

WORLD

Problems of

MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

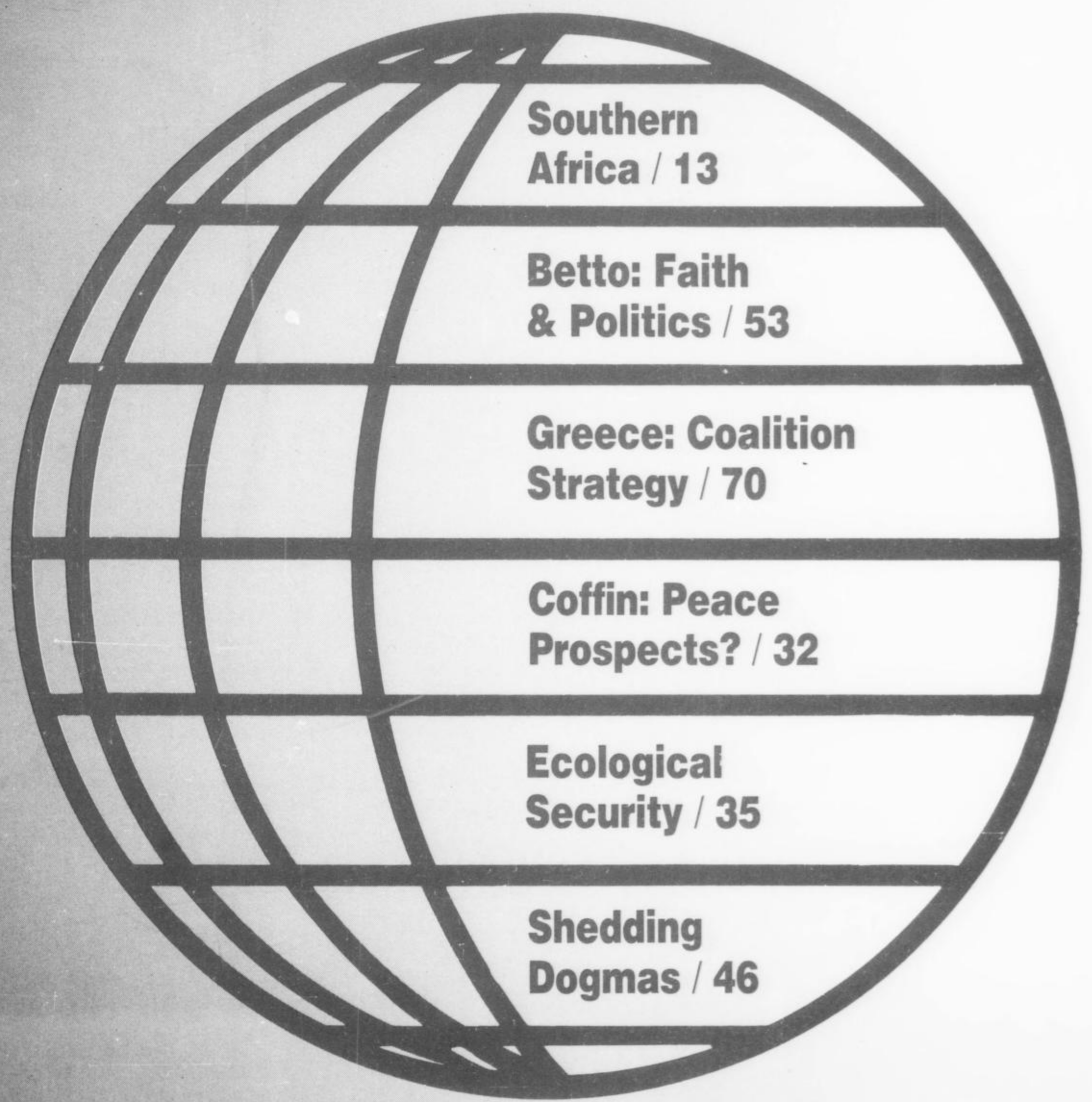
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THE TIME OF REVOLUTIONS IS NOT PAST

Narciso ISA CONDE

General Secretary, Dominican Communist Party

The history and the development of humanity are measured not only in centuries and millennia but also, and above all, in the great and profound social changes and the revolutionary transformations that occur in the social fabric. By cleansing itself of what is old and stagnant and by drawing on the potential of what is new, society becomes dynamic and acquires a future of advancement and development. Setbacks are, of course, possible. What is progressive does not always succeed in defeating what is obsolete, or in breaking its resistance to vanguard trends. This is often explained by unwarranted leaps forward or by the inability to free the energy of the forces that emerge on the scene of history and to channel it into creative endeavor. Nevertheless, *it is revolutions that renew the world*. Indeed, every significant era in the history of humanity has been born in the crucible of revolutionary struggle. That was what happened during the Reformation, after the storming of the Bastille and in the course of the ten days that shook the world in October 1917.

LESSONS OF HISTORY

As social development grew more complex, the process of transformations became increasingly meaningful, and its character, objectives and thrust changed. The wave of bourgeois revolutions which destroyed the pillars of feudalism in many countries of the Old World was followed by the storm of proletarian and national liberation revolutions which changed radically the social image of the globe during the latter half of the 20th century. This image is, of course, also connected now with progress in science and technology. In other words, *our century has no precedent in history as far as the richly diverse forms, rates and scope of social change are concerned*. Moreover, I believe that it points to a still latent potential of revolutionary practice and its advantages compared to the evolutionary type of social development.

It appears that no detailed arguments are required to prove the validity of this point: today's multifaceted

and contradictory world is developing through a unity and struggle of opposites which gives rise to critical situations and junctures in the life of the international community, calling for qualitative leaps of renewal. It looks like all this is quite clear. But in bourgeois political science, one often hears stubborn voices claiming that radical steps are an obsolete way of tackling outstanding problems, a method unfit for civilized, advanced countries. One even hears that revolutions are a product of spontaneous and irrational social forces. References are made to the dramatic lessons of the French Revolution, to the devastating effects of national liberation wars in Latin America, as well as to the more recent historical phenomena (such as Stalinism or Pol Pot's rule). These are presented as natural and normal for social revolutions and liberation processes, while other models and ways of socialist development are completely ignored.

History would have followed a different, less painful and less dramatic, course had socialism emerged through the rejection of superior, not inferior forms of capitalism. But the new society had to travel a different path, gaining strength for a transition to a higher quality. Let me note that it takes a long time for every social system to crystallise, and the process passes through different stages. In the case of capitalism, it took more than three centuries, and its history was a thousand times more brutal. Besides, the development of capitalism is not over yet.

Our ideological adversaries keep repeating, like an incantation, that no matter how lofty revolutionary ideals are, the price nations pay for their realisation is exorbitant and does not justify the ends sought. Some claim that the socialist objective is illusory; others, that it can be attained only through evolution and only in the distant future: meanwhile, the best thing is to accept the "lesser evil"—the bourgeois social system and the division of the world into developed imperialist centres and an oppressed periphery. One hears increasingly often that Soviet perestroika and the economic and political reforms of socialism are allegedly a "roundabout" way of reimplanting such

structures, a belated recognition of the advantages of capitalism and a rejection of previous "revolutionary delusions". Aside from that, it is frequently maintained that revolutions negate democracy. This view ignores the historical connection between the two.

One is prompted to remind those who falsify history that the *storming of the Winter Palace was perhaps the most bloodless of political revolutions, a revolution with the most noble immediate tasks*. The first decrees of the Soviet government ended the involvement of Russia's peoples in the world war and paved the way for delivering millions from hunger and poverty. The price of freedom increased when internal counter-revolution reared its head and an armed foreign intervention began.

One should remember that an effort to secure revolutionary gains with minimal losses is a major principle of Marxism. In all kinds of historical situations, revolutionaries sought to eliminate social injustice for the sake, not at the expense, of man. This is why the communist movement has offered an extremely negative assessment of Stalinism and similar phenomena as *incompatible with our ideals*. At the same time, the theory of revolution has gained more strength and emerged as a meaningful alternative to the principles that cemented Western civilization and its "parliamentary democracies".

We must not forget that fascism was born in Western Europe, and that Vietnam had to withstand not only a Japanese but also a French invasion, and then an aggression by the United States which dropped more bombs on Vietnam than the US Armed Forces had used during World War II. Having overthrown the Batista dictatorship, the Cuban people had to face a blockade and a constant threat of aggression. Nicaragua, which liberated itself from a pro-US tyranny, is being subjected to a military and economic aggression launched by US imperialism. In other words, history demonstrates that the "free" Western world and its reactionary quarters are the main source of violence. This is one of the reasons for the aberrations that aggravate periods of transition in countries which have opted for radical change. Today, these aberrations (which cannot be removed with the help of evolutionary measures) are being overcome in the course of new political, social and economic revolutions.

NEW TYPES OF REVOLUTIONS

Soviet perestroika is, with good reason, described by some as a "revolution within a revolution" and by others, as a "second socialist revolution". Indeed, it is not a retreat but an example of onward motion, a surge forward: it is an effort to eliminate red tape and promote political democracy and self-government on the basis of public ownership not necessarily identified with the

state, centralisation or the like. *But can transformations within a single system be regarded as a revolution? I believe they can.* Social development takes different paths within every social system, often under the impact of concomitant contradictions. It deviates from the "general course" before it reaches the crucial juncture at which the new system takes shape. How can cul-de-sacs along this evolutionary way be avoided? Through the influence of external factors, far-reaching reform or revolution. This means that we should develop our theory creatively and acquire a more adequate knowledge of the essence of revolutionary transformations in today's world. Since the world owes its renewal to revolutions, it is important to study the logic of the way they themselves change.

The same applies to science and technology. We live in an age of nuclear energy, of a *revolution in science and technology*, and of dramatic advances in electronics and computers. All these are important factors of progress. But when they are used in the capitalist way—to militarise industry in order to secure superprofits, to step up the exploitation of the Third World, etc.—a situation arises which threatens human survival. Hence the upsurge of the peace forces and of the environmentalist movements which demand a change in the use of scientific discoveries and of technology. In fact, they are putting forward revolutionary demands of global importance.

We also need to take a fresh look at the essence of *national liberation revolutions*. The factors behind them still persist, and new ones are being added to them—the transnational concentration of capital, the hegemony of its financial component and the rise of the "third technological wave". It is therefore untenable to maintain that the developing world exists all by itself or between the two systems. It is a specific, dependent part of imperialism, the periphery of its developed centres. Yes, capitalism is now a worldwide system, and it should be assessed as such. One cannot regard it one-sidedly and see only high technology, limited areas of political democracy and the high living standards of a small percentage of the human race. Dominating two-thirds of the globe for centuries, capitalism has produced not only oases of prosperity but also large-scale poverty which is today a truly dangerous global imbalance.

The capitalist system is not only the "American way of life", French parliamentarism or Japanese electronics. True, it has created the more advanced centres of civilization, but it also has a long criminal record—the two world wars, the nuclear bombs dropped on Japanese civilians, hundreds of cases of blatant and covert intervention, the "cultivation" of fascist regimes and dictatorships (those of Trujillo, Duvalier, Perez Jimenez, Pinochet, Franco, Somoza, Marcos and their ilk), the insane arms race, racism,

drug trafficking, corruption and so on. In the Third World, the prospect of starving to death haunts more than 500 million people, some 1.6 billion live in abject poverty, over 600 million are unemployed, illiterate children number in excess of 800 million, more than 2 billion have no access to safe drinking water, half of them are deprived of decent housing and over 1.5 billion, of health care. Children are hit the hardest: every day, malnutrition kills 40,000, and hundreds of thousands go to sleep hungry.

