ Green revolution is claimed to be scale-neutral — and it would if irrigation facilities, fertiliser and other inputs were equally accessible to the poor peasants as well as the rich not only in theory but in practice; this calls for a government provision of the necessary funds to the small peasants. But it is far more difficult for the poor to receive state credits. So the advantage of the green revolution in Bangladesh is definitely tilted towards the rich.

As to the extent of green revolution, the spread of it, up till now, with the spread of modern irrigation to about one-fifth of the cultivated land, cultivation of modern varieties has extended to about one-third of the sown area under cereals. Fertiliser consumption has increased from 4.5 to 18.2 kg of nutrients per acre (0.4 hectare) in the 1971-1985 period.

Now on the economic aspect of the matter. Even in villages where the more sophisticated technology is not being used, income distribution is fairly unequal. The bottom 40 per cent of the households in the per-capita income scale get about 21 per cent of the total income, while 21 per cent of the income accrues to the top 10 per cent of the households. The pattern of distribution of income is still more unequal in the technologically developed villages: the income share of the top 10 per cent of the households is about 26 per cent. The green revolution has had a pronounced effect on the size of incomes. They are particularly considerable for the larger landowning groups: 34 per cent for the large landowner compared to 22 per cent for the small, which suggests a trend towards inequality in the distribution among farm households.

The proportion in which extra income is generated by taking recourse to technologically developed form of cultivation is not invested in agriculture in the same proportion. The large landowners invest less and less directly in agriculture, seeking to apply their money accumulations in other spheres, including usury.

As to the impact of the green revolution on land market, the following regularity is easily identifiable: less than 10 per cent of the households participate in the market, and they buy more land than they sell. The accumulation of land proceeds chiefly at the expense of small landowners.

It is true in Bangladesh that small farmers are better cultivators than the large ones, because the small farmers can utilise their family labour in a more efficient way. In the first years of the green revolution it was they who intensively used high-yielding varieties and strictly complied with the new technology, enjoying encouragement from a government who undertook the responsibility of irrigation and supplied fertilisers, pumps,

etc., at a low subsidised price. But it was the rich who again gained most from the adoption of new technology: the prices which the rich farmers got for their products were higher, while the prices which they paid for inputs were less, because the poor farmers and the tenants pay much higher prices for the inputs. Moreover, a survey of farmer groups carried out in 1982 has shown that the small farmers and the tenants pay not only higher prices for fertilisers and irrigation, but pay more wages to day labourers whom they hire at the time of peak season.

Of late the government at the instance of the World Bank and IMF has vigorously taken up the policy of withdrawing subsidies from the small farms, and this has definitely made the new technology costlier to the poor peasants and tenants. The extra expenditure has not been offset by the increase in market prices of agricultural products as had been hoped for.

The adoption of new technologies in a number of areas of Bangladesh has led to an increase in production and income which is reaped more by the rich farmers, and it also expands the scope of employment for the landless or near-landless in agriculture. *But the total effect of the changes brought on by the green revolution is a still greater differentiation among the peasantry, more wealth for the parasitising sections and deeper poverty for the working people.*

Though the processes we have examined help, in principle, the spread of capitalist relations in the countryside, the green revolution in Bangladesh has failed to by and large transform the prevailing mode of production and increase cardinally the yields of grain. *The development has been in enclaves, and is generally on the wane.*

In discussing the limiting factors we must first pay attention to the nature of the state as it exists at present in Bangladesh. Green revolution and the processes associated with it destroy traditional social relations still existing in the village. From the Indian and Pakistani experience we know that big landowners there to a major degree have been transformed into agricultural capitalists. In both places, amongst other things, the role of the state was one of the key elements in the transformation. In Bangladesh power is wielded by a handful of civil and military bureaucratic capitalists mainly of the comprador nature. In spite of government declarations and facilities, productive forces have not expanded to any appreciable extent. One of the reasons for it is that green revolution has been introduced *without undertaking any land reforms* doing away with the old pre-capitalist production relations. Though from time to time some limited legislations have been enacted, yet none of them have been implemented. Pre-capitalist relations of production still coexist with capitalist in even technologically developed villages.

Bangladesh's peripheral position in the world capitalist market and the neocolonial exploitation of imperialism also act as a brake. Actually the dominant position of foreign capital in our economy is the main obstacle on the road to independent development.

The dependent capitalism in Bangladesh has not the capacity of development and stabilisation of the system in such a way that it can ensure the necessary level of production, though it is another matter that it serves

as a nutrient medium for the rise of new parasitising sections of the bourgeoisie.

Since 1975, government has been laying the emphasis more and more on privatisation, especially in the field of distribution of pumps, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. While handing over irrigation equipment and other inputs to private hands they are provided with liberal credit. It rose from Tk.2.69 billion² in 1979-1980 to Tk.11.3 billion in 1984-1985. These sums were pocketed mainly by the rich farmers and the middlemen.

With the spread of green revolution, the scope of construction and other extra farm activities in the rural area has increased and the section of businessmen who are engaged in these activities has become an influential force and serves as a power base of the ruling classes. It is through them that present-day capitalism in Bangladesh is trying to extend its sway on the rural economy and the peasants.

After the introduction of green revolution, some increase in the sphere of production, productivity and wages has been observed in the areas to which it has spread. But food self-sufficiency, which has always been the objective since the adoption of the new technology in the middle of the sixties, has not been attained, though food and agricultural production, particularly the food production, has increased. For example, food production at the end of the second five-year period (1980-1985) was 16.08 million metric tons, and the average growth of food production annually was 3.5 per cent. Yet the country is year after year increasing its imports of grain.

From all that has been discussed above the conclusions that can be reached are:

. In spite of the efforts by the government and international agencies, the scenario in rural Bangladesh has not changed in such a way where it may be said that the prevailing multi-structured society has transformed itself to capitalism fully. Under the present conditions, the limiting factors are powerful enough which precludes such transformation.

Some changes have taken place in the rural economy with the spread of green revolution, though in enclaves, and as a result, new parasitising classes presently dominate that economy and serve as the power base of the ruling classes.

The expected substantial development of productive forces has not materialised, and the objectives of the green revolution have not been attained. Bangladesh is still a very poor and backward agrarian country. The proportion of households having less than the prescribed minimum calorie intake has increased from 59 per cent in 1976 to 75 per cent in 1982. This trend still continues, despite the general increase in food output and supply.

A manpower survey between 1980 and 1984 reveals that child labour is now used more than before and that the able-bodied labour force have less opportunity for employment. Though the decline in rural wages of agricultural workers has partly stopped, yet their income in 1988 was 64 per cent of the 1984 level in real terms.

The capitalist way for which efforts have been made during the past twenty years or more will not be able to solve the problems of rural

Bangladesh or feed the people. *Limitations of the capitalist way have been expressed. What Bangladesh needs is a social transformation oriented towards socialism.* The more this transformation will be delayed, the more prolonged will be the perpetuation of present backwardness and the ever increasing poverty of the masses.

¹ Green revolution is a package of cultivation methods involving the use of high-yielding variety seeds, an adequate supply of water (through irrigation), proper dosage of fertilisers, etc.

² The Taka is the currency of Bangladesh (Tk.30.3. = US \$1). — Ed.

Journalism And New Political Thinking

Bohuslav Chnoupek — member,
CPCz Central Committee

MARX's demand that progressive, democratic journalism be the "vigilant eye of a people's soul, the embodiment of a people's faith in itself, the eloquent link that connects the individual with the state and the world"¹ has never been more topical. As we can see, the ideas of new political thinking have been truly adopted only by those mass media that are an intellectual and cultural mirror of their countries' public opinion and of the dialectics of the international community today.

'Information explosion' is one of the many notions produced by our rapidly developing world. Today, the five biggest news agencies alone daily transmit almost 50 million words; 8,230 newspapers have a circulation of over 500 million and broadcasts are received by 1.5 billion radio and 650 million television sets. Printing offices annually publish hundreds of millions of copies of books, magazines and other periodicals. All this highlights the enormous power wielded by the so-called information industry.

It is becoming increasingly clear to members of the political, academic, literary and artistic community, as well as to broad sections of world public opinion, that the human race has reached a critical juncture where situations may arise which will spell its destruction. Aware of these grim facts, we Communists have put forward (largely thanks to our Soviet friends' efforts) the ideas of *new political thinking* — a philosophy which

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not only takes in all realities in their entirety but also, in a spirit of scientifically valid knowledge, seeks to reflect the main requirements of human development.

This means that we should evaluate critically whether the tasks of journalism are tied in with the effort to tackle the principal issues of today's world. Expressing the interests of different classes, social strata, groups, parties and military, political, economic and other entities, journalism is an integral part of the social fabric, and it is as contradictory as social reality itself.

Those Western journalists who refuse to become latter-day gravediggers of humanity and who at least recognise the value of the right to live become our potential allies in a most important endeavour — *the struggle for human survival*. As the basis for cooperation of states with different social systems, mutual respect is essential to dialogue on virtually all issues with which people are concerned and to the development of polemical skills enabling everyone to retain his or her world view.

Journalism is to contribute increasingly to the positive changes currently under way in relations between countries with different socio-economic and political systems and to the promotion of ethical standards in international affairs. It is no accident that in planning their foreign policy moves, the socialist countries' governments rely ever more frequently not only on the opinions of scholars and scientists but also on the views of the more thorough journalists specialising in world affairs. This approach is prompted by the functional interconnection of journalism and foreign policy.

Renewal and Restructuring

One naturally agrees with those who regard the restructuring drive in the USSR and in other socialist countries as continuing and following up on the ten days in October 1917 — the days which, in the words of John Reed, "shook the world". No matter how differently individual journalists may see renewal and restructuring, none have the right to distort the meaning of the processes aimed at imparting a supreme humanitarian dimension to socialism and making the happiness and dignity of every individual the foremost criterion of social activity.

I think that in this connection, *two key aspects of work* are coming to the foreground as far as socialist journalism is concerned. The first is linked with the overall character of our age, with the search for new ways of modernising life in the socialist countries, with the exchange of views on this extremely demanding and truly historic creative effort, with perfecting our mutual relations and with ensuring proper conditions for a profound integration of our nations' material, technological and intellectual potential. The other aspect calls for covering the impact of socialist renewal and restructuring on international relations and on the drive to create a firm basis of a safe world.

Restructuring is assuming an international significance as its influence on the sister nations is growing. Hence the great importance of analysing everything that is international and common and everything that is national and specific. This is where the interconnection of politics and journalism

should become particularly noticeable. As to the plans of restructuring — where to conduct it, how comprehensively, and what to concentrate on — they are a matter for each Marxist-Leninist party and for the people of each socialist country to decide. However, not to benefit from the experience of one's friends would be bad for the well-being of one's own people and for the common cause of progress, democracy and peace.

Social renewal and restructuring mean more democracy, openness, truth and justice, and journalism has a great role to play in their promotion. In the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, glasnost is regarded as essential to the assertion of our system's democratic essence and to the orientation on and the involvement of the individual in all affairs of society, country and collective. It is seen as a reliable guarantee against distortions of socialism, as deliverance from everything that held us back, disfigured our development and led to man's alienation, as something that will give us 'second wind' and enable us to forge-ahead towards our objectives with great confidence.

Since the very emergence of Marxism, its opponents have used every pretext to discredit the ideas of socialism and their champions. But we should recall Engels' response to the fears that criticism among Communists would aid their enemies (in connection with the publication of Marx's 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'): "The fear that it (the publication of the letter. — *Ed.*) would put a weapon in the hands of our opponents was unfounded. [. . .] . . . On the whole the impression made on our opponents was one of complete disconcertment at this ruthless self-criticism. [. . .] I knew, also, [. . .] that one would point with justifiable pride to this test of strength and would say: Where is there another Party that can dare the like?"²

Indeed, self-criticism within the socialist countries' ruling parties which is furthered vigorously by journalism does enable us to say, 'Think how strong one must be to afford such purification!'