No end to this tragedy is in sight. Three out of every four people live in the developing countries, and their population is increasing rapidly: by the year 2000, they will account for more than 90% of the world's total population increment—an annual growth rate of 95 million. Every newborn child will be saddled with an enormous, truly unpayable and crushing external debt. Development rates under dependent capitalism fall far short of the level at which the basic needs of the population can be met, and they make it impossible to check the decline of living standards and of the quality of life which are low to begin with.

These realities are self-evident, and we hold that they leave no doubt about the need for *social change on an international scale*, for anticapitalist transformations in the Third World, and for a struggle aimed at securing revolutionary gains and paving the way to socialism. Having generated unprecedented technological progress, capitalism has also demonstrated its inability to eradicate poverty, violence and cultural backwardness over vast areas of the globe. History's new leap forward is becoming inevitable and ever more urgent. But it will only yield results if it does not stop halfway, if it spreads to developed societies, and if the socialist countries committed to revolutionary renewal continue their restructuring efforts prompted by the crisis of the structures based on administration by decree.

Such is the imperative of our age, with a large part of the world's population doomed by capitalism to live in abject poverty. There have obviously emerged *new opportunities for social progress*, for revolutions, for distinctive ways leading to socialism, and for changes in the content and combination of the forces seeking to effect transformations without delay.

THE PRICE AND FORMS OF STRUGGLE

Naturally, all this does not mean that the question of the price of revolutions is no longer topical. The point is particularly relevant for the progressive forces in those Third World areas where what is old is desperately resisting what is new and, supported by foreign reactionaries, generating protracted local conflicts. The Central American crisis which, engineered

by the United States, is using up the modest economic potential of the region's nations is a case in point. This makes it all the more important to minimise the social costs of transformations, and such an effort is tangibly present in the policies pursued by the Sandinists and by the revolutionary forces of El Salvador and Guatemala.

As before, revolutionary situations arise not where capitalism has achieved a high development level (offering it the greatest possible opportunities for renovating the "upper stories" of the system at the expense of its "weaker elements") but where underdevelopment sharply aggravates all social contradictions—in other words, on the periphery, in countries which, in many aspects, are not ready yet for a transition to socialism. But history will not wait: often, it marches on even when the requirements for a change of social systems are not there in their entirety.

In Third World areas, this process is stimulated and conditioned by glaring social contrasts, poverty, hunger and the fact that the masses are deprived of their rights and countries, of their national sovereignty. In other words, this process is connected with tasks which so far fall short of socialist development. Nevertheless, in some cases they can apparently be accomplished by a *popular revolution* which will restructure society politically on a basis close to socialism, through socialist orientation. Hence, specifically, the limitations of the reformist path in conditions of the periphery—witness the experience of Mexico, Bolivia, Peru and Venezuela which failed to fight off their debt and the crisis or to perceptibly alleviate the problems of poverty and inequality with the help of evolutionary measures.

Given the distinctive nature of the explosive world of underdevelopment, one should note that here it is easier to *begin* a revolution than to carry it through. True, to this day the Left is debating how both ends can be achieved here and now. Naturally, the forms of struggle are shaped by the situation in a given country, and they may vary from nation to nation, but a social revolution is unthinkable without a degree of coercion exercised by the people in relation to the conservative forces. It appears that so far, absolutely "pure", non-violent revolutionary transformations are impossible. Nor is a "purely" proletarian revolution possible in our conditions, given the wide and diverse spectrum of the forces engaged in social protest. It is therefore extremely important to master the art of combining democratic and revolutionary efforts with the pursuit of distinctive popular alternatives geared to the new realities. For its part, this calls for the choice of a path which, without unwarranted sacrifice, can lead to the solution of pressing problems and make fundamental change viable and dynamic.

REASSESSING THE ROLE OF DEMOCRACY

In this day and age, the close interconnection between revolution and democracy is particularly obvious. These notions are twins, and they shape the various processes that are transforming today's world. New realities need a new kind of practice which, in turn, requires appropriate forms of thinking. Historical experience must be reappraised cardinally and critically. It is not that past accomplishments will be denigrated: it is that we should overcome dogmatic views and the "sterile inertia" of thinking which stands in the way of creativity. We hold that on the eve of the 21st century we need a blend of revolution and democracy which would make it possible to eliminate socioeconomic differences, raise living standards, protect the environment, put the accomplishments of science at the service of man, and make the popular masses fully entitled to take part in decision-making on major political and economic issues.

Interpreted in such a broad way, democracy is superior to freedom. It is an "integral revolution" encompassing and transforming the economy, politics, morals, the environment and other parts of the social fabric. It is a revolution of *democratic participation, of government by the people* applied to all society. It is a new system of social organisation. Without it, social and economic transformations will not produce full results. I believe that this is a *major problem of the transition to socialism and of socialist development*. The crises or the precrisis situations in the societies that embarked on the socialist path decades ago have emphasised that democratisation is vitally necessary. Otherwise, socialist principles will remain on paper.

On the other hand, the limited nature of the Western democracies and their alienation from the people lead to institutional degradation and to reckless political gambles, up to and including "counterinsurgency warfare" or "low-intensity wars". Societies enjoying freedom which is still far from political, economic and social democracy are particularly typical of our continent and other Third World countries: there, liberal democracy benefits multimillionaires, transnational corporations and the top brass. The United States is obviously seeking to restore this type of pseudo-democracy in Nicaragua. But such political structures have helped to dramatically exacerbate the problem of human survival. The situation is aggravated by the policy of "dependent modernisation" brutally imposed by US imperialism through the IMF and other international agencies under its control.

Democratic elections are often a formality as far as the developing nations are concerned. This is reflected in the frequently explosive election results. Social protest is growing steadily in strength. The increasingly

grave crisis of the imperialist-imposed development strategy ties the hands of the local ruling quarters and lays bare the nature of pseudodemocracy: there is the impotence of the executive, of legislatures, of the judiciary and of the administrative bodies. This corrosive process affects even the so-called representative democracies that have recently come to replace military regimes. The degradation of constitutional rule in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Argentina is an example. It follows that we need new types of democracy and alternative economic models adequate to the demands of the day and to the requirements of the socially heterogeneous population—types and models which would give the people a right and an opportunity to live in decent conditions and to take part in government.

Developed capitalist countries do not offer a model worthy of emulation. There, too, one can find areas of poverty and discrimination, as well as marginal social strata. For example, the United States' rigid two-party system by no means expresses the interests of all of the country's citizens. Meanwhile, our people need a revolution; having won more democracy and freedom, we will carry it further.

Essential conditions for this do exist. A *new social agent* is emerging. It combines the people's forces and civic organisations which seek joint action, and these include the middle strata and the businessmen affected by the crisis. This common entity will give birth to government by the people which will take shape and develop with due regard for the interests of all those who support it and call for a truly national alternative. I am referring to the people's hegemony and to joint participation in government—something that will differ from the classic models of developed capitalism.

All this specifies our approach to the *vanguard of social change*, a vanguard which is collective and ideologically and politically diverse, and within which allies treat one another with respect. It is a response to the crisis of the established political systems and parties. It is a new vision of democracy. It is to give power not just to the left and progressive parties but to the people. It is to express their will, becoming less and less traditional and more and more pluralistic.

Specifically, it is a system of popular assemblies and of mass and employers' organisations controlled by the people and all those who embody the new alternative. It is inseparable from the right to recall and re-elect leaders. Bonapartism and presidential authoritarianism are alien to it. Openness is typical of its national and local government bodies in every neighbourhood, village, factory or institution of learning. This political system needs a democratic army and democratic law enforcement agencies reliably integrated into the structures of a civil society.

The new democracy means a *pluralism of ideologies and a diversity of political opinion*. The economy is to comprise public, mixed, cooperative, private and personal types of property. Meanwhile, in response to worldwide trends, the state is to strengthen both national sovereignty and integration, assisting in the establishment of a new international political and economic order.

We are committed to self-government, non-alignment, human solidarity, environmental protection, the free and equal development of men and women, and the Latin American and Caribbean alternatives. All this is no chimera. The ten years of the Sandinist revolution show that, despite US resistance, a "participative democracy"—of all hues and all economic models—is quite possible. It is a goal worth working for. The effort will have to be tremendous because in the Third World, the revolutionary choice is not easy, and the prospects will not open up overnight.

ASSESSING THE PROSPECTS

It will be a long time before we can put an end to underdevelopment and realise the advantages of the new system. But the world will not mark time either. In this connection I think it important to *abandon the traditional simplistic view of the general crisis of capitalism* whereby only one of its aspects—the system's phased erosion through the breakaway of its weaker peripheral elements—is treated as an absolute. This view does have a point, but a different aspect is often ignored. Crises, particularly structural ones, that is, those that occur after lengthy intervals, result in the modernisation of the leading capitalist countries' economic, scientific and technological potential. Such updating is typical of the current stage as well. It is linked with the rise in the West of a "third" technological wave.

In his time, Antonio Gramsci described this phenomenon as a "*passive revolution*" which is slowly and sometimes painfully "transferred" to other countries, giving rise to new realities and complex problems there. In distinctive shapes, they also arise in the Third World, where it is very difficult to separate advances in science and technology from the establishment of updated forms of domination and oppression. This is perfectly clear from the consequences of the "second" technological wave which reached us in the course of the Latin American economies' transnationalisation; this wave has caused sharp contradictions to develop between the modernised "enclaves" and the vast areas of poverty and underdevelopment.

This brings us to the most important question: how can we change the realities of the periphery in order not to lag behind again? This is an integral problem. On the one hand, it is important not to allow the national

liberation revolution to be worn down by military and political means; on the other, we should prevent its economic isolation from progress in science and technology: given a certain international alignment of forces, the simple *taking of power* (the central task of any revolution) *and the destruction of the social superstructure is sometimes not enough to secure the prospects of reaching the desired level of development and social security*.

What stands in the way today is the imperialist policy of "low-intensity conflicts". It ties the hands of the revolutionary national liberation forces and neutralises the effects of the international assistance they receive. The debt burden and many other problems rooted in the present international political and economic order are also producing extremely adverse consequences. Besides, some socialist countries have found themselves to have entered a precrisis situation: this restricts their ability to offer more extensive technological assistance to the developing nations.

How, then, can the Third World avoid cul-de-sacs in the development of the revolution? How can we prevent it slowing down or grinding to a halt? Today's collective Marxist thought holds that *we need a far-reaching reform of international relations and a struggle for their comprehensive democratisation*. Naturally, accomplishing this task and breaking out of the neoconservative straightjacket which prevents the internationalisation of Western advances in science and technology will not be easy. However, this raises a different question—about the possibility of a crisis in the United States and in inter-imperialist relations, about the prospects for transformations in the developed capitalist part of the world and about the irreversible nature of the restructuring processes under socialism. In the later case, delays in launching new processes and retreats in continuing those already launched would be worst.

Paradoxically, now that human thought is reaching new heights and man is exploring outer space, the enormous number of the dispossessed and those completely alienated from progress in science and technology continues to grow in the countries of the periphery. As the new wave of this progress surged, one-third of the economically active population in the industrialised West formed an army of "redundant" and "unwanted" people. Certain forms of alienation have also surfaced in socialist society. One hardly needs to look for any other convincing arguments in favour of various types of worldwide social transformations.

Every human life is mankind's valued asset. But apparently, it is no longer enough to reduce issues of social emancipation to this aspect only. Now that dangerous global problems (the state of the environ-

ment, nuclear power production, etc.) have arisen and are becoming aggravated, we are talking both about the lives of individuals and about the fate of the human race as a whole. Can it survive the next millennium? It is no accident that contemporary Marxist scholars speak increasingly *not simply about the crisis of the capitalist system but about a crisis of all civilization*. Humanity is thus facing a dilemma—to perish or to develop differently along a radically new path.

The industrial society in different social "models", including socialist ones, has encountered physical, planetary limits. The industrial type of growth has exhausted its potential, and it now threatens to destroy human society. I believe that this is creating a special prerevolutionary situation in the world. In order to survive tomorrow, we need not only tried and tested but also absolutely different methods of transformations. *The task of transforming the world therefore remains on the agenda*. Today, however, it has become much more complex. It implies progress toward a restructuring of social relations with due regard for the new worldwide realities and contradictions that require radical solutions. The time of revolutions is not past. On the contrary, their significance is growing as never before.

It would be no exaggeration to say that we are witnessing and taking part in the emergence of a *new type of revolutionary process*. I will not hasten to specify it today. A great deal still remains unclear, although it is already obvious that new forces and movements are appearing on the scene of history and completely distinctive critical situations have arisen which cannot be resolved by traditional means. We should launch a bold and creative search. This, to me, is the essence of the new political thinking adopted by a number of sister parties and revolutionary movements. It is replacing not just this or that individual theory or ideology but the thought patterns of Communists and other alternative forces amid a crisis of industrial civilization and the increasingly acute distinctive problems of its periphery.

This change is, in essence, *revolutionary*. It will therefore be opposed, even by some within our movement. This is natural. The specific historical conditions under which individual parties operate are sharply dissimilar: some countries are in the final phase of the industrial era, while others are only just entering it or are halfway into it, and this is what largely shapes the

way people think and the attitude they adopt.

One cannot, however, conclude that the forces waging class battles in the Third World, on the periphery of our industrial civilization, should steer clear of new creative action. *A spiritual renewal of our ranks is inevitable, it is an imperative of our age*. But it should take its own distinctive forms geared both to the world's realities and to the conditions within a given country. This process is already on, borne out by the changes under way in the communist parties of Latin America and in other revolutionary movements or, say, by liberation theology. Naturally, not everything has fully crystallised yet. I believe that even some of the ideas present in new thinking show a degree of Eurocentrism and inadequate attention to the revolutionary potential of the developing countries, particularly of Latin America.

Practical steps in this direction can give a new and powerful impetus to the struggle for conditions worthy of man in the Third World. This, in turn, means that we should understand alternative democratic ideas about social liberty and justice and their attainment. But in the course of this inevitable conceptual renewal it is important not to forget that the many millions of people now living on the "periphery" are to make their contribution to civilization's future and that social revolutions there are both necessary and possible. Without their renewal-oriented impact, we will be unable to eliminate the scandalous state of underdevelopment or to destroy definitively those mechanisms of industrial growth which have turned the wealth of the developing countries into an object of exploitation by the imperialist powers.

Obviously, all this makes *new attitudes* absolutely imperative. It is a conclusion dictated by the present worldwide trends and by the essentially new quality of social protest. Involved in this protest in a variety of ways are representatives of almost all sections of the periphery's multitiered society. Different demands are converging: *people want a life worthy of man*. I see an effective solution to this problem as an opportunity for many parties and movements to reach a new level of revolutionary practice. The alignment of forces is changing, and this change makes it possible not to repeat past mistakes and to give free, humanistic rein to the process of liberation. The important thing is that, as they say, it takes walking to get where you want to be.

NEW THINKING AND LOCAL CONFLICTS

Dimitrios CHRISTOPHIAS

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

How does new political thinking help lessen international tensions, settle local conflicts and "cool" what we call "hotbeds"? Some of the answers to this questions were supplied by *WMR*, in particular, by the South African Communists' leader Joe Slovo and the British trade unionist Ken Gill in their dialogue.¹ I would like to make a few relevant points on the basis of the experience accumulated by the AKEL.

Until recently such conflicts in ever new countries and regions were a sort of delayed-action mines under the entire system of international relations. Now a different trend is gathering momentum: the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan have been concluded, the gory fighting between Iran and Iraq was stopped after almost eight years, the UN plan for settling the conflict around Namibia is being put into effect, the proposal for a dialogue between North and South Korea is gaining ever broader support, an international conference on Cambodia has taken place in Paris, and efforts continue to reduce tensions in Central America.

All these complex processes are a reflection of new political thinking. It is based on respect for two salient features of our age: the *growing diversity of our world and the multiple forms in which its component parts are developing*, on the one hand, and *its increasing unity and interdependence*, on the other. These two features are dialectically interconnected and intertwined, and are interacting. In spite of clearly divergent aspirations and ideological trends, there is a common interest in arranging life on our planet in a way that would enable all the peoples to preserve their values and develop along their chosen roads without wars, ecological catastrophes, hunger, disease, and all the other manifestations of evil and degradation which freely cross national borders.

All this calls for broad, mutually beneficial and equal cooperation among nations. But what cooperation can there be if each of the sides locked in ideological struggle will look for chinks in the other's armour in a bid to project its own way of life and philosophy to the whole world? That is why a line must be drawn clearly between two spheres, namely, relations between the

classes, including ideological struggle, and relations between states.

Class interests have always underlied domestic and foreign policies. Officially, they were presented as national, state or bloc ones, and enveloped in talk about "common good" or religious motives. But ultimately, as Marxists and many other realistic people believe, the policy of any state, or any alliance of states, is determined by the claims of the dominant sociopolitical forces. Hence intolerance, enmity and conflicts.

Power politics, however, do not remove ideological contradictions, but only escalate tensions and lead to critical situations. *Exchanges of views and debates on values can be in a way competitive and favourably influence the partners, but ideological warfare never does.* The choice between the two depends not only on political ethics, but on historical responsibility. In international politics ideology is simply counterproductive. Other criteria are operative here, such as national and state interests, and they can be balanced far easier.

Of course, ideological warfare is an extremity. I think, generally speaking, that a house for people to live together in peace—be it a European, an Asian or a universal one—cannot be built if each side insists on using only its own bricks. The point is to accept any constructive contribution wherever it comes from.

Is it normal when one side views the other as "an aberration of history" and makes its own policy accordingly? And it is no less dangerous to consider oneself the monopoly owner of truth, the holder of a "ticket to the future", and look down upon one's partner as a temporary companion who has nothing to say to the future generations.

We all are in one boat, and can get drowned or keep afloat only together. That is why *recognition of the priority of common human values, or rather human survival, is the core of new thinking.*

It may seem strange that Communists, who have always been known to take a class approach to social phenomena, are laying such an emphasis on common

human interests and values. The class approach both to the realities of a society divided into antagonist classes and to international affairs, pervaded with those antagonisms, is still relevant. But until very recently common human values were viewed as a function and the ultimate result of the struggle of the proletariat, which by emancipating itself will free society as a whole from antagonisms.

Now the proliferation of weapons of mass annihilation has set an objective limit to class confrontation on the international scene: it is the threat of universal annihilation. For the first time ever the common human interest in *averting a catastrophe threatening civilisation* is real and not abstract, immediate and not long-term.

It was believed not long ago that the war danger lurked in the contradictions between the social systems. Yet before 1917, there had been one system, capitalism, in the world, and World War I broke out. Conversely, in World War II nations from the opposite systems joined in an alliance to defeat Nazism. The common interest of all the nations and states faced with the Nazi threat prevailed over their sociopolitical differences and created the foundation for a "supra-systemic" coalition. Therefore now that an even more formidable threat is looming large, states of different social systems can and must cooperate in order to safeguard peace and fulfil common human tasks.

Addressing the UN General Assembly, Mikhail Gorbachov said, *inter alia*: "At the new stage, it is imperative to de-ideologise relations between states. We do not renounce our convictions, our philosophy or our traditions, nor do we urge anyone to renounce theirs".² The ideological principles and social goals of the two systems are incompatible opposites. Each will remain on its own position and protest the advantages of one's own system, one's way of life and one's values not only with propaganda, but also with actions in various fields, including international affairs. But this struggle must not be transposed onto relations between states.

There are no contradictions in this proposition: the concept "*international relations*" is broader than that of *relations between states* because it encompasses also relations between public and political movements, currents, parties, etc. Clearly, all these cannot be "de-ideologised". There will always be special bonds between component parts of the international communist and working-class movement, between them and the socialist community, and between all of them and socialism-oriented countries in the Third World. No one can prevent people, classes, parties and nations from favouring or helping close or kindred forces.

But what obstacles are in the way of de-ideologising relations between states today? From the point of view

of social psychology, they seem to be the stereotypes of the conflicting sides, which are a reflection of deep-seated unfriendly and largely distorted perceptions of each other. But apparently, if there is firm political will and a realistic appraisal of the situation, a start can be made in improving matters on the basis of negotiations, trust and mutual conviction of the predictability of each other's actions.

When it comes to "hotbeds", it is necessary first and foremost to understand the interests of others, to review one's own needs and conduct realistically, to shed ingrained stereotypes and to set one's sights on joint efforts in order to avert, localise or settle a crisis.

When all is said and done, only the conflicting parties themselves can reach a lasting settlement. Each of them has its own objectives and wants, its own history of animosity, and its own view of the room for political manoeuvre. Their desire to reach a settlement is not a priori either: it is not all that rare that governments, various forces or individual leaders think it politically advantageous to keep tensions simmering. However, the threat to peace posed by such a conflict and the misery of the peoples involved do not become smaller for all that.

All this makes the *international environment* of the conflict a very important factor. It may help drag out the crisis or contribute in every way towards its resolution, prevent it from flaring up, and encourage a search for sensible compromises. We think that any conflict, let alone an armed one, is a dangerous aberration of international affairs, and that all the states should make efforts to prevent or settle it. It should be generally understood that such conflicts threaten universal security and expose thousands of people to suffering. The only correct answer is not one-sided intervention and confrontation, but the concerted actions of forces from every pole of the political map of the world.

Practice shows that any conflict can be settled politically, by peaceful means if there are perseverance, patience and goodwill. But it also demonstrates that a settlement does not come of its own accord, but *must be struggled for*. The settlement of a conflict, especially of a drawn-out and bitter one, necessitates a great sense of responsibility, an awareness of the significance of any step, the ability to seek compromises without forsaking principles, and sometimes even the courage to give up conventional concepts.

The idea of *national reconciliation* has been tested extensively on various continents in the past few years. In the context of Cyprus, I would call it the process of *intercommunal rapprochement* and of achieving mutual understanding as a means of removing or relaxing the internal reasons behind the conflict. This is a difficult road. There seem to be few, if any, historical precedents of hostilities being ended through national

reconciliation and the eventual establishment of appropriate coalition structures to govern the country. That is why a number of politicians and public figures consider such a policy line to be of little effect and therefore unpromising.

But I think that this idea deserves serious consideration. Usually, confrontation is not an isolated phenomenon, but takes place in an interconnected and interdependent world. There has long been no "purely" internal war in any country. Moreover, the external factor takes the form of not only direct support to some internal force, but also that of outside influence on its platform.

For example, the situation in Cyprus is the result of direct military intervention on the part of Greece and Turkey in 1974, and on the part of Britain yet earlier. Outside interference plus actions by the nationalists and chauvinists from the two communities are the root causes of confrontation and strife between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and reconciliation is difficult to achieve. That is why it is important to create such an environment around the conflict by international legal means which would, firstly, block any input of "fuel" from without, secondly, prevent the flames of that hotbed spreading to other countries, and, thirdly, give the people a sovereign opportunity to make their sociopolitical choice without outside intervention.