Without Closing Our Eyes

It is important for journalists to take a critical look at the history, the present state and the prospects of fraternal cooperation in the socialist world. Let us consider frankly whether our press has been doing enough to stimulate internationalisation of economic, scientific and technological developments and of integrating ties. One must admit that the press, radio and television are yet to do a great deal in this sphere. For many years, a simplistic approach to the socialist countries' cooperation prevailed. We wrote little about the complex picture of life and work in the fraternal countries, and unwarranted fears made us close our eyes to the difficulties and problems that impeded progress in cooperation.

The press should feature more articles about the world socialist market which is linked organically with the rest of the international community, as well as analyse the ways of raising the level of the socialist countries' integration, in terms of both form and content. Journalism can effectively assist in broad and open public verification of compliance with international agreements.

The successful implementation of the CMEA integrated programme for

cooperation in science and technology will help accelerate the socio-economic development of each country in our community. The removal of bureaucratic administrative barriers, coupled with economic incentives and with steps to ensure the effective operation of joint enterprises, research centres and laboratories at higher levels of economic cooperation, is sure to encourage the soonest possible application of new technologies, greater labour productivity and better product quality. The public has every right to ask why the press, radio and television pay so little attention to these questions (except in the coverage of official events) and why they are treated in an overcautious manner. I think that, so far, our journalism has been too timid in abandoning stereotypes, simplistic attitudes and, particularly, the fear that objective coverage in the media may be 'detrimental to our friends abroad', 'detract from their prestige' in the eyes of the public and thus supply our ideological opponents with 'ammunition'. Obviously, this is an untenable attitude.

With good reason, we can interpret mass support for the strategy of acceleration, restructuring and socialist renewal as a mandate for journalism to be more vigorous in advocating *socialist integration* because without it, we will not have the required acceleration, restructuring or renewal. I would welcome the journalistic practice of sponsoring international round tables at which scientists, scholars and experts in economics and politics could discuss, say, the prospects of making the socialist countries' currencies convertible, or equitable price formation, or the principles underlying the operation of joint enterprises and of our nations' single market with the sovereignty of each participant fully retained. It would be excellent for these questions to be covered in the media virtually every day.

Naturally, the right to express one's views about such matters should not be confined to journalists, scholars or professional men of politics. It is important to give the floor to broader sections of the public and to take their opinions into consideration. It appears that the socialist journalist is himself changing. Our age demands a new type of media worker — not an observer dispassionately registering developments but a committed commentator, promoter and participant of restructuring.

International Aspects of Restructuring

Let us now turn to another dimension of the issue — the opportunities journalism offers for helping to build a world without wars or weapons. New political thinking has provided communist and democratic journalism with a revolutionary method for analysing, summing up and drawing conclusions with regard to the developments under way in today's contradictory world. It is only by taking all realities into account, by delving into the past, examining the present and anticipating future trends that one can discover how the more important global problems can be resolved. The world must eliminate the huge arsenals of mass destruction weapons, avert an environmental catastrophe and close the growing gap between developed and developing countries. Many believe — and this view is justified — that the establishment of a new international information order will help tackle these issues.

If we journalists, representing different political currents, agree that all people on Earth are in the same boat and that they can all perish together in the nuclear flames, then the categorical imperative for the world's journalists is to *make the defence of universal human values their supreme mission*.

We are well aware that imperialism is the main source of the contradictions wracking modern civilisation. The aggressive militarist policies of imperialism have forced the socialist countries to spend, for self-defence, enormous resources so as to attain strategic parity; this has even impaired their economic development and improvement of living standards. However, acknowledgment of this fact should not prevent us from admitting openly in our analysis of the problems of ending the arms race and extinguishing armed conflicts that we have not always fully used the political means of settling contradictions. In terms of historical truth, we should acknowledge our share of the blame for the erection of East-West barriers.

Specifically, our journalists did not always respond rationally to criticism from the other side, criticism which, at times did contain valid points. As a rule, we presented a biased, propaganda-oriented image of countries with the other social system. Inevitably, we lost credibility with our readers, and the socialist world had no adequate understanding of the processes occurring in the West.

All this was, of course, a reflection of the political line too. In our approach to world developments, we did not always proceed from the premise that the class-based interests of socialism were directly consonant with universal human values. We did not have enough patience in the search for political paths and compromises that would accommodate the views of the other side, and this prevented us from identifying allies of our just cause in the opposite camp. That is why we must say quite candidly that with new political thinking, we are ready to walk our part of the way to a safe world. Today, this approach is necessary in journalism too.

Naturally, this gives rise to a number of intricate problems. The Western information market is being increasingly cornered by companies connected with the military-industrial complex. World-wide, the corporate manufacturers of military hardware and electronic devices control 90 per cent of the non-numerical and digital information contained in data banks, more than 50 per cent of all computers, 35 per cent of all shortwave radio transmitting stations, 75 per cent of all television programmes, 50 per cent of all motion pictures, 33 per cent of all book titles and 65 per cent of all information distributed internationally. The concentration of capital in this sphere is continuing. In the non-socialist world, 80 per cent of all newspapers, 90 per cent of all radio stations broadcasting to foreign countries and more than 90 per cent of all television companies are now monopoly-controlled.

How, then, can journalists representing these media join the struggle for a world without weapons? How can the world's journalists pool their positive efforts under these circumstances? Is this task at all feasible? I think that this is part of the question raised by Mikhail Gorbachov: "Can capitalism get rid of militarism and function in economic terms and develop

without it?"³ Only the future will answer these questions definitively. Meanwhile, we can draw on past experience, above all on the joint struggle of the anti-Axis coalition nations and their journalists during World War II. This experience shows that, given a clear and humanitarian objective, goodwill and reciprocity, cooperation is possible.

Evidently, media coverage of the steps taken to achieve disarmament, consolidate peace and create a system of universal security cannot be reduced to official policy statements, speeches or views expressed by statesmen. I think that, nowadays, it should focus primarily on publicising innovative ideas and on shaping and broadly reflecting public opinion both in the East and in the West. It follows that journalists are to help pool the peacemaking efforts of scholars, intellectuals, artists, experts in various fields, athletes and representatives of civic organisations and movements. For diplomacy to become truly popular and for the masses to really have the final say on vitally important issues, international relations need full-fledged glasnost which, overwhelmingly, depends on journalists.

When new political thinking is discussed, one often hears that ideology is being ousted from the sphere of intergovernmental relations. This means that philosophical, religious and other differences in world views and in the assessment of the future of this or that social system must not be elevated to the status of international contradictions or hamper disarmament and all-round cooperation. In this sense, the ousting of ideology from relations between countries with different social systems for the sake of shifting from confrontation to partnership can be described as an *integral part of new thinking*.

With regard to the mass media, this does not at all imply an end to the sharp ideological struggle conducted in various spheres — from general philosophical issues to the defence of the values upheld by this or that social system. However, one must not question the right of every nation to choose its own social system and path of development. That is a matter for each nation to decide on the basis of its specific historical experience. Let journalists — as well as politicians, diplomats and, generally, all those who, in one way or another, influence public opinion — never forget that the progress of history depends not only on transient factors but also (and much more) on general laws: it can be neither accelerated nor slowed down without regard for objective reality. That was what prompted Lenin to point out that it was inadmissible to export either revolution or counter-revolution.

The universal acceptance of this principle and its practical application in international relations will no doubt help defuse tensions and assist in the solution of today's key problems. Journalists are to contribute tangibly to these efforts. Cooperation between various civic organisations and artistic associations, the friendly ties connecting twinned cities, regions and workers' collectives, international forums and festivals, sports events and two-way tourism — all these activities which I would describe as civic or popular diplomacy deserve much wider media coverage. The media should really influence the content and the form of this diplomacy and help involve more people in the elaboration and conduct of peaceful foreign policy.

Humanitarian Mission

The development of modern civilisation is inseparable from the *humanitarian mission* of journalism. As the world itself with its class-based antagonistic differences is contradictory, so is the international journalistic community. We Communists are convinced that, ultimately, our ideals will be accepted universally. Naturally, those subscribing to non-Marxist views hold the opposite position. Nevertheless, this is no obstacle to prevent the 2.5 million people employed in the world's information industry, including more than 500,000 professional journalists, from establishing mutual understanding.

The journalists of the socialist countries, of the communist and democratic press are ready for such constructive cooperation. We maintain that this should be furthered by the International Organisation of Journalists, the International Federation of Journalists, regional associations and the International Catholic Union of the Press. We would do well to discuss, at the United Nations and UNESCO, the question of a new international information order. The rapid progress of advanced technologies has opened greater opportunities before the mass media and enabled them to transcend national and even continental boundaries. I might repeat that this has increased considerably journalists' professional responsibility.

This is why I believe that on the basis of broad joint discussion, including debate within the UN framework, it would be useful to draw up and approve an *instrument on international journalistic activities* in the name of defending universal human values. It could not only contain positive ideas but also feature a precise list of propaganda actions incompatible with the mission of journalism — above all, propaganda of war, militarism, violence and enmity among nations; creation of an 'enemy image'; violations of basic human and national rights; as well as all forms of discrimination.

The changes that occurred so quickly during the latter half of the 20th century make it incumbent on us to develop a shared ability to adapt to new circumstances. Socialism is drawing the necessary conclusions from this and taking the new realities into account. At this point it would be appropriate to say that the socialist world welcomes the interpretation of restructuring and new thinking as a 'two-way street'. Consistent peace-making efforts on the international scene and glasnost which makes it possible to check the record of individual nations against the task of peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation of all countries will no doubt be the best evidence proving the humanitarian thrust of socialist renewal and restructuring, as well as the creative strength of socialist journalism.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 164

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 38.

³ See *Pravda*, November 3, 1987.

The Battleground Of A Dirty War

Jose Arisala — CC Executive
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Communist Party (PCC)

IN the middle of June 1988, 17 men were seized from two mining communities in the San Rafael Municipality by unidentified gunmen. No one knew what had happened to them and a search revealed nothing. A week later birds of prey were seen circling over bushes on the bank of the Nare River. Two mutilated human bodies, the severed remains of seven hands, three feet, two heads, some clothes and a machete — clearly the tool with which the massacre had been perpetrated — were found there. It was hard to tell the number or identities of the victims whose names have been added to the tragic list of Colombia's *desaparecidos* (disappeared ones). But why such an attack on simple miners? What crime did they commit to deserve such cruel deaths? The answer is that they were members of the local branch of the Patriotic Union (UP)¹, just as PU leader, Alejo Arango, a Communist and a municipal councillor, who had 'disappeared' last January. He had been detained by army troops and thrown into the local jail, from which an armed gang had snatched him . . .

Froilan Arango, a PU activist, was killed in the village square a month before the March elections. Guillermo Blandon and Margarita Daza (who was substituting for the missing Alejo at the municipal council) were also assassinated. These murders decapitated the San Rafael Patriotic Union; the Bogota-based weekly *Semana* wrote, and the members of the miners' council were forced to close the PU premises after their lives were threatened.²

Such macabre events are not unusual in Colombia. Similar tragedies have occurred in various parts of the country. What happened in San Rafael was just one incident in a chain of violence which has escalated from 'selective' assassinations to mass killings. PU activists and sympathisers are targeted simply for alleged involvement with the guerrillas.

Soon after the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the government of Belisario Betancur had signed a truce in 1984, a wave of killings of revolutionary and popular leaders began. The infamous Plan Condor had been put into effect.

This 'extermination plan', as our party calls it, was conceived within the more reactionary circles, dismayed that a bourgeois government, with a strong army experienced in counter-insurgency warfare, had had to come to terms with the guerrillas after spending decades in futile attempts to defeat them. A ceasefire was agreed, with the two sides pledging to coexist and to generate socio-political reforms that would bring about a lasting democratic peace.

But the guerrilla leaders' prestige grew even more after the truce had been signed and a new political movement, the Patriotic Union, emerged. This alarmed the reactionaries, who feared the increasing momentum of resistance.

Hence their opposition to a political settlement of the national crisis. They demanded that the guerrillas capitulate in return for their lives (in past experience, such promises were never kept) or else face brutal suppression.³ Naturally, that demand was rejected.