Such a "breakthrough" in the environment is quite realistic: as the danger of the progressive involvement of the great powers in local conflicts grows, so does their objective interest in restraining the conflicting domestic parties and steering them towards reconciliation.

Apart from that, national reconciliation seems to be the only acceptable platform enabling also the neighbouring states to make a joint contribution towards settling conflicts. One graphic example is the Asia-Pacific region, where various countries have stepped up their efforts in a bid to lessen tensions and bring about a settlement in Cambodia.

To sum, the idea of national reconciliation, though difficult to materialise, is no longer a theoretical abstraction, and is being used as the base for *concrete models* of settlement. While there are international agreements on Afghanistan but little to show in the domestic dialogue, on Cambodia Hun Sen has had quite a few informal meetings with Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The agenda of the Paris Conference included the drafting and consolidation of measures aimed at averting a civil war and preventing the restoration of the genocide regime, the ending of foreign military aid to all the conflicting parties, and the adoption of international guarantees for Cambodia's status of an independent, neutral and non-aligned state.

Thus a realistic approach to the actual situation in the conflict area and readiness for compromises and

for talks between the main parties involved with the mediation of the international community yield positive results. Naturally, the international guarantors of the settlement bear special responsibility: they cannot and must not undermine the credit of trust granted to them as accords are concluded, especially so when they enjoy broad international support.

Fifteen years have passed since Cyprus was cut forcibly into North and South. The artificial border has severed apart even once single urban development areas, such as those near Nicosia. Greeks and Turks, who were neighbours, are now separated. But the main thing is that 37% of the country's territory are occupied by Turkey, and that for many years now foreign military bases have been destabilising the situation both in the country and in the region as a whole.

That is why the AKEL believes that the Cyprus problem is the result of primarily *foreign intervention*. It is the policy of imperialism, particularly its intention to turn the island into a major military base in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, that is the driving force of the internal conflict. The imperialists are quite happy with the division of the island because they view the Cyprus question exclusively through the prism of their own strategic interests.

All talk about the "fatal incompatibility" of Greeks and Turks is just eyewash. Their religious, language and ethnic differences notwithstanding, they are united by a common historical and cultural heritage that is more than four centuries old. Both communities consider themselves Cypriots and the long-suffering island their common homeland. *The goals of our struggle for a new Cyprus are the evacuation of the occupation troops and Turkish settlers, the dismantling of foreign military bases and total demilitarisation.*

It is our belief that the peace-loving public could exert substantial influence on the governments of the countries (primarily Turkey) which are involved directly or indirectly in the Cyprus conflict so that effective measures should be taken to settle it. The urgent demand that the Cyprus issue be discussed as a regional problem at an international conference with the participation of Greece, Turkey, the UN Security Council members and representatives of both Cypriot communities would be the best possible help and manifestation of solidarity on the part of the progressive and democratic forces.

The AKEL believes that such a meeting would help restore and rebuild Cyprus as a sovereign, territorially integral, united, non-aligned and demilitarised state. The withdrawal of the Turkish occupation troops and all the other foreign troop contingents, the dismantling of the military bases and other facilities of the imperialist powers and the total demilitarisation of the island will meet the vital interests of the Cypriots and all

the other peoples of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, because Cyprus is a potentially explosive seat of tension.

Domestically, it is very important to establish a continuous intercommunal dialogue. But it is very difficult to clear away the roadblocks on the way to rapprochement and understanding because, regrettably, the two sides still insist on different concepts of a settlement.

The Greek Cypriots propose a single bicomunal federal state with a strong central government and with respect for the "three freedoms" (those of movement, settlement and acquisition of property). They want total demilitarisation of the Republic of Cyprus, including the withdrawal of all foreign troops (Turkish and Greek), the disbandment of the National Guard and the security service, and the return of the Anatolian settlers home.

The leaders of the Turkish Cypriots, however, insist on the preservation of the existing status quo. The Denktas administration wants two separate, loosely linked states. It also demands the permanent presence of Turkish troops in the north of the island and an influx of Turkish settlers into the separatist "state" at the expense of the Turkish Cypriot community, whose members are forced to emigrate.

In this situation the AKEL is trying to help with drafting a detailed blueprint for a federation that would be acceptable in the specific conditions of Cyprus. We think that both communities and all the citizens of a future Federal Republic must have equal political, economic and constitutional rights and possibilities, and that both communities must be represented in all the federal bodies of government. In this way the preponderance of one of them over the other can be prevented and their interests balanced.

Our party considers its proposals to be a political message to the Turkish Cypriots, and an appeal for rapprochement. We need to create a climate of mutual trust, in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots would not fear each other. We have called *uncompromising war on every manifestation of chauvinism, and demand an end to the riot of passions and hatred, and to the sense of insecurity in both communities.*

Of course, that goal cannot be achieved overnight, however greatly we want it, because the seeds of mistrust and suspicion planted by the British colonialists in their day have sprung shoots in people's souls. But the Cypriots are resolved to uproot these malevolent plants.

There is a tendency for constructive exchanges of opinion between Cypriot political and public organisations on the key points of a settlement. Discussions bring forth both differences and points of contact and

common approaches. For example, mutual prejudice was removed at a meeting between President Georgios Vassiliou and the leaders of Cypriot political parties in December 1988, and agreement was reached on a joint search for an optimal solution to the Cyprus problems.

The highest advisory body to the President, the National Council, has a special role to play in improving the domestic political climate. It is making efforts to minimise the rivalry of the political forces, to promote understanding among them, and to work out a common stand in the talks with the leadership of the Turkish community. The AKEL believes that progress towards concrete goals cannot rely only on the wisdom of the leaders of the two communities or on the results of their dialogue. *The mass of people ought to participate in discussing ways of achieving reconciliation and balancing the interests of all the parties involved.* To this end the AKEL is conducting large-scale agitation and propaganda, energising public organisations and sponsoring numerous rallies and demonstrations.

Rapprochement and contacts between political parties, public organisations and ordinary people from both communities are helping towards a peaceful reunification of the country by political means.

Under the present conditions the task of the party is to direct the real desire for reunification into the right channel and to use it in order to win ever new forces to its side. We are urging Greek and Turkish Cypriots to act jointly within a single front. All the parties should contribute to the establishment of such a front. The anti-imperialist forces—bourgeois and proletarian, Greek and Turkish—are called upon to cooperate in the struggle for a peaceful future for the country.

The Communists believe that such cooperation offers a means of achieving the concrete goal of reconciliation as the basis for the total independence of Cyprus. Only then can we talk of the gradual creation of the conditions for transforming society along socialist lines.

The settlement of the Cyprus problem could help remove one of the chronic "irritants" in the region and the world as a whole. Politically, it would contribute towards the emergent tendency for disengaging conflicts. The key is the resolution of the internal problems of a settlement through reconciliation, and of the external ones through international agreements on the basis of new political thinking.

¹ See WMR, No. 5, 1989.

² Pravda, December 8, 1988.

THERE WILL BE PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Jose Eduardo Dos SANTOS

Chairman, MPLA—Party of Labour, President of the People's Republic of Angola

Below the Angolan leader replies to WMR's questions about the situation in the south of Africa, progress towards settling the regional conflict, and the state of affairs in the party and the country.

To the MPLA—Party of Labour and to the government of the People's Republic of Angola, *peace and complete stability in the region and the end of the apartheid regime* constitute the pivotal question of the situation in the region, one the resolution of which brooks no delay. The other key question is the *independence of Namibia*, whose territory is unlawfully occupied by South Africa in defiance of the demands of the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity.

It is in the context of these two problems that we are formulating our policies in Southern Africa and seeking ways to abolish apartheid and secure Namibia's independence. The Pretoria occupation authorities have been unlawfully using the long common frontier of that country with Angola as the chief springboard for acts of aggression and subversion against our republic. We drew up a *general plan* for resolving the problems of South-West Africa with the aim of implementing Security Council Resolution 435/78 and stopping US and South African aid to the UNITA. Naturally, we demanded that South African troops evacuate the occupied southern part of Angolan territory. In return Angola agreed to the phasing out of the contingent of Cuban internationalists who were helping our people to counter acts of aggression.

The difficult negotiations were being conducted for several years, and were crowned with the signing of accords in New York on December 22, 1988, under which the UN Resolution was to be enforced beginning with April 1989.

PROGRESS ON THE PEACE PLAN

There were two stages of efforts on our part to have the peace plan implemented. The first one involved the solution of problems related to the *external factors* behind the deterioration of the domestic situation in Angola. In particular, it was necessary to block the inter-

vention of the imperialist powers in the internal affairs of the republic and to put an end to the direct military involvement of the South African regime, to massive military support for the UNITA gangs; and to US interference.

The second stage was to deal with the essentially *internal problems*, primarily the settlement of the armed conflict between the government and the UNITA. At present we are doing just that.

The domestic peace programme drawn up by the MPLA—Party of Labour and the Angolan government proceeds from the need to end Washington's and Pretoria's intervention in the internal affairs of our republic, to terminate armed operations throughout the territory of the country and to ensure respect for the Constitution and all the other fundamental laws. UNITA members are expected to become involved in the political, military and economic life on a case basis, in accordance with the rights guaranteed to every citizen. Jonas Savimbi is to withdraw temporarily from Angolan politics and go abroad (last March he himself stated his intention to do this).

Last May our peace plan was supported by the leaders of 8 African states at a meeting in Luanda. Zairean President Mobuto, Jonas Savimbi and the other UNITA leaders also approved the main provisions of that plan. Later the leaders of 21 African countries, including 18 heads of state, met in another summit outside Kinshasa. They endorsed the major principles of the peace programme of the Angolan government. It was announced that hostilities in Angola would be stopped on June 24.

The accords ran into difficulties, however. They are natural because the war has been raging in the country for over 27 years, and the UNITA forces have been waging armed struggle against us for 14 years, killing civilians, destroying communities and infrastructures and impeding the building of a socialist state. We hope that these initial difficulties will be resolved and an early

peace achieved in Angola. Then our people will be able to give all their efforts to the economic and social restructuring of the country.

The complete implementation of the overall plan will naturally create a new situation in the south of Africa, and in particular facilitate peace in Mozambique. Namibian independence and peace in Angola and Mozambique will exert a positive influence on the regime of South Africa, where internal contradictions have been growing worse, especially since the defeat of the South African forces in Angola in 1987-1988. That debacle, incidentally, was the main reason behind the change in Pretoria's policy towards our country and Southern Africa as a whole. The economic plight of South Africa, let alone its social conflicts rooted in racial discrimination and the inhuman apartheid system, is worsening.

In view of the changes in the region as a result of the growing strength of the progressive forces, the broadening movement for peace and freedom, and also shifts in international relations towards general detente and rapprochement between the US and the Soviet Union, the new South African head of state has indicated that he will revise his country's policy line, and promised to seek a political solution to the apartheid problem and to establish relations with all the neighbouring countries on the basis of better balanced mutual interests. The countries of the region are closely following developments; their overall goal is the abolition of the apartheid regime and the establishment of a democratic black majority regime in South Africa.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

In Angola, our party came up at its 2nd Congress (1985) with a new economic concept, based on an alliance between the private and the public sector and on the use of all the economic factors in order to promote national reconstruction and economic and social progress.

In addition to an important public sector, Angola has a mixed and a capitalist sector. The latter is made up of foreign investors, including transnational corporations, and also small and medium-sized Angolan businesses. The government is directing, coordinating and controlling the operations of all the economic sectors by diverse means towards the fulfillment of the annual targets under the national development plan.

The *socialist* economic sector naturally is in the focus of our attention. Problems in that sector do not differ greatly from those faced by all the socialist countries, which have now come under close scrutiny and caused major transformations. Economic structures are being revitalised and overcentralisation and

bureaucracy in economic management dismantled in the course of perestroika in the Soviet Union and similar processes, with specific variations, in other socialist countries. We are adopting economic management methods involving *greater decentralisation*, and are changing our planning principles accordingly.

A new law on state enterprises has been put into effect to make enterprises more *autonomous* and to upgrade administration. At the macroeconomic level, price formation will be streamlined (energetic efforts are being made in this direction) and the exchange rate of the national currency versus the US dollar will be adjusted in accordance with the former's real buying power. Simultaneously the system of wages is being readjusted and the *state finances improved*.

The state has run up a budget deficit as a result of poor organisation and the losses incurred by a number of enterprises. The current economic restructuring is aimed at making those enterprises profitable, mostly through financial incentives and cost-and-benefit rather than administrative management.

Externally, the revitalisation programme included negotiations with our creditors on *rescheduling foreign debt payments*. Most of these were from the West, and one of their conditions was Angola's joining the International Monetary Fund. Having weighed up all the pros and cons, the government decided to join the IMF and the World Bank. It was difficult because the US was against our membership, but eventually we secured the number of votes needed for acceptance.

The next step was a debate in Angola on the need for extending the term of repaying the external debts in order to rehabilitate the national economy and release financial resources for its development.

The economic programme drawn up by the 2nd party programme envisions, in general, changes in the managerial methods; improvements in the administration of state enterprises, their higher profitability and lesser dependence on the state budget; a more rational use of cost-and-benefit relations; and improvements in the country's external and internal financial situation. National personnel will be trained and used efficiently along with all the subjects of economic relations, the broadest possible openness will be practised, and foreign investment will be used to rehabilitate the economy.

THE DECISIVE FORCE

The MPLA—Party of Labour is playing the leading role in the system of state power. Today it is the decisive force in the guidance of the country and Angolan society as a whole. That is why we take care about the cohesion of the party and about training top and middle-level leaders. A system of ideological

education has been established and a Central Party School with branches in the provinces is operating.

The party influences the major mass organisations through its members and activists. The National Association of Angolan Workers, the Angolan Women's Union and some other organisations number hundreds of thousands of members each. We are working in other public associations, the unions of writers, artists, performers and musicians. The party has many young members, who exert influence on the younger generation, including students. School-children are united in the Organisation of Young Pioneers.

The problems facing the party today demand that the *strategy of political alliances* be redefined. A broad discussion is under way on the means and methods of analysing the changes in the economic structure and on attuning the political superstructure to them. In this way we will prepare the ground for the future broadening of the participation of all citizens in the political, economic and social processes.

RACIAL HARMONY IS POSSIBLE

The South African government, as has been said in general terms, is forced by objective factors to revise its domestic and regional policies. South Africa has achieved a high level of economic, scientific and technological development. It has skilled personnel and advanced technologies, and can sell its products in the region and outside it. But today it cannot use this potential in full because of the policy of racial discrimination.

We think that tangible steps towards the abolition of the apartheid regime will *entail a broad political breakthrough in the attitude of African states towards South Africa*. On our continent it is far cheaper and more profitable to use its products, technology and expertise. I think that the South Africans have a stake in the potential markets of their neighbours. Hence in the near future, when the apartheid problem has been resolved, both the Republic of South Africa and other countries of the continent are likely to display an interest in mutual cooperation and a broader use of the resources of South Africa. Clearly, problems in this sphere will be settled not overnight but step by step.

Zimbabwe has set a good example of resolving the problem gradually through a national racial harmonisation programme within a normally functioning political system. We believe that if this experience is used in the specific circumstances of South Africa, it will be possible to create a system of harmonising the interests of all the races and tribes and, ultimately, political forces within a single democratic state. Undoubtedly, such a model would involve the release of all the political prisoners, including the ANC leader Nelson Mandela, and agreement on solutions to the priority political problems of South African society.

We hope to see peace triumph finally in the region before the year 2000. To this end it is important that the international community mobilise support for the peoples of our continent, especially in Southern Africa, who together with those South African whites who want change in the system are struggling for the early abolition of the regime of racial discrimination and for a political settlement in the region.



THE MARKET MECHANISM AS A BASIS FOR PLANNING

DO MUOI

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The time that has elapsed since the 6th Congress of the CPV in 1986 has been relatively short but rich in diverse and complex events. On the one hand, negative phenomena still abound (and some have become even more acute) while, on the other, ever more new and positive factors are coming into play, examples of a conscientious attitude to one's work are multiplying, and the awareness of the need for change is growing. Awakened in many sections of the social fabric, the spirit of democracy is emerging as the motive force of renewal.

Things have obviously changed for the better in the economy. This process became particularly vigorous in the closing months of 1988. An impetus was given to the formation of a mixed economic structure and to a rational investment policy. The rate of inflation and the growth of prices have slowed down, even though marginally. The food market has become more diversified and more active. The volume and the scale of business transactions with foreign partners have increased. The strategy of national defence and the foreign policy doctrine have been geared to the new international situation. Cooperation with the Soviet Union, Laos, Cambodia and other sister countries has gained strength and new dimensions. Fresh opportunities have arisen for extending mutually beneficial ties and, simultaneously, winning political security in conditions of peaceful coexistence with different countries in the region and the world.

All these changes for the better are linked closely with the mounting constructive shifts in the development of our party and in the CPV's political and organisational work. The CPV has drawn useful practical lessons from the past and made far-reaching conclusions concerning the forms and methods of managing society in the future.

Reviewing the implementation of the decisions adopted at its 6th Congress, the party has stated that the

course mapped out at the forum has been largely borne out. In the course of a purposeful and consistent effort, Communists have gained a clearer insight into the relevance and validity of the concept of subsequent development advanced by the congress. On the basis of this concept we are adding to and perfecting the guidelines that have largely proved their worth, and we are drawing up new ones.

As our country advances toward socialism from the starting point of petty commodity relations, the transition is to be a protracted process comprising a variety of stages, each calling for the establishment of a relevant and rational economic structure.

At this point one should note that the period of transition to socialism began in Vietnam after our victory in the war against US imperialism.¹ In this connection the party had to tackle a number of urgent tasks—those of establishing a working-class dictatorship throughout the republic; bringing the agrarian sector in the North up to the level of the part of the South unaffected by the war; giving the state sector pride of place in the economy; rehabilitating and developing all sectors of the economy, culture, education and medical care; stabilising living standards; and accumulating the necessary resources.

We had to attain these objectives by working against great odds: there was the enormous damage done by the war, the need to repulse acts of aggression and our duty to honour our international obligations.

Besides, the perfectly understandable desire to create a material and technological infrastructure for socialism as soon as possible prompted us to make many miscalculations in assessing specific aspects of the socioeconomic situation in Vietnam. For example, it was believed that the period of transition would be over within 20 years of the victory of the socialist revolution. This view gave rise to the

arbitrary directive to undertake a rapid and large-scale industrialisation effort and the soonest possible transformation of economic relations. This aggravated the economic imbalances that were acute to begin with. Over the ten years from the proclamation of the SRV in 1976 to the 6th Congress of the CPV, the nation failed to reach the desired level of economic development despite certain accomplishments. The people's urgent material and cultural requirements have yet to be met fully. So far, the national income we have produced covers only a small part of the consumption fund. The output volume and labour efficiency are not enough for us to create the necessary accumulation fund.

The lessons we have learned, the experience we have gained and the practical conclusions we have drawn have led us to specify the need for and the salient features of the initial stage of the entire period of transition about which Lenin said that "at best this transition will take many years, in the course of which our policy will be divided into a number of even smaller stages. And the whole difficulty of the task which falls to our lot, the whole difficulty of politics and the art of politics, lies in the ability to take into account the specific tasks of each of these transitions."²

The 6th Congress of the CPV stated that the *initial stage of the transition to socialism in Vietnam would last several more years* during which a major task was to be fulfilled, that of comprehensively stabilising the nation's socioeconomic position and continuing to create the necessary conditions for socialist industry.

This objective cannot be attained without, first and foremost, *overhauling the national economy* so as to streamline its structure. For the past two years we have been trying to organise production above all in order to meet the demand for food and consumer goods and to increase our exports. Naturally, top priority has been given to the agrarian sector, including forestry and fisheries. We are paying equal attention to light industry, small-scale production and handicrafts. Heavy industry and the infrastructure should also be developed properly to tackle the principal tasks of the initial stage and make economic development possible at the subsequent stages of transition. All these changes should be effected on an appropriate scale and on the basis of modern technology. Meanwhile, we try to keep within the limits imposed by the actual circumstances and the opportunities available to us.

Developing the productive forces the right way is very important for the effort to build a socialist society. This is the only way of overcoming poverty and underdevelopment about which President Ho Chi Minh said that they were much harder to defeat than feudalism and imperialism. To do this, it is imperative to completely unfetter and assert the creative potential of the people, draw on their labour, intellectual and financial capabilities, and entitle them to organise their work places to their liking throughout the economy and across the nation. In other words, we should create a *mixed economy*. Its importance

to Vietnam is hard to overestimate. We hold that the use of other economic structures alongside those run by the state will make it possible to democratise management and give our citizens the freedom to choose occupations and forms of activities within a framework defined by legislation. Such is also the demand of the objective laws governing the development of socialist society in a country where small-scale commodity production remains the dominant form of economic activities.

The record shows that the productive forces may be fettered not only by backward relations of production: in some cases, these relations develop unevenly and, within some parameters, the gap between them and the level of the productive forces is too great.

Our party made a mistake by ignoring the intermediate forms of economic activities, failing to note the distinctive character and the still low level of the material and technological infrastructure, and paying insufficient attention to the dominant role of manual labour in the economy, its underdeveloped, small-scale commodity production, and its low level of socialisation. We moved with unwarranted haste to develop the state-run and the collective sectors and to eliminate private and individual economic activities just as fast. This prevented our people from asserting their enormous potential fully and made it more difficult to involve them in the tackling of pressing problems.

We also overrated the role of public ownership of the means of production and underrated the importance of proper relations of distribution and management. Our record has demonstrated that when the latter are not geared to the demands of socialist transformations, even well-equipped enterprises owned by all the people operate with little efficiency.

The new concept of socialist development and the economic policy oriented on a combination of different sectors have taken root relatively fast over the past two years. They have boosted the development of the individual and the family sectors and encouraged various cooperative forms of economic activities in rural and urban areas. Private capitalist enterprises have been opened in Vietnam. Agricultural production has grown sizably, small-scale industries and handicrafts have gained strength, and the market of consumer goods and food has become more active.

During the period of transition, different forms of ownership of the means of production are not pitted against one another; instead, they merge and intertwine. For example, state-run enterprises owned by all the people can expand production by using the financial resources of other collectives, organisations and private individuals. Agricultural cooperatives are also based on property owned by all the people—land and certain implements. The individual and the private capitalist sectors practice integration with state-run enterprises and cooperatives, use their capital and, together with them, expand production and seek greater economic efficiency.

It is therefore patently untenable to adopt a simplistic attitude to the division and confrontation of different types of property and to rigidly divide the economy into socialist and nonsocialist. Besides, forms of economic activities and of property are constantly changing and developing. It is now obvious to us that enterprises in different economic sectors are *equal before the law*. They complement one another because they cooperate and compete simultaneously. However, a prejudiced attitude to the individual and private sectors as "absolutely nonsocialist" gave rise to discrimination against their enterprises, and this was not always consonant with the interests of the nation's development.