Then those favouring violent methods of settling socio-political conflicts set in motion their plan to liquidate the leaders of the Patriotic Union and of the Communist Party. They wanted to provoke the FARC into violating the truce and use this to try and suppress the mass movement by cutting off its head. The first victims of the reaction were the people's chosen representatives, among them Senators, members of the House of Representatives, deputies to local bodies of government and also several CC members of our party. PU President Jaime Pardo Leal was killed as he was driving with his wife and children near Bogota on October 11, 1987; and in the past two years the Union has lost more than 700 members and activists.

The trade union movement as a whole has sustained heavy losses. Angelino Garzon, General Secretary of the Trade Union Centre of Workers (CUT), said at a public meeting on June 29, 1988, that 160 CUT members had died in the 18 months since the establishment of the Centre and that death threats had been made to hundreds more, including the Union's chair Jorge Carrillo Rojas.

It is the frequency and mass scale of the crimes that has shocked the country. They began in the Meta Department on January 20, 1988, when paramilitarists shot dead 17 peasants. In March two massacres were perpetrated by fascist-minded terrorists at Uraba to the north of Antioquia, claiming a total of 46 lives.

On April 3, 36 people were killed and 15 wounded at peasant festivities at La Mejor Esquina (Cordoba Department) when a group of hooded men swooped on the place and opened fire at the crowd. A week later three men died and 20 were injured in an attack on a union meeting in the San Alberto municipality (Cesar Department). In the same month bandits ordered 25 farm-workers out of a ranch-house in the banana-growing region of Uraba, shot them dead and left their bodies lying on the Caribbean coast. Violence continues unabated.

Who is responsible for murdering leaders and rank-and-file members of our party and the PU, democrats, legal officers, academics, trade unionists, journalists, clergymen, workers, peasants, women and children?

Most of these crimes are carried out by well-armed paramilitary groups. During parliamentary debates in September 1987, Interior Minister Cesar Gaviria admitted that 140 such groups existed across the country; 128 of them have been named in a report by the Administrative Security Department, among them the Colombian Anti-Communist Alliance, the American Anti-Communist Alliance, Alfa 83, the Greased Ones,⁴ Death to Revolutionaries, Death to Kidnappers and the Black Hand.

Many of the gory raids are the work of mercenaries recruited from among young unemployed people and common criminals who are crack shots and deft bike riders. These hired killers stage surprise attacks with automatics and submachine guns on restaurants and offices, or in the street. The 'job' is paid for well, partially in advance, with the balance

handed over after newspapers have reported the crime. In most cases the assassins do not even know who they are meant to kill and the wrong people can get hurt. For example, an 18-year-old carrying out a 'contract' learned only too late that he had killed Colombia's Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla.

The narco-business chieftains are prominent in organised violence, wielding enormous power and possessed of unlimited funds. The first paramilitary group, Death to Kidnappers, was set up by one of them supposedly to retaliate against the guerrilla group which had kidnapped one of his relatives. The investigation into the assassination of PU President Jaime Pardo Leal turned up evidence that another drug dealer, Gonzalo 'Mexican' Gacha, had paid the assassins the equivalent of \$100,000.

These dealers (quite a few of them latifundistas) conspire with military commanders, who use the army to support them, 'clear the way' and ensure that they operate with impunity, apparently receiving fat bribes in return. Small wonder that most of the crimes are committed in areas which are tightly controlled by the army and police. It seems that a few days before the assassination of Pardo Leal there had been lively telephone communications between the residence of the 'Mexican' in the Pacho community and Bogota's Cavalry School (80 kilometres from the scene of the crime).

The links between the army and criminals are growing closer. On May 2, 1988, the public was shocked to read in the press data leaked from a secret report of the security service to the President of the Republic. It said that elements of the Battalion Voltigeros headquartered near Uraba, had been engaged in 'reconnoitring' and identification operations against possible members of the network of the People's Liberation Army.

In spite of all that, the army command and President Virgilio Barco are making no attempt to end the dirty war against the Colombian people. The criminals operate with almost absolute impunity. Amnesty International said in its 1987 report that no action was being taken against right-wing extremist groups and that there was no evidence of any clashes between the army and paramilitary forces. Investigations do not lead to arrests and no one has been sentenced for such crimes. Moreover, any attempt to unravel them is ruthlessly blocked. Procurator General Carlos Mauro Hoyos, who was fighting the Mafia and criticising the army tribunals, was brutally killed in January 1988.

Thus, the extreme right-wing forces, big proprietors and latifundistas are organising and bankrolling the criminals, while their 'targets' are apparently picked by the Colombian and foreign secret services. In other words, there is a conspiracy against Colombia's already limited democracy to launch a coup d'état and install a neofascist dictatorship in order to suppress the people's struggle and crush the guerrilla movement.

But the reactionaries have failed to accomplish their main goal of provoking panic among the people. The March 1988 municipal elections showed that the Patriotic Union retained most of its positions: 19 alcaldes were elected from among its own candidates and another 193

municipalities (roughly one-fifth of the total) won en bloc with allied parties.

The Trade Union Centre of Workers was established and has been growing stronger against heavy odds, proving the most significant step towards greater unity of the working people in the past 40 years. The Simon Bolivar Committee of Insurgent Organisations (Coordinadora Guerrillera Simon Bolivar) has been formed to unite the FARC, the National Liberation Army, the People's Liberation Army, the April 19 Movement (M-19), the Quintin Lame Indigenous Command and the Workers' Revolutionary Party.

The Patriotic Union and other left movements have called upon their members and friends to resist reactionary violence and to press for a plebiscite in order to pave the way to progressive constitutional reform. Recently the country was swept by a tide of protest — real outbursts of public wrath (e.g., in Tumaco, Uraba and Riohacha) — against the abysmal working and living conditions, the government's neglect of regional needs and the restrictions on the freedom of the individual.

A Commission for Democratic Coexistence, set up in Bogota in August, includes representatives of the Catholic clergy, the opposition Conservative Party, the Patriotic Union, other left parties and movements, the trade unions, including the Trade Union Centre of Workers, human rights organisations and retired army officers. The government decided to stay away in the belief that it alone can and must direct the process of peaceful settlement in Colombia.

The rebels, denied effective safety guarantees, do not participate directly in the newly-established organisation either, but they passed on to commission members their proposals urging an end to the dirty war, political and social reforms and a plebiscite on changes needed by the country.

The rebels stated that they were ready to pledge respect for the rights of the civilian population and the Geneva Convention in order to debrutalise the internal conflict in Colombia, naturally, on the condition that the government and the army should also respect the international humanitarian laws.

From all this the conclusion must be drawn that *only general agreement between all the political parties and major public organisations and movements, including the guerrilla movement, can save Colombia from an all-out civil war and give peace to our homeland. If it is not achieved today, tomorrow will be too late.*

¹ The Patriotic Union is a political movement set up in 1985 on the initiative of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) with the Communists' support; it unites a broad spectrum of the country's progressive public. — *Ed.*

² *Semana*, June 28-July 4, 1988, No. 351, p. 58.

³ The position of the National Liberation Army, which did not subscribe to the ceasefire agreement but carried on the fighting, detracted from the truce too. For more information on the guerrilla movement see *WMR*, No. 5, 1987 — *Ed.*

⁴ Its members blacken their faces with shoe polish.

Latin America: Democracy And The Military

A Dialogue With The Army?

Ornel Urriola — CC member,
People's Party of Panama

THE complexities of life require a realistic and innovative approach to the theory of revolution, and a rejection of dogmatism and sectarianism. Efforts to work out modern forms and a modern style of work, and a creative application of Marxism as the method for understanding and transforming the world, are also required. It is important to be flexible, to respect the views of others, to give up the idea of 'historical vanguardism', and to examine and solve every problem creatively and with initiative.

Facing the Crisis

The crisis in Latin America is the result of the stagnation in the traditional sectors of the economy and the deepening contradiction between the modern productive forces and the relations of production that have been imposed by imperialism. The only way out of the crisis is genuine national liberation leading to a restructuring of the relations of production in accordance with the requirements of the productive forces, which have been developing rapidly under the impact of scientific and technological progress.

Genuine liberation is impossible unless two basic contradictions are resolved. First, there is the internal contradiction between the democratic liberation movement and the political ruling class, the latter enabling the transnational corporations to exploit the popular masses and plunder the natural resources. Second, there is the external and general contradiction, affecting the greater part of society, between the nation and imperialism. It is most acutely manifested today, when the burden of exploitation is borne, too, by the national industrial and agrarian bourgeoisie, as a result of the policies of the IMF and the World Bank.

There must be an examination of every facet of the highly complex problems in the liberation struggle. The policy of broad alliances will obviously help the forces which have yet to comprehend the true causes and all-pervading character of the crisis to become involved in this struggle, and to realise that their interests are incompatible with the policy of imperialism and its local servitors.

For this reason changes in the thinking of many communist parties in Latin America and the Caribbean are vital. This process is not a recent phenomenon, beginning as it did soon after the Cuban revolution with the involvement of various social strata in the national liberation movement and the efforts to demonstrate and develop the socio-economic structures of the countries in the region.

The Cuban revolution did more than merely to show that the advanced system could win in the Western Hemisphere. It absorbed the revolutionary ideas of earlier generations (above all those of Jose Marti), and adopted the anti-imperialist ideas of revolutionaries in other countries of the continent. The result was that the revolution was understood and supported by ideological trends which spread to all Latin American universities, beginning with Cordoba¹.

New social forces, with their own specific features, emerged in the political arena. Highly significant was the entry into the struggle of members of the Catholic Church, with their liberation theology, and the rise to power in some countries of military men under the slogans of nationalism and social reforms corresponding to those of the popular revolutionary movement.

The liberation theologians and the communist parties began to move closer to each other. Meanwhile, the participation by the armed forces in the national liberation struggle brought out more points of divergence than of convergence. Incomprehension was displayed both by the military and by the Communists, some of whom continue to regard all military personnel as providing solid support for internal reaction and imperialism. Neither the contacts and discussions between them, after the establishment in 1986 of the Organisation of the Military for Democracy, Integration and the Liberation of Latin America and the Caribbean (OMIDELAC),² altered the situation.

In order to decide whether the armed forces are capable of promoting the success of the Latin American revolution, it is necessary to analyse what prompted the military to take action after 1968, when there were a series of coups d'état in various countries of the continent.

The Aims of the Military in 1968

An analysis of the major coups d'état reveals a powerful nationalistic trend for the protection of natural resources from the rapacity of imperialist corporations. This trend appeared despite the armed forces' acceptance of the Pentagon's national security doctrine, and despite their participation in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance.

Here are a few examples. In Peru, the decision of the government of Belaunde Terry to grant new concessions to the International Petroleum Company, and the need to extend national sovereignty over the country's territorial waters to a 200-mile limit (an area ruthlessly exploited by North American fishing fleets) were the main inducements to the coup d'état led by General Juan Velasco Alvarado. In Ecuador, the military, led by General Rodriguez Lara, rose in defence of the country's fish resources at the height of the 'tuna war'. (Also apparent was the desire to prevent President Velasco Ibarra from establishing a dictatorship favouring the local oligarchy and US corporations, who were trying to get their hands on the country's oil deposits.) The coup d'état staged by General Juan Jose Torres in Bolivia was also meant to safeguard the nation's natural resources. The overthrow of the civilian government in Panama on October 11, 1968, led by General Omar Torrijos, was designed to prevent the signing of the Johnson-Robles treaty, which provided for an indefinite

prolongation of the colonial status of the Panama Canal Zone, and a continuation of the US monopoly position on the Isthmus, including the presence of US military bases.

Such attitudes in the armed forces should be viewed against a background of sharpening political and social crisis in the region at the time, without discounting the fear felt by the top brass that oligarchic regimes would be unable to modernise the state and carry out vital reforms, thus allowing the guerrilla movement, led by radicalised members of the middle strata, to get out of hand and produce 'new Cubas'. Consequently, *the Cuban revolution acted as a catalyst in modifying the attitudes of many senior Latin American officers.*

General Torrijos recalled that after 1959, when the guerrillas in Cuba defeated the regular army, the men at the military academies began to reflect on the causes of what had happened. In the course of their analysis many of them shed their false notions and learned to see the true causes of social and political change. They began to see the difference between the short fever of street demonstrations and disturbances, and the all-pervading malignant growths in the social structures.

The actions of the progressive wing of the armed forces did, indeed, spring from the desire to assert national sovereignty over basic natural resources, and to use state power as an instrument for economic and social reforms. But these schemes were not completely realised because of resistance from imperialism and the local oligarchies, whose economic, political and ideological positions were no more than slightly affected. But the main reason was, perhaps, their paternalistic character, which prevented the people from actually taking an effective part in government and in social transformations.

The Military Review Their Positions

Contrary to popular opinion, we feel that *the decline of the progressive trend within the Latin American armed forces (including those in Chile) does not warrant the assumption that the Latin American armies are utterly lost to the cause of the revolution.* Certainly, the external and internal factors behind the coups of 1968, and subsequent years, have not disappeared, and have even been intensified. At that time, the military feared 'world communism' and the Cuban revolution; today, the progressive army circles are gravely concerned about the neoglobalist diktat and the intervention by US troops in our countries' internal affairs on the pretext of combating the drugs trade. The military have not forgotten the sinister lessons from the war over the Malvinas and the invasion of Grenada. They are also worried by the threat of US aggression in Central America, and the plots against Panama and its defence forces.

The contradictions between the Latin American nations and imperialism have been growing more acute, affecting a broader spectrum of the social forces, who are joining a struggle that is inevitably assuming the features of a national liberation movement. The impoverishment of the labouring masses and the middle strata is increasingly intolerable, and this was stressed by Torrijos, who understood well the problems of military personnel in Latin America.

After the death of Torrijos, General Dario Paredes tried to dissuade the Panamanian armed forces from participating in discussions and searches for ways of solving national problems. The reactionaries tried to bury the ideas of Torrijos in an effort to secure a review of the treaty between Panama and the United States in order to assure Washington of perpetual possession of the Canal and the continued presence of Pentagon bases in our country even after 1999.

The People's Party of Panama responded by setting the task of defending and developing the legacy of Torrijos, especially since the party he set up had agreed to collaborate with the pro-imperialist oligarchy in an effort to win the goodwill of the US administration and the international financial institutions. The Panamanian Communists realised at once that *it was, essentially, a question of ideas: those that had left a deep imprint on the minds of military men*. When the US press began to attack General Noriega, our party's General Secretary exposed the real purpose of this campaign, and gave an objective assessment of the role of the army command and the officer corps in the ongoing events. He recalled the duty of the armed forces to stand up for the spirit and letter of the Panama Canal treaty. The Communists called on Noriega and the General Staff to resume the dialogue with the representative organisations of the working class, the peasantry and all the other anti-imperialist democratic forces, putting aside their ideological differences.

Many have said that the case of Panama and its armed forces is a unique one because of the country's specific position. Every state has, of course, its own history, but all the Latin American nations have one thing in common — oppression and exploitation by imperialism and the increasing desire for liberation.

No, imperialism and the mercenary bourgeoisie have failed to make the men in uniform insensitive to the sufferings of their compatriots. The armed forces of the Latin American countries are not made up of robots or 'trained gorillas', as is claimed by those who don't really want revolution itself, but rather some kind of speculative and futile scheme.

What the Officers Say

Those who insist that the military have no concern with the changes under way in the world forget what Heraclitus said many centuries ago: "All is flux." This is a law which also applies to the armed forces, and here is what the military themselves have said to bear it out.

The president of OMIDELAC, General Edgardo Mercado Jarrin, on the anniversary of the first meeting of the organisation's Directive Council, said: "We are witnessing a process of change that has also affected the armed forces. There is a growing conviction in South America and the Caribbean that we should not be involved in the East-West confrontation. It is time to stop thinking that everything that happens or that is planned in Latin America necessarily relates to the conflict between East and West. I believe that it is necessary to review the role of the armed forces."³

Addressing a round table held at the same time General Richelieu Levoyer (Rtd) of Ecuador, urged the need to restore the ties that once existed between the armed forces and the people, "ties inspired by the

great national liberation leaders of Latin America, such as Bolivar, San Martin and others . . . In this hour of trial, the Latin American armed forces must stand together with their peoples in the fight for the second independence — economic and social. Together, civilians and military, we must mount an offensive against poverty, while keeping to a common strategy of struggle against imperialism and the local oligarchies."

Replying to a question from the Peruvian newspaper *La Voz* on changes in the armed forces resulting from changes in the world, Latin America and the Caribbean, Captain Geronimo Cardozo (Rtd) of the Uruguayan Air Force said: "I think that, since the armed forces are the most important element of power, they are, more than any other sector of society, the object of brainwashing techniques designed to turn them into instruments of foreign interests alien to the people. There are also other conditions which make the army receptive to this ideology: its own structure and its hierarchy and apolitical character, designed to be used against the people. But historical processes and human evolution itself have been reacting against the isolation of the armed forces and their estrangement from the rest of society. As this reaction develops, and as people come to realise their own role, everything must be done to persuade the military themselves to participate."⁴

Captain Raul Vergara (Rtd) of Chile dealt with the reasons why the army took part in coups d'état. In his view they are attributable to "the gap in the level of development between the armed forces and the society to which they belong. This is the result of their mutual isolation, which in turn leads to mutual incomprehension. This difference ultimately reaches a critical point, as it did in Chile, where the armed forces acted against the will of the majority, put an end to the process of profound change, gained a reputation for brutality and became forces of occupation in their own country."⁵

Some Conclusions

In one way or another the changes in Latin America and the world as a whole affect the army, especially the more educated and enlightened officers. With the fog of inventions around the notorious 'East-West confrontation' beginning to lift, many people are coming to realise that the real cause of the economic and social crisis in the countries of the continent is imperialism and its oppression of them.

There is an obvious difference between the army of today and that of 1968. Then the armed forces assumed the role of tutor to the popular masses, defining in advance the content and framework of the social changes they intended to carry out. Many now understand that the armed forces require the help of the forward-looking strata of society to involve them in the struggle for the second independence.

However, under the influence of 'anti-militarism', resulting from past experience, some leftists believe that until the armed forces undergo a radical change it is futile to expect them to join in the revolutionary process. For their part, the conservative-minded military, even in the 'democratic' countries of the region, have tried to place the responsibility

for the crisis and the plight of the people on the progressive circles. What then is to be done?

Some valuable advice was given by General Torrijos, when he said: "Let the left know that the armed forces exist. Let the armed forces also understand that the left is a reality, and that there is no weapon that can avert a revolution. The left must be aware that even if the revolution can be carried out without the participation of the armed forces, the price will be so high that at the moment of victory there will be no one to lead it, because its chief leaders are dead."

Mutual understanding is, of course, not enough. Someone must show initiative. *It must come from us, the Communists*, and from the left, democratic forces in each country. Reality demands efforts towards consultation and agreement. Even if the key problems are not all solved at once, then at least new avenues of struggle will have been explored which do not threaten enormous loss of life, great suffering and poverty, like those to which imperialism and the oligarchy have doomed the masses by encouraging armed conflicts. That is the conclusion to be drawn from the history of Central America, Afghanistan and Angola.

It is not easy to win the support of the military in order that they and the people take power together. The bourgeoisie and imperialism have understood the importance of the army at crucial moments of history, and they have carried on the ideological and political brainwashing of army personnel and of the middle and senior command echelon. That is why Communists, and the left and revolutionary forces as a whole, cannot allow the spontaneous evolution of political consciousness within the military to determine their attitude to the national liberation struggle and the revolution. It is wrong to neglect political and ideological work among them.

It is as well to recall here the words of General Torrijos, whose authority has transcended the borders of Panama: "It is just as irresponsible to say that the armed forces in Latin America are an assemblage of obtuse and cruel people impervious to the winds of social change . . . as it is to regard the participants in Latin American liberation movements as extremists whose sole aim is to destroy society and set up a totalitarian regime on its ruins."⁶

The extent to which the left, in particular the Communists, will be able, in the light of what has been said, to solve the problems of the national liberation revolution in the modern world is a question that will be answered by the events of the next few years.

¹ A reference to the 'university reform' movement which originated in Cordoba (Argentina) in 1918, and which had a great influence in the following decades on the shaping of the democratic, patriotic thinking of progressive students and intellectuals. — *Ed.*

² For details see *WMR*, No. 10, 1988. — *Ed.*

³ *El Nacional*, Lima, December 7, 1986.

⁴ *La Voz*, Lima, December 10, 1986.

⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁶ *Ibidem.*

They Fought For The Cause Of The People

The Comandante Of The Americas: Revolutionary, Humanist, Thinker

Ernesto Che Guevara, a prominent leader of the Cuban Revolution, would have turned 60 this year. The ideological and theoretical heritage he left to us is of interest to all who want to know more about the struggle the people in the developing countries are waging for national liberation and socialism. In his works and speeches, Che devoted much attention to the shaping of the new man, to the socio-economic conditions which would enable the individual to assert fully his rich spiritual, creative potential. As requested by our readers, we present an article on the humanitarian aspects of the world view of the outstanding Latin American revolutionary and internationalist.

A BETTER world was the ideal of Che Guevara, the legendary fighter who, in the words of Fidel Castro, was a human being of the 21st century. His dream was a world in which man, freed from the blind necessity of using labour to satisfy 'bodily needs', and armed with a new consciousness and new ethics, would effect revolutionary transformations opening the way to the worldwide triumph of communism.

Che's humanism had nothing in common either with the 'anthropolitical concepts' typical of pre-Marxian materialism and of certain latter-day trends, or with commitment to some abstract 'eternal human essence' isolated from social, class-based contradictions. On the contrary, his was an appeal for a radical restructuring of the world, of society.

Marxism and Leninism were the basis of Che Guevara's world view. He subscribed fully to the idea Marx and Engels expressed in *The German Ideology*. "... For the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness . . . the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*; the revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew."¹

The Comandante of the Americas was profoundly convinced that only a revolution, national in form and international in its social and class character, could eliminate exploitation of man by man and thus free the individual from the alienation generated by the 'grim necessity' of selling his labour and release his vast spiritual and intellectual capacities. Che maintained that the socialist phase of the communist revolution could not be regarded simply as a socio-political and economic phenomenon. It is also a moral event which places man at the centre of social change and turns him into a vigorous and conscious maker of history. Man's

psychology, system of values, convictions, habits, behaviour and attitude to other people, labour and society undergo a change. Without it, Che could not picture either socialism as a social system or the new man. "Socialism will not be able to function," he said, "if people do not develop a new and fraternal attitude to others, whether those in a society which has built or is building socialism, or those who suffer from imperialist exploitation worldwide."²

A brilliant student of Lenin's theoretical legacy and a man with a distinctive vision of the 1950s and 1960s, Che responded readily to all the new developments generated by the era in which colonial rule collapsed and the reactionaries were doing their utmost to slow down this process. He noted that "we live in a world which is profoundly and antagonistically divided into groups of nations representing highly dissimilar economic, social and political trends. In this world of contradictions, the one between the socialist nations and the developed capitalist countries is, today, fundamental . . . While this contradiction is the most important, it is by no means the only one. There is also the contradiction between different developed capitalist countries which are fighting constantly among themselves to redivide the world and to secure stable markets which make their development possible. Unfortunately, this development is based on hunger and exploitation in the dependent world. These contradictions reflect the world's actual realities and threaten it with new conflagrations which, in the atomic age, may engulf the entire planet."³

In stressing this point which is particularly topical today, Che insisted that imperialism was the common enemy of all nations (that was a salient feature of his theoretical views and practical work). It follows, he argued, that the struggle against imperialism, for peace, socialism, national liberation and social emancipation is becoming universal. "Each time a country is liberated", he said, "the world imperialist system suffers a defeat . . . The socialist countries therefore have a vital stake in making these changes irreversible. Our internationalist duty, determined by the ideology that guides us, is to assist in the fastest and most resolute liberation."⁴

In the message to all nations from the Tricontinental Conference (Havana, 1967), Che Guevara urged them to remember "that imperialism is a worldwide system and the final stage of capitalism and that it should be defeated in a great and worldwide confrontation."⁵ This conviction, rooted in Marxist-Leninist principles and the Latin American revolutionary tradition, was basic to the militant internationalism of Che, who fought against the divisions which at that time surfaced in the socialist camp.