We do attach great importance to the mixed character of our economy. But we are profoundly convinced that the *public sector* plays the leading role in it. It is the sector which determines the socialist character of the economy, and it should therefore be placed in key positions, expanding integration-related ties with enterprises in other sectors and encouraging them to meet the interests of all the people. Administration by fiat will not work here. On the contrary, this calls for an ability to effectively use the available technological, financial and organisational advantages and to keep raising labour productivity and improving product quality. In order to facilitate the achievement of these difficult objectives, we are devising a new mechanism of management which would make it possible to promote the initiative of socialist economic structures and enable them to proceed with their work on a sound economic basis.

The state sector should have enough strength to control the market. But this does not mean that it should necessarily seek to control a large part of every industry. In those fields where cooperative, family and private enterprises work well and benefit the national economy, it is pointless to try and secure a dominant position for the socialist sector. Moreover, it will be useful to reorient or close those state-run enterprises that are not important in economic terms and have been subsidised for a long time. Their property can be auctioned off or leased to state-run, cooperative and other enterprises, collectives or private individuals.

As we continue our socialist transformations, we now reject the idea that cooperative activities and collectivisation are one and the same thing. We maintain that all organisations engaged in economic production, operating in accordance with the principles of voluntary labour or financial contributions by citizens or collectives, and managed democratically are *cooperatives*, irrespective of the scope or level of the technology used or of the degree to which their means of production have been socialised. Most of them, based on different types of property, operate in agriculture. They are entitled to transfer land to those peasants who wish to lease it. They also monitor the way this land is used and organise joint production where it yields greater returns than individual or family activities. In

direct contact with local government bodies and civil organisations, cooperatives tackle the social problems encountered by peasants.

Together with their families, members of cooperatives can operate autonomously and shape their relations with these cooperatives on the basis of contracts. Nor are they prohibited from engaging in any other form of economic activities.

We believe that businesses run by individuals, handicrafts and private capitalist enterprises will remain essential components of our economy for years to come. The scope of the private sector is not limited, and the spheres in which it can operate have been defined by law. Incidentally, the right to own, use and inherit property is legally guaranteed. At the same time, the government is devising a mechanism for controlling and regulating free enterprise. We also hold that the transformation of private businesses and their merger with the socialist sector should proceed *on a voluntary basis*, through the gradual absorption of the former into cooperative and state-capitalist enterprises.

The advance from petty-commodity to large-scale social production essentially is the transformation of a largely natural economy into a planned commodity one. While we used to believe that the market laws are a vestige of the past, today we say that they cannot be ignored in building a new system.

The old view, naturally, could not have helped influencing structural policy, which tended towards self-isolation and the separation of production and marketing according to modes of production and along territorial boundaries. The new approach is oriented toward the development of *commodity production and the use of commodity-money and market relations*, which we think is inevitable in building socialism, and corresponds to the specifics of the transition period. We understand that the erroneous view of centralised supply as the only acceptable form of distribution under socialism is deeply rooted, and is not easy to stamp out. It was only gradually that we came to see even the end consumer product as a commodity in the full sense of the term, while many other products, such as the means of production, were never considered such. That was why commodity-money relations were ignored, and why the principles of cost-accounting were not fully translated into practice. It was not until recently that we began to categorise as commodities not just consumer goods, but also primary products, the results of R&D, services and information.

Naturally, some of the means of production, such as the land, natural resources, forests, etc., belong to the state and are not subject to selling or bequeathing. A rent or tax is paid for using these resources.

We consider the labour power of the wage worker to be a commodity as well. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat his interests, even if he is employed in the private sector, are protected by the state, which sees to it that the employer respects the terms of the labour contract

and the laws of the country. The workers of the public sector also are owners of their labour power, which has a value expressed in wages. The socialist principle of distribution presupposes that the worker receives also benefits from collective and social funds according to the quantity and quality of the work done.

Under the bureaucratic system of centralised supply, the market was divided into an organised and a free one, which differed from each other in the system of prices and in the forms of the circulation of goods and money. The former market was a monopolist in production and in the sales of many goods. Today we approach the social market as a *single whole*. Various forces are involved in commodity circulation, and the public sector along with the cooperative one are seeking to prevail through efficient economic activities.

The market mechanism, governed by the law, influences reproduction primarily through prices. Producers and consumers, who both cooperate and compete on the basis of equality, agree the prices of products and thus form *market prices*. To economic units these prices are a reflection of the real need in their commodities, which is also closely related to the buying power of money. Naturally, there are other factors in play, such as the balance between supply and demand and world prices.

In order to give a free rein to commodity-money relations, we think, it is necessary to do away resolutely with the imposition by the state of countless price scales, and with subsidies to unprofitable enterprises. This will help prevent swindles and embezzlement.

Of course, market prices are in a sense speculative because there still are shortages in the country. Yet administrative-command methods should not be employed to overcome shortages and keep down prices because they entail even more serious problems. State price controls are applied only to badly needed essentials, and even then temporarily.

We no longer fix most of the prices, which are being formed freely. In order to prevent abuses, the state has reserved the right to fix prices for only a few raw and primary materials and manufactures, all or most of them produced by a small number of enterprises.

The renovation of price formation *does not mean that market relations are no longer controlled*. The point is the overhauling of the forms and methods of administration and management, the substitution of cost-and-benefit regulators of supply and demand for administrative ones. We think that such a policy is an efficient means of doing away with the black market and illegal businesses.

Financial reforms also should meet today's most pressing demand, that is, guarantee *real wages to the working people*. These depend on the profits earned by economically independent enterprises from marketing their products, and vary according to the principle "the boat rises or goes down along with the water level". Those

whose main sources of incomes are wages and budget benefits are paid bonuses in order to protect their living standards from inflation and growing prices for basic necessities. Today, when the expenditures of the state far exceed its revenue, it is very difficult to pay such bonuses regularly and on time. However, the new financial policy and the dismantling of every form of the centralised distribution of goods according to quotas and at fixed prices are welcomed by the people because now there is room for independent initiative, because lines at the shops have become shorter, and because commodity circulation has been freed from many negative phenomena.

The correct use of economic mechanisms improves rather than worsens the quality of *macro-planning*. It is no longer limited to the public sector or the state budget, but embraces the development of the prospects for the growth of the mixed commodity economy, and directs its evolution towards harmony and stability. The market relations are simultaneously the basis and the object of planning.

Plans are fulfilled predominantly with the help of economic methods, and not under orders from on high. They are directed at achieving a higher efficiency of production. A major demand made on the planners and economists today is that they should correctly balance out diverse interests, attaching priority to the needs of producers, entrepreneurs and consumers as the basis for meeting other requirements.

Economic contracts are a strong impetus to the formulation and fulfillment of plans: through them central agencies ensure that the key products are put out in requisite amounts. Administrative measures are permissible only as an exception, and so long as cost-and-benefit regulators are not efficient enough. The state should have adequate material reserves to make these latter work.

The renovation of the management of the socialist sector has already begun, although actual changes have not yet been tangible. The reasons behind this are the momentum of old thinking and the unwillingness of the entrenched bureaucratic machine to change the old, habitual routine, when every detail of the country's life has been run from the top. The centre still has unjustifiably broad powers, but it is often unable to cope with elementary problems.

The price reform enables us to create the conditions for shaping within the next three years a *renewed system of economic management* that would fit the concept of a planned mixed commodity economy developing along socialist lines. The essential elements of this process are as follows: the conversion of all the production units, primarily state-owned ones to the principles of cost-accounting, self-financing and self-development; rational taxation; and close links with the market, which can be mastered through the skillful use of the advantages of socialism. To this end state enterprises have been allowed to issue stocks and shares or to practice state-capitalist forms of production.

Many difficulties on the road of renewal are the result of high and fast-growing inflation, which in Vietnam is the aftermath of the negative factors accumulated over the past years. Efforts to restore the republic's depleted financial resources are part of the comprehensive transformations now under way. Eventually they will help raise incomes, cut back on spending, and limit and then stop the emission of paper money to support budget expenditures. We bear in mind here, however, that the market is volatile, and the relevant government agencies need to be on their guard in order to react properly to changes, to seek the optimum balance between supply and demand, and to do what they can to keep down prices, especially for rice, gold and hard currency. We hope to level out the inflation rate in two or three years, which will enable us gradually to achieve socioeconomic stability.

The task of building socialism demands that the nation grow stronger, make use of the powerful potential of the age, and extend scientific and technological cooperation with other countries as a major factor of the rates of industrialisation and economic growth in general. We can make good use of our advantages, such as large labour resources, natural wealth and the climate and geographic location of the republic, only by following an "open-door" policy, broadening our external economic contacts, jacking up the possibilities of the domestic market to the potential of the world market, boldly attracting foreign investments and drawing on the scientific and technological achievements of other countries.

We attach priority to the development of comprehensive cooperation with the Soviet Union, Laos, Cambodia, all the CMEA countries and other socialist states. In our relations with them we try to renew economic practices, to do away with dependence, and to carry through our contracts and agreements on the basis of equality and to mutual benefit. We also try to broaden our economic, scientific and technical contacts with India, with our closest neighbours, with all those who want to do business with us. We offer favourable terms to Vietnamese expatriates who want to contribute to the national effort in various forms.

The present international situation and Vietnam's correct foreign policy line are creating the conditions for *our fullest possible involvement in the world economy*. This process is facilitated further by our changing external economic relations.

We are drastically overhauling the methods used to determine currency rates and developing mechanisms promptly to regulate domestic payments in accordance with world market prices. Cost accounting is being introduced in export and import deals, and the potential of banks trading in foreign currencies is being beefed up. Concrete proposals for privileges to producers of goods for socialist countries are being worked out. Under certain conditions, producers from any economic sectors will be allowed to do business with foreign partners. Our special concern is that contractual obligations be strictly observed and fulfilled and that proper guarantees be secured, of course, on the basis of mutual benefit.

The law on foreign capital investment has offered fresh opportunities for broadening investment operations in Vietnam. It is already yielding results, and in order to consolidate them, we should resolve the following problems without delay: to work out concrete regulations for foreign investment in economic development projects; to expedite the development of infrastructures and services to cater for foreign businessmen in Vietnam; and to intensify the training and retraining of personnel with a view to the prospect of broadening our external relations.

The master economic concept formulated by the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam and expounded and concretised further by the 6th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee is a step towards a *drastic renewal of economic thinking*. It is the basis for formulating and achieving new economic targets for the years to come, and a reflection of the party's efforts creatively to apply Marxism-Leninism to the Vietnamese realities and to build socialism by methods consonant with objective processes.

¹ On January 27, 1973 the United States signed in Paris an agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam. US and other foreign troops were withdrawn from Vietnamese soil.—Ed.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 331.

POWER, DEMOCRACY, LAW

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The increasingly broader involvement of the people in decision-making at the level of the state and society has been a hallmark of democratic development throughout the 40-year history of the German Democratic Republic.

Immediately after our state of workers and peasants came into being, President Wilhelm Pieck stated (October 1949): "We have reached a turning point in German history... So let us all cooperate in a responsible, loyal and friendly manner in order to rise to the historic tasks at hand and eventually state our case before the bar of history.¹ In offering all those who wanted further social transformations the chance to share in the national responsibility, our party proceeded from its own experience—experience which showed that the working class, standing for the basic interests of all the working people, could triumph only by joining forces with them.