However, his understanding of the actual mechanics of international conflicts and his desire to defeat imperialism "in a great and worldwide confrontation" did not mean that, like some of the then leaders of the international communist movement, he ignored the threat armed conflicts posed to humanity in the nuclear age. The very thought of a nuclear apocalypse capable of wiping out, within minutes, all the accomplishments of civilisation, was alien to him as a revolutionary and humanist.

In defending Cuba's revolutionary foreign policy which he himself helped to shape, Che noted repeatedly that imperialism was the foremost warmonger. He stressed the need to fight for world peace, for general and

complete disarmament. The threat of a world nuclear war which imperialism used in its blackmail must not be allowed, he said, to paralyse the resistance of the three continents' oppressed masses or the socialist countries' solidarity with them — particularly when nations were subjected to brutal aggression, the way it happened to Vietnam. Che did not see peaceful coexistence as reconciliation of the exploited and the exploiters, of the oppressed and the oppressors. Nor did he agree that peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems was possible only between the great powers on the basis of the world's new division into spheres of influence.

He saw peace as integral, universal and indivisible: "... If we want to secure universal peace, one cannot speak about coexistence as a principle applying only to relations between the mightier powers. It should be established for all countries irrespective of their size ... The principle of peaceful coexistence does not imply recognition of the right to trample upon the will of the people."⁶

Che helped draw up one of the major precepts of the foreign policy of the Cuban Revolution, a principle Fidel Castro developed in reference to the new conditions. It is the principle recognising the indelible link connecting universal peace with respect for the sovereignty of nations and for the right of the Third World to socio-economic development. "Eliminate the philosophy of plunder, and the philosophy of war will disappear," Fidel Castro told the UN General Assembly in 1960. Four years later Che Guevara recalled this phrase in Geneva, at the World Conference on Trade and Development, noting that instead of disappearing, the "philosophy of plunder" was gaining ground. Unless the economic and political causes explaining the constant deterioration of the situation of the less developed countries were removed, he said, "international tensions may assume dangerous proportions." The rebellious spirit of the exploited nations would grow daily: "They will take up arms to win the rights which they were made unable to secure by force of reason."⁷

This forecast stemmed from a scientific analysis of the factors behind underdevelopment and of the possible ways of overcoming it. Che did not identify underdevelopment with backwardness or 'external dependence': he regarded it as a result of uneven capitalist development which was particularly pronounced at the imperialist stage. In his view, this development was distorted by the needs of the imperialist monopolies. It was rooted in the economic, social and political structures of most Asian, African and Latin American countries. Underdevelopment is constantly reproduced as a result of inequitable trade, the penetration of dependent economies by monopoly capital, the control of the terms of international trade by the biggest transnationals and, finally, the fact that the imperialist powers, primarily the United States, bring political, ideological and their entire economic pressure to bear on the Third World to perpetuate its exploitation.

To Che Guevara, underdevelopment was also a human tragedy. Runaway inflation, mass unemployment and the deteriorating conditions of the masses lead to hunger, poverty and moral degradation: "The death

of a child caused by the lack of medical drugs becomes an accident of little importance to the parents."⁸ To him, economic development was a means with which to attain the supreme goal, that of ennobling man.

Not a single developing country, Che was sure, could overcome its dependent status in an evolutionary way, through gradual reform, while remaining within the imperialist orbit. These nations must destroy the entire mechanism of reliance on the capitalist market, change the class character of the state, consolidate its economic independence, effect far-reaching structural transformations (including a radical agrarian reform and rapid industrialisation), abolish exploitation of man by man, and train their own technological, scientific and ideological cadres.

There is an inseparable dialectical interconnection linking the tasks of national liberation and social emancipation with the definitive solution of the development problem which the dependent countries feel very acutely. In Che Guevara's view, genuine national liberation and socialism were essential to progress. The record showed that neither the imperialists nor the local ruling classes would willingly give up their positions or privileges and that, as a last resort, they would use force to suppress the people's aspirations. New hotbeds of confrontation would therefore arise in the exploited countries. Revolutionary struggle would thus become the principal means of ensuring development and attaining durable peace.

Che opposed those who, guided by a simplistic interpretation of Marxism and of the law of the correlation between the productive forces and the character of the relations of production, denied the possibility of an underdeveloped country embarking on the path of socialist development. Invoking the experience of the October Revolution in Russia and the Cuban Revolution, he insisted that this problem be approached dialectically and specifically and that due attention be paid to the new conditions created by the consolidation of the world socialist system whose accomplishments vastly influenced the hearts and minds of progressives throughout the world. In the era of revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism, social consciousness develops rapidly due to the "advancement of the world's productive forces and to the inspiring example of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, an example that influences the masses across the world". According to Che, the relations of production and the productive forces clash not because of a mechanical accumulation of economic strength but due to the politically obvious qualitative superiority of one class over another. This is why "economic analysis can never be separated from the historical fact of the class struggle" or from man as "its living expression".

This approach determined all of Che's theoretical and practical work. He saw the complexity and diversity of the ways leading to the worldwide triumph of socialism, but he did not regard the transition of socialism as the objective of all anti-imperialist action in all countries. He believed that for several Asian and African nations which were fighting for liberation from colonial rule, the development of capitalist relations of production could signify a great stride forward despite its adverse effects as far as the working people were concerned.

Che did not reject the use of inter-imperialist contradictions, although

he realised that joint action by the oppressed nations and their unity with the socialist countries offered the more important opportunities for changing the inequitable international economic and political order. At the 1964 Conference on Trade and Development he said: "If all the nations living in precarious economic conditions and dependent upon foreign powers in some vital sectors of their economies and of their political and social structure . . . speak here in favour of a new type of relations, humanity will take a step forward."⁹ He was therefore one of the first to demand, in the name of the Cuban Revolution, those international standards which, a few years later, were described as a new international economic order.

Convinced that the liberation of the "economically dependent nations" from the diktat of the "capitalist markets" and "the complete elimination of the exploitation of the dependent countries by the developed capitalist powers" were indispensable to stable economic recovery, Che reflected on the relations which were to arise between the socialist world and the underdeveloped nations. He urged the socialist countries to gain a clearer insight into the problems of the Third World and to establish equitable commercial relations which would not be based simply on 'mutual benefit' and the unfair prices of the world market. He called on the socialist countries to place industrial enterprises in the underdeveloped nations pursuing a policy independent of imperialism. He advocated brotherhood, solidarity, internationalism and new ethics in international economic relations. This, he held, would enable the newly independent nations to end the economic sway of the monopolies and embark on the path of socialist development.

The example of the relations established between the socialist countries and Cuba (specifically, Soviet-Cuban relations) prompted Che to assert the necessity and possibility (not yet fully realised to this day) of expanding such relations of a new type. In the context of these relations, the Cuban revolutionary argued, politics must not be determined by economic considerations. On the contrary, trade and economic ties are to further the policy of international friendship. This would help to highlight the basic difference between socialist values and the 'grim reality of imperialism', strengthen world peace and assist in the liberation of dependent countries. Che regarded the latter factor as particularly important because, in his words, "each time a country separates itself from the tree of imperialism, it is not only a victory in a specific battle against the main enemy but also a contribution to this enemy's effective weakening and a step bringing us closer to the final victory".¹⁰

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¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 52-53.

² Ernesto Che Guevara, *Obras 1957-1967*, La Habana, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 574.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 518.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 573.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 594.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 542-543, 545.

⁷ Ibid., p. 539

⁸ Ibid., p. 70.

⁹ Ibid., p. 519.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 573.

surveys, letters, and diary

40th Anniversary of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Right to Fight for One's Rights

THE 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a good occasion to recall how it all began. The instrument the United Nations approved at the time did not win universal recognition at once. Several delegates abstained from voting on it on December 10, 1948. The resolutions which made it mandatory for UN member nations to observe the Declaration were endorsed later.

The subsequent record of this major instrument embodying the noble ideals of human rights and their protection has not always been smooth either. Nevertheless, changes for the better are obvious. Significantly, even those governments which used to take a dim view of the Declaration's principles prefer not to mention this, at least publicly.

Positive trends in international relations and the advent of new political thinking are boosting the struggle for the observance of human rights. The International Association of Democratic Lawyers is contributing to this noble cause by conducting numerous actions of solidarity with victims of arbitrary rule and violence.

The foremost difficulty connected with the observance of the Declaration is that the issue of human rights, specifically of civil and political rights, is not only a juridical but also — at least — a political, economic, social and psychological problem. It can be regarded in two ways — from the standpoint of society and through the eyes of the individual. But human rights violations have a common denominator — the contradictions that underlie conflicts involving states, classes, groups of people and individuals.

Without resolving these contradictions, one cannot reinforce or assure human rights, including the foremost human right — the right to life. Hence the global dimension of the demands to avert the nuclear threat to human survival, promote peace and security for all, ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits, and create favourable conditions for social and economic progress. The objective is also to improve health, education and the upbringing of the younger generation and to foster tolerance to dissent and intolerance to all forms of discrimination.

We may need something more than that — but at least not less — to have the Universal Declaration of Human Rights translated fully into reality. If this comes to pass, we, the present generations, can finally say to people: wherever you are born, whatever your colour of skin, whatever path you choose, rest assured that no one will attempt to take away your dignity or your rights.

Meanwhile, the struggle continues, and the right to wage this struggle flows directly from the ideas and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Amar Bentoumi
Secretary General,
International Association of Democratic Lawyers

In Step With The Times

Fraternal Parties Congratulate WMR on its 30th Anniversary

"THE great work done by the journal over the years has made it a valuable forum for exchanges of experience between fraternal parties and for highlighting complex problems which have to be resolved in our interdependent world in the interests of human survival, nuclear disarmament, peace, national independence, democracy and social progress," *the CC of the Party of the Socialist Vanguard of Algeria* says in its message of greetings. "We wish you even more fruitful and productive work."

"The current significant events give us the hope that we are advancing towards our goal of renewal and improvement at the journal so that it should better meet the needs of our day," says *Athos Fava, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Argentina*. "The content of the journal is improving, although a good deal is yet to be done in this respect, and its organisational structure is being streamlined. Although there is no substantial change in its layout as yet, attempts are nevertheless being made to bring it up to today's standard."

The message sent in on behalf of the *National Leadership of the Brazilian Communist Party* by *Dinarco Reis, Chairman of the party's Control and Ethics Council*, expresses the hope that "the journal will continue to bring out all the diverse views, debate the pressing issues of

Continued from WMR No. 11.

today's world, the revolutionary process and the parties' activities, and invariably present different options for the solution of one problem or another. We believe that emphasis will always be laid on the parties' independence in formulating their policy lines and evaluating the specific realities in their countries and regions."

The Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party notes in its message of greetings: "The Hungarian Communists support renewal at the journal. In our view, *WMR* should become a lively forum of progressive social ideas, advanced Left thought and creative discussions. Analysing new phenomena of social development and drawing general conclusions from them, it should help fraternal parties in their search of ways and exchanges of opinion and experience and help consolidate the Communists and other Left forces. The journal should be open to any progressive idea that can contribute to the renewal of our thinking".

Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SED Central Committee, says in his message of greetings, inter alia: "The task today is to achieve cohesion among all the forces of reason and realism in order to ensure human survival and progress in the solution of other pressing problems of global proportions. The Communists' contribution to the struggle for those goals, made on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, is irreplaceable. Our party will continue to use its participation in the journal in order to work for the accomplishment of our common tasks in the struggle for peace and social progress and to attach priority to what all the Communists have in common."