At its conferences in Brussels in 1935 and in Berne in 1939, the Communist Party of Germany had worked out a policy of forming a broad popular anti-Nazi front and set itself the goal of shaping antifascist democratic relations in the country. After the defeat of Hitler, the Communists were the first party to tell the public (on June 11, 1945) about its goal of "establishing an antifascist democratic regime, namely, a parliamentary democratic republic with all the democratic rights and freedoms for the people".² It thus showed all the interested forces how to prevent the political and economic circumstances which had enabled the imperialist forces to unleash two devastating world wars from ever arising in Germany, and how to pull out the social roots of fascist ideology and Nazi terrorist statehood. This goal was also pursued by the strategy of establishing the political power of the working class in alliance with other working people, formulated in April 1946 by the unification congress of the Communists and the Social Democrats in its document *Principles and Objectives of the SED*. Their consensus for cooperation rested on their common striving to defend democracy and peace and to promote friendship among nations.

After the war, there existed on the territory of the

present-day GDR a large peasantry, a very differentiated stratum of intellectuals, considerable urban sections, and large numbers of small and middle businessmen, as well as a strong working class. Businesses were not expropriated, and the building of a new society opened an encouraging social perspective before their owners. Before the Nazis, different parties had functioned as a reflection of the above population mix, and that democratic tradition was continued. Several parties began their work in the Soviet zone as soon as the fighting had subsided.

Antifascist transformations were being combined with efforts to build socialism, which met the basic interests of the German people and corresponded to historical necessity. In this way the formation and development of the GDR was made a common cause of all the classes, strata and generations of the working people, and they were participating increasingly consciously in that process.

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany,³ formed in the specific circumstances of our country,

bears an historical responsibility as the leading political party. It has much prestige with the people as a consistently Marxist-Leninist organisation of the working class and all the other working people, and a major social force. Our experience tells us that the *leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party is a natural and vital principle of socialism*.

In pursuing its policy, the SED is cooperating constructively with other parties, among them the Democratic Farmers' Party (more than 115,000 members, mostly cooperative farmers), the Christian Democratic Union (more than 133,000 believers), the Liberal Democratic Party (around 104,000, mostly artisans, traders and intellectuals), and the National Democratic Party (around 110,000 members, mostly artisans, handicraftsmen and intellectuals). All these organisations are represented in the People's Chamber, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers and the local bodies of government at every level, and thus participate in vital decision-making and in running the affairs of the state.

More than 80 civil organisations also contribute to this democratic process of cooperation. The largest of them

This October the socialist world celebrates two anniversaries: the People's Republic of China and the German Democratic Republic were established 40 years ago. In directing the building of a new society, the ruling parties of the two countries rely on the fundamentals of communist theory and their own experience, and take account of specific national conditions. These two articles deal with major aspects of building socialism in the GDR and People's China.

are the Confederation of Free German Trades Unions (9.5 million members), Free German Youth (2.3 million), Democratic Women's League (1.5 million), Kulturbund (264,000) and the Farmers' Association for Mutual Assistance (580,000), which have their own groups of deputies in the People's Chamber.

Today one in three citizens of the republic performs a state or social function on a volunteer basis. This fact is proof of the objective coincidence of the vital interests of the working class and those of the other groups and strata of the working people. Eternal strife and selfishness in relations between parties in the past have now been replaced by cooperation for the people's wellbeing in the spirit of trust and comradeship. The social activity of Christians and clerics, which has grown under people's rule, is also directed towards the public good.

The experience of the creative application of Marxism-Leninism by the SED in the specific circumstances of the GDR shows that the power of the working class and the entire working people and the alliance of parties and mass organisations and their democratic cooperation in the SED-led National Front are the basis and guarantee of social progress.

By creating the conditions for overthrowing all relations which denigrate and enslave people, socialism has made it possible to implement the principle "*man is the highest being for man*",⁴ and it cannot develop further without the broadening of democracy. There can be no true people's rule without the broadest possible involvement of the people in its organisation and exercise. As Lenin wrote, "the socialist revolution can only be lasting when this new class learns ... from the practical work of government. Only when it enlists the vast mass of working people for this work, when it elaborates forms which will enable all working people to adapt themselves easily to the work of governing the state and establishing law and order. Only on this condition is the socialist revolution bound to be lasting".⁵

In practice, the building of developed socialist society is a long and complex process which involves far-reaching political, economic, social, spiritual and cultural transformations. It gives rise to diverse social phenomena. Our party is constantly analysing this process and drawing proper scientific conclusions in order to govern it. Practices which can justify themselves remain. What hampers advance is dropped, and of course, new approaches are worked out to tackle fresh problems.

In this context the SED's strategy of social development is aimed at strengthening and perfecting the advantages and achievements of socialism, its productive forces and relations of production, the political and social environment, science, the educational system, ideology and culture. In other words, the task is to improve every aspect and sphere of social life systematically and at a high level, and to maintain and develop the country's defences in accordance with the international situation.

The party is trying to raise the ideological and political

level and efficiency of every Communist in order to carry on this multifarious process in earnest. Only in this case will party members always be superior to others in understanding the conditions, mechanism and results of societal development, and be the first to produce answers, with due regard for the experience of others, to outstanding questions in order to take correct decisions for the benefit of the people. (Incidentally, in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels drew the above conclusion from the formulation of the historical mission of the working class.)

Today this demand is more urgent than ever, especially in view of the differentiation of domestic social processes and international relations. In order to meet it, we think it important continuously to broaden democracy within the party, to strengthen discipline, and to create an atmosphere of high moral responsibility and creative exchanges of opinion in every party organisation. We have never thought that Communists should be stubbornly sceptical about new developments. Our goal is substantiated changes, which requires both a definite stand and knowledge. Only in this way can the party exercise its leading role: its prestige and influence are not heaven-sent but must be won and asserted over and over again.

Our position is that by playing the leading role in society, the Marxist-Leninist party assumes responsibility for continuously raising the spiritual and cultural standards of society, and for the political education of the entire people. Indeed, we can assume obligations, including the exercise of power, only if we have knowledge and an adequate intellectual potential relying on a sound ideological and theoretical base. Otherwise the gains and achievements of the preceding generations will be jeopardised.

Our party has proclaimed the free development of everyone to be the condition for the free development of all. Moreover, in winning and then defending political power, it has taught millions of citizens to regard socialism as an objective demand on them, and to fulfill this demand conscientiously. This historic accomplishment of the party is undoubtedly a substantive prerequisite for the country's stable political development.

The further perfection of socialist democracy is the main condition for the strengthening of our society and state power. We already have legislation, passed in 1965, on multiple-candidate elections to representative bodies of government. Fifteen years ago work collectives took part for the first time in the selection and practical testing of candidates for deputy. Eventually this practice became law. In this year's communal elections National Front committees and a number of other organisations were able to nominate candidates in their constituencies, thus making the nomination process even more democratic.

In the last communal elections 273,444 candidates were approved, while 3,585 entrants failed to secure backing from work collectives, district groups or election commissions. We consider this fact to be evidence of the

people's sovereign exercise of their rights, and of the high demands made by them on their elected representatives.

This principled approach encourages future deputies to be more active and helps establish relations of trust and constructive partnership between them and the electorate. Another contributory factor is that there is one deputy or candidate for deputy for every 45 eligible voters. Effective preconditions have thus been created for the further perfection of democratic cooperation between all the classes, groups and strata of the population. In this way deputies and officials are able to work out proposals together, approve them after thorough deliberations, implement them by joint efforts and monitor their efficiency.

We think that the more than 7,800 local people's representative bodies play a key role in strengthening the state and developing socialist democracy because at no other level of government are there such close links between the bodies of government and the citizenry, or such broad opportunities for their competent and responsible cooperation. This democracy enables us to introduce new forms of people's involvement in social affairs and to make them work.

We have always viewed Lenin's principle of democratic centralism as a *dialectical relationship between central administration and planning and local initiative*, and as an organic blend of strategic guidelines for state development with the course consciously chosen by the working masses. This successful strategy of the SED relies on experience: central government attuned to the people's interests promotes their initiative in tackling state, communal and production tasks. For its part the conscious creative activity of the masses contributes to the efficiency of administration and planning. We will continue to improve the application of Lenin's principle along these lines.

As the broadest political organisation of the people and the main tool of the working class and its allies in improving the new society, the socialist state has the task of translating strategy into practical results. This task can be accomplished only if all the citizens consciously contribute to the effort.

The sovereignty of our people is being developed on the basis of the country's socialist Constitution, which legally formalises the political, economic, social, spiritual and cultural foundations of society and guarantees the rights of citizens and their associations. The GDR Constitution has incorporated all the provisions of earlier German legislation that have ever served the interests of the working people. But now they have been enriched with a fundamentally new content and backed with a unified economic and social policy. This is how the *humane nature of our revolutionary transformations* is being embodied in practical action. Man is both the object and the measure of policy. All citizens regardless of nationality, race, world outlook or faith, social background or status have equal rights and duties. The state guarantees them freedom of conscience and equality before the law.

Another reflection of the humane nature of socialism is the law passed by the People's Chamber in March 1989 to grant the right to vote and to be elected to foreigners living in the republic. In May, foreign nationals aged 18 or over who had been in the GDR for more than 6 months on work contracts, as students or as permanent residents, were allowed to vote in local elections, and those aged 21 or over to stand for election.

Socialist democracy can be improved only on the condition that this process is combined consistently and dialectically with measures to ensure the exercise by citizens of their rights and to enforce justice and the law. Our socialist rule-of-law state emerged in revolutionary battles and has been developing in the specific circumstances of its proximity to the watershed between socialism and imperialism. That is why law is an important means of defending socialist statehood against domestic and external enemies. We proceed from the Marxist-Leninist premise that "the establishment of the political power of the working class is an imperative of the transition to socialism".⁶ That was the only way of ensuring victory for the working people in fierce class battles.

The problem of power is central to any revolution. Our party has never made a secret of who the socialist state serves or whose interests it defends. No socialist achievements are possible without the power of the working people, and calling this power in question means jeopardising everything created by the people, eroding political stability and denying the social achievements of the new system and the real scientific prevision of ways of social progress. Hence the sensible and responsible imperative of *repulsing politically and legally any attempt to undermine the socialist system*.

The SED believes that the responsibility of the Marxist-Leninist party to the people makes it necessary to use power in their interests. That is why the GDR government consistently fulfils the resolutions of the 1945 Potsdam Conference on war criminals. Since we have touched upon this matter, the world public can consider the laws in either German state to be just only if they stipulate strict punishment for those personally involved in Nazi terror and in the destruction and suffering caused by Nazism (as the GDR laws do). The propaganda of war, fascism, racism and obscurantism is banned in our republic. Antifascism, the maintenance of peace and the strengthening of friendship among nations have been proclaimed the *supreme principles of state policy*. This is a manifestation of the humane nature of workers and peasants' power.

The legal system, with its educational orientation, has taken shape in the GDR along with the strengthening of the socialist state and the socialist relations of production. A strong impetus has been given to these processes by the political and economic strategy adopted by the 8th SED Congress in 1971. It was designed to raise the material and cultural standards of living on the basis of the high growth rates of socialist production, better efficiency, scientific and technological progress, and higher labour

productivity. It was also planned to involve citizens in social affairs and in the effort to achieve the state goals on an even larger scale. In other words, the socialist principle that everything should be for the good of the people was made the core of all decision-making. The educational functions of society were enhanced in this way, and proof of their efficiency was the abolition in 1987 of capital punishment, which by then had not been applied in practice for a decade, and by the tenth amnesty announced in the republic, the most far-reaching in its history.