The message of greetings of *the CC of the Dominican Communist Party*, signed by General Secretary Narciso Isa Conde and Secretary for International Affairs Arnulfo Mateo, reads, inter alia: "We think highly of the role played by *WMR* as the propagator of Marxist and revolutionary thought. The journal did not develop in a straight line and its potentialities used to come up against serious difficulties. But we are heartened to state that at present it is becoming an increasingly attractive and effective press organ in the spirit of the positive change taking place in our movement."

"The journal played and continues to play an important role in the education of our party cadres and all the Communists," *the Central Committee of the Egyptian Communist Party* notes. "No other publication in the world can offer the Egyptian Communists such valuable experience of fraternal parties or such forceful contributions authored by foremost fighters for peace and socialism . . . Our party, which has participated in the journal for over ten years now, is joining forces with you to contribute to improvements at the journal and the exercise by it of its great and noble role."

A telegram of greetings from *the CC of the Communist Party of Israel* speaks highly of the journal's role "in elaborating and advancing Marxist-Leninist thought and in exchanging accumulated experience of the contemporary revolutionary movement". The Israeli Communists wish *WMR* "every success in the ideological struggle for strengthening the unity of our international communist and workers' movement, and for advancing our common noble cause of peace, democracy and socialism."

General Secretary Rajeswara Rao, speaking on behalf of *the National*

Council of the Communist Party of India, stresses that the CPI "takes pride in its association with *World Marxist Review* since the journal was conceived by an international meeting of communist and workers' parties. Since then we have been trying our very best to strengthen our bonds with the journal. The role of the journal has now increased manifold in the context of the renewal and forward march of the communist movement in its various contingents, as well as internationally."

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia notes the importance of *WMR* as a forum for exchanging the opinions and experiences of working class parties and stresses that "recently it also became a forum for dialogue between Communists and Social Democrats, Socialists and other forces fighting for peace, democracy, social progress and human survival".

"At present the journal is in the process of renewal," *the CC of the Communist Party of Jordan* says in its message of greetings. "The accumulated rich experience is being used, past mistakes and drawbacks overcome, new phenomena studied and a search for bold and resolute solutions to practical problems unfolded in the course of restructuring. The April Meeting of fraternal parties expressed the spirit of combative unity that we share and that has always been the essence of the journal's work and the source of its strength, growth and development, has opened broad opportunities for an objective breakthrough in the work of the journal, the results of which we are already feeling."

Ali Khavari, First Secretary of the CC of the Tudeh Party of Iran, says: "It is gratifying that the journal profoundly understands the scope of common human problems and resorts to the philosophy of new thinking as it refrains from giving ready-made dogmatic recipes but concentrates on the mobilisation of the broadest possible forces and the solution of the urgent and pressing problems of today's world."

"It is with enthusiasm that we note the vast improvement in the quality and relevance of the contents and especially of the readability of these important viewpoints in translation," *James Stewart, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland*, says in his message. "We can see that the earnest endeavour of the years is being brought to fruition in the restructuring exercises upon which the journal embarked as a result of the important April Meeting of the parties. We will want to see these important initiatives pursued with the determination to bring the journal to be a foremost reference of the struggle to improve the lot of humankind."

"New questions and new challenges fall on the shoulders of Communists and communist and workers' parties everywhere, not least, curbing the aggressive forces of imperialism which threaten mankind with nuclear war," *the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada* notes. "We look forward to seeing *WMR* play an ever more important role in deepening the ideological and theoretical debate and promoting closer cooperation between all forces of the working class and democratic movement in the ongoing struggle for peace and socialism."

The message signed by *Carlos Aldana Escalante, Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Cuba*, reads: "In the 30 years devoted to the propaganda of the ideas of socialism and the activities of the communist

parties and other progressive forces, the journal has accumulated a wealth of historical experience. *WMR* is serving with exemplary perseverance the noble goals of peace and understanding among nations. Fighters for social emancipation have always found in it a forum of fraternity and solidarity. Today the journal is concentrating on expanding its work, raising the efficiency of its publishing activities, giving wider coverage to major problems and improving the presentation of material."

"The importance of the journal to our struggle is enormous especially because we work under the conditions whereby we do not have a publication of our own," *the CC of the Communist Party of Lesotho* notes. "The journal is unique not only in being a publication belonging to fraternal communist and workers' parties, but also in the sense that it is the only publication which disseminates the experience of the struggle waged by fraternal parties under varying conditions in the whole world".

"Our party thinks highly of *World Marxist Review's* fruitful activities as the principal channel of multilateral cooperation among fraternal parties in the ideological and theoretical field and a means of exchanging information and drawing general conclusions from experience," *the CC of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party* says: "The MPRP will continue to support the journal, popularise in every way its valuable ideas and proposals among Communists and the working people in general, and participate effectively in *WMR's* varied activities."

Congratulating *WMR* on its jubilee on behalf of his party, *B. B. Manandhar, General Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Nepal*, has sent in his best wishes to all the representatives of the fraternal parties on the journal. "Your efforts are useful and necessary, especially at this turning point for our movement, when every task of ours is related to the struggle for the preservation of peace and for a nuclear-free and non-violent world," he says.

The CC of the Portuguese Communist Party says in its message: "Following the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, the journal has throughout these 30 years been a brilliant populariser and staunch defender of the ideas of the emancipation of the working class, of Marxism-Leninism, peace, social progress, socialism and communism, and also of the struggle for the national liberation and social emancipation of the working people and nations.

The CC of the Communist Party of Saudi Arabia says, inter alia: "We appreciate the serious and constructive dialogue at the April Meeting and its recommendations, aimed at restructuring and renewing work at *WMR* in accordance with the spirit and demands of the time, and also the organisational measures taken on their basis, which in our view will give a fresh impetus to the journal's work."

"Today, on the threshold of the 21st century, communist parties are looking for new answers to the questions posed by far-reaching changes," *Herbert Mies, Chairman of the German Communist Party*, says in the message of greetings sent in on behalf of the party board. "The demands on the journal are growing as a result. We wish the Editorial Council fresh success in highlighting, on the solid basis of Marx's, Engels's and Lenin's ideas, the greatly diverse forms in which their ideas are being translated

into reality and to encourage constructive and scientific exchanges of opinions among Communists and also between Communists and non-Communists in order to fortify the forces of peace, progress and socialism."

"This jubilee is indubitably a landmark in the history of our collective publication," *Felicesimo Macapagal, Chairman of the Philippine Communist Party*, says. "We are following with great interest and optimism current innovations at the journal, which are a part of our joint efforts. We are confident that a creative and determined approach will enable *WMR* to win new regular readers."

The CC of the Communist Party of Finland says in its message: "Nowadays, the role of *WMR* is growing more and more important in implementing our tasks and in the efforts for our common goals — peace, justice and social progress. We need broad discussion and exchanges of opinion and experience for the implementation of these goals, and *WMR* is a means of winning new allies and partners for cooperation."

"Although the past 30 years have seen differences and difficulties in relations between communist and workers' parties, the journal has been playing a useful role in exchanges of opinion, experience and information among them," *the CC of the French Communist Party* says in its message of greetings. "We are of the opinion that the journal will play a more positive role in accordance with the wishes and demands voiced in discussions at the April Meeting in Prague. The journal constantly strives to take into account more resolutely the important changes which are taking place in the international situation and in the policies of the parties as well as the new political theoretical and ideological realities."

The CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia congratulates the international staff of the journal on the jubilee and notes the need, stressed by the April Meeting, "to restructure *WMR's* work in order to increase its role in contemporary world development. It is necessary to continue frankly, resolutely and democratically to develop further Marxist-Leninist theory, report on the activities and concrete goals of individual parties, and contribute to their common struggle against the forces of imperialism and anti-communism and for a lasting world peace."

"In these three decades, *World Marxist Review* has been making an important and notable contribution towards enhancing the unity and cohesion of the international communist and workers' movement and helping it to fulfil its important mission in the struggle for peace, national and class liberation, *the CC of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka* says in its message of greetings, signed by *CC General Secretary K. P. Silva*. "Its articles, scientific conferences and other initiatives have helped to bring clarity and class understanding to revolutionary fighters in most countries of the world and to provide them with a valuable forum for exchanges of information and experience."

"The South African Communist Party, which is totally committed to the struggle for national liberation in Africa and against apartheid and national degradation in South Africa, regards its association with your journal as one of its internationalist duties," *Joe Slovo, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party*, stresses. "We are proud of having contributed

to the development of our journal *World Marxist Review* . . . At a time when developments of an historic nature are taking place in Southern Africa, your assistance to our struggle is vital."

Congratulating *WMR* staff on behalf of his party, *Trevor Munroe, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Jamaica*, pledges "unflagging support for the journal and its efforts to improve its contents, presentation and distribution in accordance with the demands of the present stage of the struggle for peace and social progress. The WPJ reaffirms its willingness to continue to participate in such efforts."

Peter Symon, General Secretary of the Socialist Party of Australia, says, inter alia: "Those who have worked to produce the journal over these years have made an invaluable contribution to the cause of peace and socialism, to the education of party cadres and readers generally in Marxism-Leninism, informing them of issues and events in many countries . . . We look forward to the journal becoming of even more valuable assistance in the work of our party."

The steering committee of the National Liberation Front of Bahrain wishes *WMR* prosperity and progress and notes: "The journal has been an architect of comradely relations and a venue of ideological, political and theoretical dialogues. In this way it has helped develop and strengthen internationalist relations, so vital to us today, which should be promoted and fortified in the context of new phenomena and great positive changes that are taking place."

Congratulating *WMR*, *Claudy Chipotel, Secretary for the CC of the Guadeloupe Communist Party*, expresses the wish that "the 30th anniversary be keynoted by renewal at the journal. We will endeavour to mark the anniversary with the publication and distribution of recent key contributions to *WMR*."

"On the 30th anniversary of our collective journal," says *the Board of the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin* in a message by its *Chairman Horst Schmitt*, "we would like to note the publication of analyses, discussions and accounts of meetings and collective theoretical undertakings . . . *WMR* helps our party members in their struggle for the unity of action of the working class, for a broad anti-imperialist alliance, against bourgeois ideology, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism of every ilk, and contributes effectively towards the assertion of new thinking."

The CC Secretariat of the Yemen Socialist Party says in its message of greetings: "The journal contributes to the spread of new political thinking in international relations in the name of the stepped-up struggle for peace and people's well-being in the world . . . We believe, however, that it should advance to new frontiers in order to broaden the scope of its international activities, enrich the content of its publications and improve the methods of its work."

The CC of the National Democratic Front of South Korea (NDFSK) says in its message: "Last April, the meeting of communist and workers' parties emphasised the important role of the journal in providing information on issues of ideology and theory and in promoting exchanges of experience between parties: it reaffirmed the journal's authority in the struggle against imperialism and militarism. The journal has been constantly rendering

moral support for the NDFSK and the South Korean people, who are valiantly waging their struggle against the US and the dictatorship."

The message of greetings from *Ibrahim Zakaria, WFTU General Secretary*, reads, inter alia: "The journal has taken a stride forward in highlighting the practice of building socialism with its successes and setbacks, and in the forceful coverage of the current political and economic reforms in a number of socialist countries. In this way it helps stand up to the vicious anti-socialist campaign."

"We think highly of the fruitful cooperation between the AAPSO and WMR throughout these years," *Nouri Abdul Razzak, General Secretary of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation and Acting AAPSO President Morad Ghaleb* say in their message of greetings. "We wish the staff every success in the implementation of their noble task for the good of peace and progress."

The message signed by *Josef Skala, President of the International Union of Students*, and its *Secretary General Giorgos Michaelides* reads: "The International Union of Students sincerely wishes you new successes in your work for the most noble and humanistic goals of humanity."



The journal has received messages of greetings also from the central press organs of communist and workers' parties, their theoretical publications, communist and other progressive publishers, various organisations and individual readers.

The international staff of the journal sincerely thank all those who have sent in their congratulations and greetings on the occasion of WMR's 30th anniversary.

The Reader Wants to Know

What Israel is Doing in Southern Lebanon

I take a keen interest in the events in the Middle East, and I know from press reports, including yours, the methods Israel are using to set up a 'state within the state' on Palestinian territory. There is every reason to speak of Israel's colonisation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Observers note such destructive processes there as the catastrophic reduction (by almost half) in the share of those engaged in agriculture and the disruption of the traditional ties of this sector, now fully geared to the needs of the Israeli economy. The rate of unemployment in the occupied territories has reached about 40 per cent. There's plenty more evidence of Israeli colonial rule. However, I cannot quite understand (since there is much less written about this)

what is happening in southern Lebanon and the western part of the Bekaa Valley. It looks as if yet another colonial enclave is being established there, at the close of the 20th century. Please tell us about that.

Chris Danielson
Glasgow, Great Britain

THE latest reports from southern Lebanon and the western part of the Bekaa Valley mention new occupation actions by Israel: its troops have cut off from the rest of the country the 14 villages known as the 'Shabaa plantations', located at the foot of the south-western slope of Mount Jabal-al-Sheikh, and into this zone Tel Aviv now intends to move the Ethiopian Jews (Falashas) brought to Israel via the Sudan.

What are the Shabaa plantations? They are fertile lands about 20 kilometres long, and seven wide. During the occupation of 1982 most of the houses in the local villages were destroyed, and those that remain intact have been abandoned. Recently, eyewitnesses noticed suspicious activities in this section, which is fenced off with barbed wire which runs electric current. They saw columns of military transport vehicles carrying prefab houses into one of the local population centres. They also saw large groups of Falashas there.

The seizure of the plantations corresponds to the previous policy of the occupation forces, which have succeeded in taking over a substantial amount of Lebanese territory; thus, back in 1949, while pre-truce talks between Lebanon and Israel were still going on, the latter also occupied about 2,000 donums¹ of Lebanese land in the area of Nab'a ad-Dawara. Between 1973 and 1985, the aggressors appropriated an extensive territory of about 52,000 donums stretching along the Lebanese-Israeli border.

The occupiers' 'ever-living' annexationist policy is striking evidence of Israel's rapacity, coveting the land, water and riches of southern Lebanon. At the same time it is aimed at creating a new security zone for the Zionist state, at the expense of alien territory. Tel Aviv adopted this method after it failed, even with the help of its local henchmen, the 'army of South Lebanon', and other forces, to strengthen its security. This puppet army has almost disintegrated in the face of continuous blows from Lebanese patriotic resistance fighters.

At the same time Israel wants to alter the demographic structure in the occupied Lebanese territories by moving people there to a kind of 'human fence' — that very same 'security belt' it has talked so much about. Here it is appropriate to remark on a double violation of human rights: both indigenous people and the forcibly resettled Falasha poor are affected. The Israeli authorities are playing with their lives by drawing them into a big political adventure, because the Shabaa plantations will never become the Falashas' second homeland.

Now that Israel is openly appropriating Lebanese lands, the voice of the international public can be heard, ever louder, demanding the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, and from the occupied areas of Lebanon. World opinion is increasingly supporting the

idea of convening a full-fledged international conference to settle the Middle East crisis, the root cause of which is the problem of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and an independent national state.

Rafic Samhoun
representative of the Lebanese
Communist Party on the *WMR*

¹ 1 donum = 910 square metres.

***WMR* Ties**

OUR offices have been visited by Athos Fava, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Argentina. He told the Editorial Council about the new features of imperialist strategy in Latin America, the present phase of the struggle of its peoples for social and national liberation, and the internal political situation in Argentina. Cooperation between the PCA and the *WMR* was discussed in a conversation with the Editor-in-Chief.

★ ★ ★

Suleiman an-Najab, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Palestinian Communist Party and of the Executive Committee of the PLO, has visited the *WMR* offices. During the conversation he described the situation in the Israeli-occupied Arab territories and gave an analysis of the present stage of the Palestinian national liberation movement.

★ ★ ★

Naip Hawatmi, General Secretary of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has visited the *WMR* offices. A conversation on the state of affairs in the Middle East and the Palestinian problem took place.

★ ★ ★

Academician Stepan Sitaryan, First Vice-Chair of the USSR State Planning Committee, visiting the journal, told fraternal party representatives about the course of perestroika and the problems of creating a mechanism for accelerating the socio-economic development of Soviet society in the light of the decisions of the 19th All-Union Conference of the CPSU.

A Destructive Policy

H. E. Newsum and Olayiwola Abegunrin, *United States' Foreign Policy Towards Southern Africa. Andrew Young and Beyond*, Houndmills, Macmillan Press, London, 1987, 164 pp.

THE authors of this interesting book, one of them formerly and the other currently lecturing at the University of Ife in Nigeria, deal with US policy towards Southern Africa mainly during the presidency of Jimmy Carter and the early period of Ronald Reagan's Administration. The basic approach is in the context of a history analysis. Of course, some theoretical discussions come up here and there on some issues, for instance the question of race and social class in the USA, and the stage and level of the development of social classes in black Africa. However, the authors have not attempted to give a picture of the development of social classes in Zimbabwe and South Africa, or the response of such classes to the foreign policy of the USA towards Southern Africa.

In H. E. Newsum's letter to Andrew Young, cited in the book, it is specified that "the ideological thrust of the manuscript (now the book under review — *S.M.*) is neo-Marxist" (p. 108).

The authors pay great attention to Andrew Young's role in the foreign policy of the USA towards Africa, and mainly towards Southern Africa, during his tenure in office as the US Ambassador to the United Nations. Apparently, the authors do this due to a number of reasons: firstly, because given the leading role Young played in the American civil rights movement, the authors chose to reassess his role in American and world politics. Secondly, they categorise Young as an important "prototype of US diplomatic personalities" who represent "the final compromise between the black petty bourgeoisie and the white ruling class" in the USA. They believe that he used this post at the UN "and his influence on the suppressed masses to advance the ideological and economic mission of world capitalism at the inevitable expense of the world's oppressed classes" (p. 20). They argue that Andrew Young was President Carter's leading spokesman on US policy towards Southern Africa.

They criticise him as a 'client' of Western industrialists and financiers who advocated neocolonial solutions to the political and economic problems of Africa, with specific reference to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. They stress that "the clientage strategy is particularly counter-progressive in the African context because it creates economic ties that often allow the African entrepreneur to make a fast buck without improving public services or building up lasting independent primary industries" (p. 35). And this leads to the entrenchment of neocolonialism in independent black Africa.

The reader will find the chapter on CIA covert activities in Southern Africa rather interesting. It is stated that these operations are used to overthrow progressive governments or to prop-up anti-democratic, reactionary regimes. The book shows that the CIA cooperates with the intelligence services of the former colonial powers (Britain, France,

Portugal, etc.) and with Israeli intelligence in covert operations, specifically against Angola.

Under the Carter Administration some efforts were made to attain peaceful solutions to the independence problems of Zimbabwe (then called Rhodesia) and Namibia. The USA participated in the Contact Group of five Western Powers (together with Britain, Canada, France and the Federal Republic of Germany) working under the auspices of the United Nations. This Group tried to persuade the South African racist government to grant independence to Namibia. The authors show how the Carter Administration changed its stance in 1978 on the Namibian issue and resorted to rabidly anti-communist tactics in its policy towards Africa.

The book presents some interesting debate on the issue of implementing economic sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa and the difficulties encountered by the underdeveloped black African states in enforcing the sanctions in practical terms against the imperialist powers' opposition.

There are some shortcomings in the book. The most outstanding are, I believe, as follows: there is an obvious lack of information on US policy towards Southern Africa in 1984-1986 and on the issue of sanctions against South Africa since the mid-1980s. The book is silent about the secret involvement of the USA in the destabilisation of Mozambique prior to the signing of the Nkomati Accord, and about the strained relations between the USA and Zimbabwe in connection with the latter's independent position. The reader does not learn anything about the involvement of the CIA (through the Afro-American Labour Centre) in the trades union movement in Southern Africa. Finally, reference is made to the fact that the Federal government of Nigeria gave 17,400 nairas to the African National Congress (ANC) of Zimbabwe. This is a mistake because the political organisation in Zimbabwe was called the African National Council, not Congress.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned shortcomings, the book is quite useful because it offers an analysis of the foreign policy of the United States of America in a region which is important in world politics.

Sam Moeti

representative of the Communist Party of Lesotho on *WMR*

¹ Andrew Young was appointed by President Carter to be the US Ambassador to the United Nations in 1976. Prior to this he served in the Congress as Representative of the state of Georgia. He was an active member of the Congressional Black Caucus. He became Mayor of Atlanta in 1981.

Spy Story USA

Bob Woodward, *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA 1981-1987*, Simon & Schuster Limited, London, 1987, 543 pp.

THE CIA has always been more than a US spying agency directed against perceived enemies. Since its creation at the height of the cold war, spying on friends and allies, disinformation campaigns, subversion and assassination have all been integral parts of the CIA's arsenal. The author, Bob Woodward, shows that this has not changed. He writes from a position of authority and knowledge. Bob Woodward is co-author, with Carl Bernstein, of *All the President's Men*, a book about the Watergate scandal which eventually brought down the Nixon presidency.

This time the author directs his attention to the CIA of the Reagan years and bases himself mainly on interviews with people who worked for the CIA. For example, he conducted a series of interviews with William Casey, former Director of the CIA. This cooperative relationship with the CIA is actually at the heart of both the strength and the weakness of the book.

On the one hand, there is little reason to doubt that most of what the author writes is true even if he cannot name his source. As he explains, he would have preferred to name his sources but "because of the topic's sensitivity, nearly all interviews were conducted on 'background', which means that I have promised that these sources will not be identified. The simple reality is that people will not discuss intelligence and security matters without this protection" (p. 13).

On the other hand, his acceptance of the CIA's terms means that there are big holes in the book. Although the theme is the CIA's secret wars, remarkably little is said about CIA involvement in Afghanistan. Similarly, very little is said about the CIA's activities against the Soviet Union.

When Reagan assumed the presidency, he appointed a like-minded man, William Casey, to be Director of the CIA. Both were convinced that the USSR ultimately lay behind all acts of international terrorism and subversion even though Casey's own national intelligence officer responsible for the Soviet Union "pretty much cleared the Soviets of involvement in terrorism . . ." (p. 125). But when Casey discovered to his dismay that the actual source of the allegation was a story planted by the CIA in Italy, he made no attempt to correct this widely publicised piece of disinformation. "As far as the American public was concerned, the Soviets still stood publicly branded . . . as active supporters of terrorism. And the record was never corrected" (p. 129).

For Casey, such disinformation was entirely justified because he held that the USSR was an evil empire even if there was no evidence to support it. Indeed, he was convinced that everyone, including Soviet citizens, hated and despised the Soviet government. He believed that it was possible to recruit Soviet citizens who travelled abroad. "In his opinion, an offer to work for the United States was doing someone a favour" (p. 305).

Casey devoted much of his tenure as Director of the CIA to overcoming what he viewed as the passivity which had entered US foreign policy during

the Carter Administration. He blamed Congress for hamstringing the CIA's ability to carry out covert paramilitary operations — in his opinion, a necessary option for the defence of US interests. Foreign policy, according to Casey, had to fight terrorists and Communists consistently and with all means available: "The Soviets supported subversion worldwide; the United States could do no less" (p. 216).

Casey was fully aware that the overthrow of foreign governments or the assassination of foreign leaders had been made illegal by Congress in the 1970s. Revelations of its unsavoury activities had given the CIA — and the US — a bad reputation at home and abroad. For Casey, the main problem was how to get around Congressional rules which restricted CIA activities to spying and intelligence analysis. "Intelligence could not be idle; every effort had to be made to get the policy-makers to act" (p. 111). And if the policy-makers could or would not act, he was willing to act for them.

The US government believed that Libya was behind a series of terrorist attacks, including the hijackings of TWA Flight 847 and the *Achille Lauro* in 1985, the shoot-outs at Rome and Vienna airports in December of that year and the bombing of a West Berlin disco frequented by US servicemen in April 1986. Casey was so convinced that Qaddafi was unpopular at home that he gave support to some anti-Qaddafi exile groups. However, these plans to overthrow Qaddafi from within failed and so, shortly after the West Berlin bombing, Reagan ordered the US armed forces to attack Tripoli and Benghazi.

Even before these incidents occurred, Reagan had worked himself into an anti-Qaddafi frenzy. In 1982, much publicised reports were circulated alleging that Libya was making plans to attack US interests abroad and even the President himself. But subsequent CIA analysis showed that these hit-squad reports were misinformation designed to take advantage of exaggerated US fears. The source was Manucher Ghorbanifar, an Iranian arms merchant who saw in the Qaddafi scare a way of increasing his personal wealth. According to the author, "he single-handedly kept the issue alive for several months. Soon the CIA officially and secretly declared Ghorbanifar a 'fabricator'" (p. 186).

The author does not answer the obvious and inevitable question: If the evidence connecting Libya to terrorism was so thin, then why did the Reagan Administration continue to promote its rabid anti-Qaddafi line? The answer is that Libya was providing support to countries and movements which were seen by the US as anti-American. Furthermore, the US government sorely needed a scapegoat to hide its impotence in dealing with terrorism.

Although the CIA had labelled Ghorbanifar a liar (he even failed several lie detector tests), Casey thought he might be useful in making approaches to Iran. Casey's philosophy was that "sleaze was no barrier to usefulness" (p. 413). The Ghorbanifar connection eventually led to the Iran-contra affair.

Meanwhile, President Reagan had become obsessed with winning the release of US hostages who were believed to be in the hands of pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon. In 1985, Robert McFarlane, John Poindexter and Oliver North, all members of the National Security Council, hatched a plot

to exchange arms for hostages. Ghorbanifar was to act as intermediary between Iran and Israel. Israel would give weapons to Iran in exchange for the release of US hostages. The US would then replenish the Israeli arms stock. Profits would go to the Nicaraguan contras. These three, with Casey's full and unqualified support, had decided to circumvent and break US law which specifically prohibited lethal assistance to the contras. Moreover, it contradicted official US policy not to negotiate with terrorists — and Iran was considered a terrorist state. It was only on his deathbed that Casey admitted to the author that he knew all along about the illegal diversion to the contras (p. 507).

The CIA, the author shows, also carried out other actions against Nicaragua, most notably, the attack on Corinto's oil depot in 1983, the mining of harbours and the use of small Cessnas to bomb Nicaraguan cities or supply contras inside the country. The CIA even planned, as its manual for the contras stated, to 'neutralise', i.e., kill Sandinista leaders.

The plans to commit illegal acts in the name of anti-Sovietism met resistance not only in Congress but also within the CIA itself. During the 1984 presidential campaign, Reagan accused Casey's predecessor, Stansfield Turner, of weakening the CIA. Reagan had not liked Turner's remarks four years earlier that the USSR did not really have a military advantage over the US. "This was heresy to Reagan, who had campaigned on the charge that more military spending and new weapons systems were essential" (p. 68).

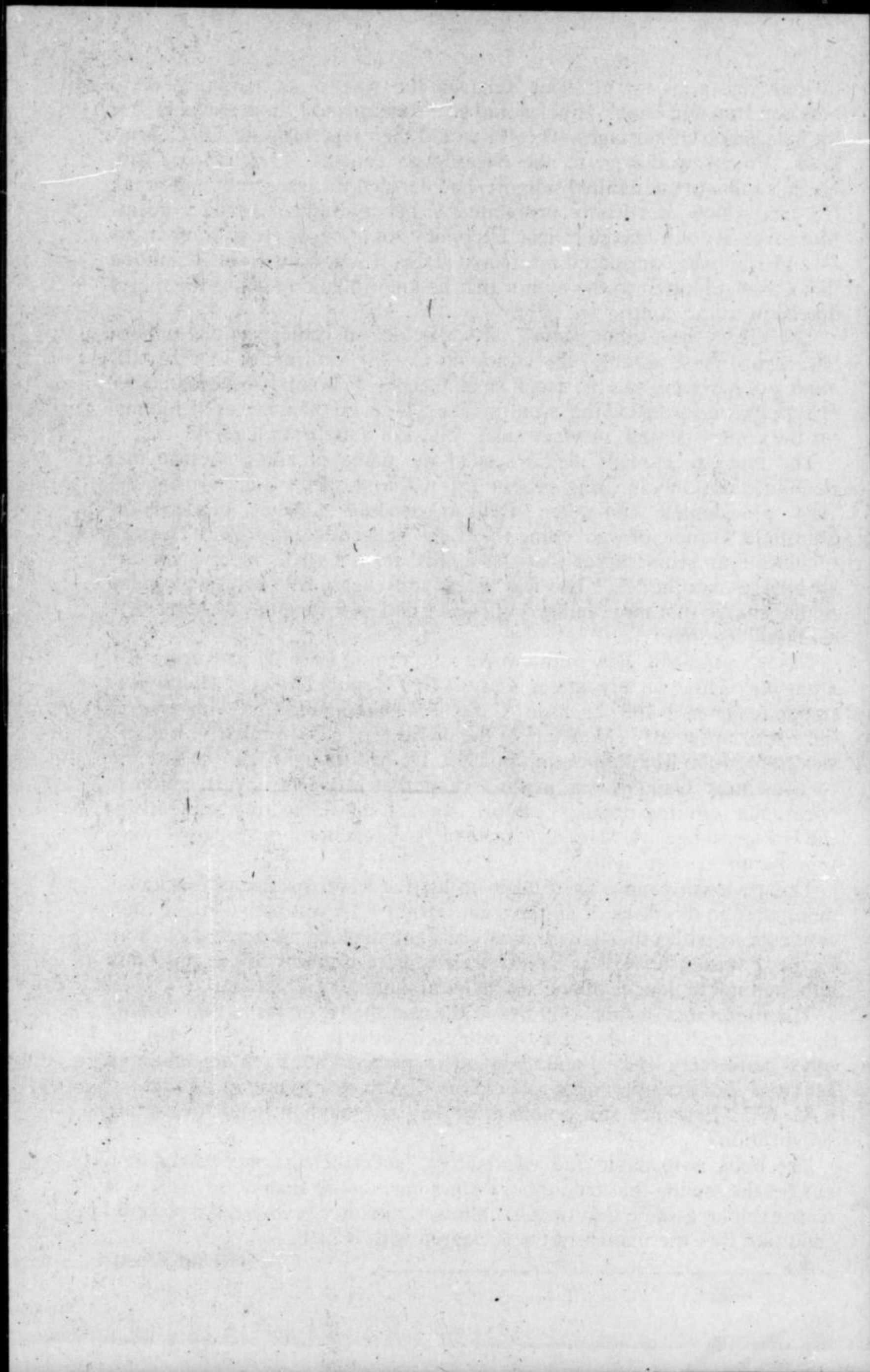
Casey's simplistic view of the world as a form of East-West struggle also antagonised his own appointees. Casey's first Deputy Director, Bobby Ray Inman resigned in 1982 because "Casey was aligning the CIA with some of the major unsavoury characters in the world" (p. 203). Similarly, Inman's successor, John McMahon, quit in 1986. He had thought that the attempt to overthrow Qaddafi was madness and that effective covert action in Nicaragua required popular support. But the unfolding Iran scandal was the last straw because "this arms scheme, the deception of Congress was a time bomb . . ." (p. 440).

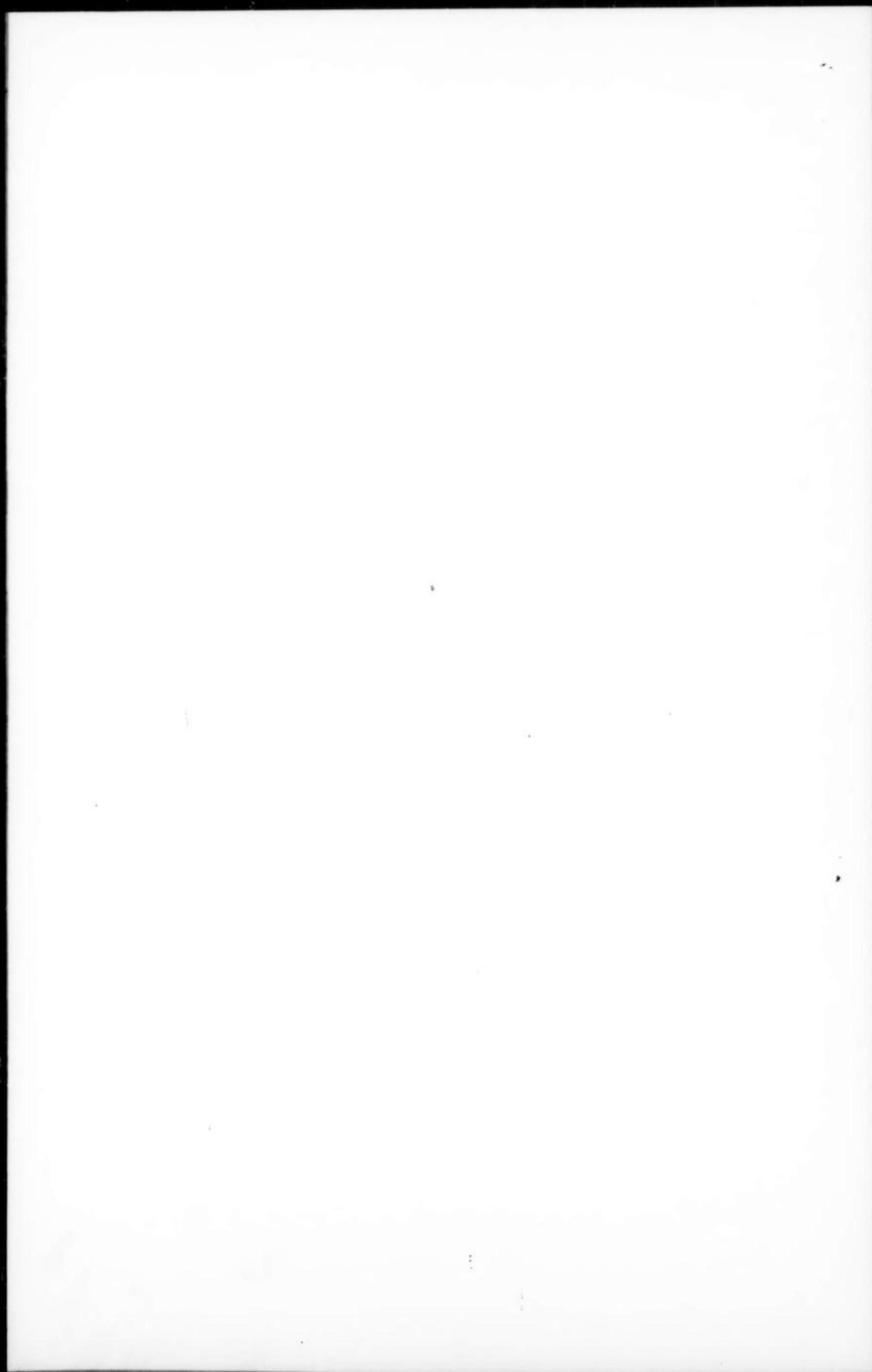
This reviewer cannot even begin to list the lesser events and incidents mentioned in this book or all the countries the CIA was active in and their connections with other governments and intelligence agencies. Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan as well as Saudi Arabia figure prominently in this book although not as much, of course, as Nicaragua, Libya and Iran.

The usefulness of this book lies in the fact that it unites in one volume the discovered and subsequently admitted activities of the CIA. On the other hand, very little is said about its suspected but as yet not admitted activities. For example, what role did the CIA have in planning the flight of KAL 007? Evidence still points towards a spy mission if not deliberate provocation.

The book is readable and informative. Nevertheless, one cannot help but get the feeling that the author knows much more than he reveals. It is reasonable to assume that the CIA allowed the interviews to take place on condition that the manuscript was cleared with it first.

Gerald Woods





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