Law-making processes are being constantly improved in the GDR. Altogether 86 major legal acts and regulations have been passed, amended or expanded since 1971. The hallmarks of this extensive programme are, firstly, that it is a result of decisions taken on the broadest possible democratic basis and, secondly, the purposeful and consistent broadening of the rights of citizens, including those related to their participation in running social affairs. Today the socialist German state has the *fullest ever system of democratic laws*, which are being upgraded systematically. This system incorporates the Labour Code, the Civil Code, the Civil Procedural Code, the Law on Youth, the laws on local people's representative bodies, the Law on Applications, etc.

The origin of our Labour Code is a good example of law-making in our country. The initiative came from the Confederation of Free German Trades Unions, and the reason behind it was substantial changes in the productive forces and relations of production, and the intensification of production as a result of the resolutions passed by the 8th SED Congress. Altogether 5.8 million workers contributed to the debate on the new legislation, and their proposals and criticisms were reflected in substantive and editorial corrections and in the concrete interpretation of legal provisions.

The Code approved in this way in 1977 guarantees everyone the right to work, which is a major achievement of socialism. This right (which applies to men and women alike) is inseparable from the right to participate in administration, to remuneration in accordance with the amount and quality of the work done, to education, to free time, to leisure and leave, to health care, and to social security in old age and in case of modernisation of production. Pensioners are allowed to carry on working in their chosen occupations. The Code also guarantees every young person occupational training, and provides advanced training opportunities for all. The trade unions have the right to tackle questions connected with production planning and pay. They supervise health and safety services and allocate the funds set aside by enterprises for cultural and social needs.

The Labour Code helps strengthen law and order at the workplace, as do the more than 28,000 conflict commissions elected by the working people, as well as the state courts and special trade union groups set up to consider complaints concerning social security. Two-thirds of the problems arising in that sphere are settled out of court,

which is evidence of the legal competence and conscientiousness of the volunteer workers who tackle them.

Although just a few aspects of the Labour Code have been described above, what has been said makes clear that this legislation aims at *promoting human dignity and furthering constitutional principles*. It also testifies to the highly responsible attitude of the state to the rights of its citizens. To us, the right to work is inseparable from socialism. By exercising it, we fulfill our moral obligation to the preceding generations, which relentlessly fought capital in order to give people the chance to work freely for themselves and for society.

Man does not live by bread alone. But at the same time being still determines consciousness. Socialism is the system of sovereign people which serves the people, and the state should make every effort to ensure that every citizen always feels this.

The five-month-long public debate on the Civil Code of the GDR is proof that socialism makes law a part of people's everyday life and prevents their alienation from it. Altogether 4,091 suggestions and remarks were submitted in the debate, and as a result, 360 additions and amendments were made to the original text. The finalised law, which has been reprinted several times owing to public demand, contains 480 paragraphs. In comparison, the bourgeois civil code had a mind-boggling 2,385 paragraphs.

Democratic debates on the Law on Youth (with the participation of about 5.4 million citizens) and on the Law on Farm Production Cooperatives (in which almost 850,000 farmers participated) have also contributed to the legal education of the people.

In our rule-of-law society all laws are binding for everyone. Naturally, the state also abides by the laws and other legal regulations, and it is the duty of state agencies, and also amalgamations, enterprises and offices to guarantee the rights and interests of the citizens. Clearly, such high legal standards make it necessary, particularly for administrators and managers at every level, constantly to improve their legal knowledge and use it in practice consistently and correctly.

Other characteristics of the socialist rule-of-law state are the equality of all citizens before the law, the inviolability of the person, the independence of judges in trying cases, the right of defence and other legal guarantees. It is also important that the citizen concerned can appeal the verdict of any court on a criminal, civil or any other case to a higher court. The legal protection of citizens was further improved with the establishment of the Grand Senate, a new appellate body of the Supreme Court of the GDR, and with the introduction in 1989 of the legal review of certain administrative decisions.

The broad participation of the working people in judicial proceedings is another guarantee of legality and justice. In almost all the lower courts cases are tried by a professional judge and two people's assessors. There are a total of 60,000 people's assessors in the republic; like the

judges, they are elected in their home areas. Members of "comrades' courts", of whom there are some 310,000, are elected in a similar manner. Working on a volunteer basis, these local courts and the commissions on labour disputes consider all production conflicts, 25% of all criminal cases and about 10% of civil cases. Between 1986 and 1988, the 34,000 civil courts passed verdicts on 57,767 cases. Trade union representatives take part in hearings on more than 80% of labour disputes, and delegates from the work collectives concerned attend 70% of all criminal trials. The courts provide an average of 500,000 legal consultations a year free of charge.

The broad involvement of citizens in judicial proceedings greatly contributes to their legal education. People are increasingly realising that the enforcement of law, order and security and crime prevention measures are a task for the whole of society.

The level of legal consciousness depends directly on the ramified system of legal propaganda, the availability of legal literature (the total print run of the Labour Code, for example, is more than 4 million copies), and the possibility to talk informally with judges and procurators at meetings, of which around 60,000 are held in the country every year.

Legal protection is a factor of the quality of life. The GDR has one of the lowest crime rates in the world: in 1988, a total of 119,124 crimes were recorded, or 715 offences per 100,000 residents.

Our reality clearly shows that we have built a socialist rule-of-law state. It is a historic achievement of the working class and its allies, which have together asserted the power of workers and peasants on German soil. That power relies on stable political, economic and social relations to secure constitutional and other general legal guarantees for citizens and to protect their freedom and

dignity. This means that judicial practice in the GDR has been developing as the direct opposite of the practice of the bourgeois states, which have never had and cannot have *democracy for the people*. That is why bourgeois democracy does not measure up to the legal maturity of our society.

Our task now is to improve the legal conditions for the rapid growth of the productive forces in the age of the scientific and technological revolution; to broaden and deepen the various forms of representing people's interests; improving legal consciousness and the overall legal standards of the population; and constantly to guarantee internal security and public order. In this way our society will grow more mature, and our socialist state will steadily develop and grow stronger as the true representative of the people's interests and the dependable vehicle of workers and peasants' power, which has always been the main condition for the process of socialist revolution on German soil.

¹ Wilhelm Pieck, "An der Wende der deutschen Geschichte". In: *Reden und Aufsätze*, Vol. II, Berlin, 1954, p. 303.

² Aufruf des ZK der KPD vom 11. Juni 1945. In: *Revolutionäre deutsche Parteiprogramme*, Berlin, 1967, p. 196.

³ The SED unites 2.3 million members, who represent all the strata of the GDR's 16.6-million-strong population. Workers make up 57.8% of the membership.

⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 182.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 420.

⁶ E. Honecker, "Auf sicherem Kurs. Zum 30. Jahrestag der Gründung der SED". In: *Reden und Aufsätze*, Vol. 4, Berlin, 1977, p. 297.

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CHINA'S WORKING CLASS WANTS REFORMS

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An all-round revolutionary reform of China's economic, political and ideological system has been under way since the Third Plenary Meeting of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist

Party of China in 1978, following a decade of upheaval during the "cultural revolution". We have scored major successes in putting it through. Mistakes have also been made, especially at the present stage, and the country has been faced with quite considerable difficulties. But the Chinese working class and its Communist Party are fully resolved to overcome these difficulties—and are now overcoming them—to ensure further social transformations.¹

What is the concrete role of the working class in effecting the socialist reform, and how can it be enhanced? Those are the main questions I shall try to answer.

Let us look at some of the social statistics. The share of industrial and office workers in China's total population

has been gradually growing; in 1986 the industrial workforce numbered 127 million.² In the past few years, about 80 million have joined the rural industrial workforce.

Relations within the working class are characterised by the dialectical unity and diversity of interests. In China, which is at the initial stage of socialism, the level of socialisation of production is on the whole relatively low, and the commodity economy relatively underdeveloped. For the purpose of economic progress, we have been conducting a policy of coexistence of various economic sectors and types of property. Hence the diversity of interests of the working class. They are being harmonised on the basis of the community of its vital social aspirations. That is also the point of departure for the CPC's political line. The party regulates relations between groups of working people, seeking to raise their activity in effecting the reform and building socialism.

Structurally, China's working class can be divided into five large groups:

- workers in actual production;
- working people in the service industries;
- industrial researchers, engineers and technicians;
- employees in education, science, culture, sport and public health; and
- managerial personnel in production, and in state and civic organisations.

The first four groups are the administered, and the contradictions between them and the administrative apparatus are the most essential ones for these groups. But the latter is an organic part of the working class, for this category of workers is necessary at every stage in building a socialist society to make economic and social progress possible.

However, it is the ordinary working people who are masters in the state and in society, and the owners of the means of production, both collective and the whole people's. They are the producers of material and spiritual values, and their interests need to be respected and protected. Still, because of their different social status, contradictions and conflicts of concrete interests and requirements may and do appear between the administered and the administrators. Now and again, the administrators lose touch with the administered, cease to be "servants of the people" and become their "masters". This is a danger no society can escape entirely.

Regrettably, in China there exist cadre workers who use their power for self-seeking purposes, who have degenerated, who are steeped in corruption and who arbitrarily violate the working people's legitimate rights. This is being resolutely condemned. Unless the contradiction between the administered and the administrators, between the leaders and the led is fully resolved, it is bound to be aggravated and to develop into a conflict. That is why a clear knowledge of these problems and their correct regulation through an improvement of the economic and political situation, eradication of corruption and

strengthening of law and order are a necessary condition for socialist construction and reform in China.

Good prerequisites for this have been created. One of them is the *cultural and technical standards of the working class*, which have tangibly risen over the 40 years of the People's Republic. The absolute majority of the Chinese intelligentsia are an organic part of the working class, acting as bearers and disseminators of scientific and technical knowledge. Still, for a country like ours, there are too few cadres with a top and middle-level skill training. Meanwhile, economic and scientific progress in the modern world largely depends on the quality of labour power. Not on it alone, of course, for the political and ideological factor, manifest in the working people's "militant spirit" and in their striving to overcome any difficulties, is equally important. That is why we believe it our duty to tackle this problem in harmony with man's moral and ideological perfection.

That is the only way in which the working class can become a progressive productive force and the vehicle of progressive relations of production with the leading role in social transformations. After all, it is the subject and the crucial factor of economic, political and cultural development, and the initiator and chief instrument of the socialist reform.

The 13th Congress of the CPC in 1987 formulated the party's main line: to concentrate attention on the growth of the productive forces and the boosting of the economy. The working class is the front-ranking contingent of fighters for the socialist modernisation of the national economy, because the workers are directly linked to the modern productive forces, the large-scale socialised production, and the latest scientific and technical achievements. That is why their role in economic development should not be simply calculated from their numbers. Indeed, for the time being, the workers in China do not constitute a majority of the population, but they create a large share of the Gross National Product. For this reason we believe that if the contradiction between the steadily growing material and spiritual needs of the people, on the one hand, and the backward social productive forces, on the other, is to be resolved, it is important primarily to *strengthen the vanguard role of the working class*.

With rapid economic development, deep changes have been taking place in the political thinking of broad masses of the working people, and their urge to take part in political life and in democratising our society has been growing by leaps and bounds. That is why the working class is not only the most important subject of economic advance, but also the chief factor stimulating democratic changes in politics.

But at the present stage this class as a whole cannot as yet directly exercise such a role, and it is realised mainly through its vanguard: the CPC and the assemblies of people's representatives at every level. This does not imply, of course, that the party has been shouldering the working class away from managing the affairs of society.

The Communists are in close touch with their class and rely on it, for efficient leadership can only be exercised in this way, by fully expressing the interests and hopes of the working class.

Reform of the system under socialism means the *self-improvement and self-regulation of the socialist system*. This is essentially a revolutionary process. However, in this case its purpose is to transform not the "destiny" of the people, but the "destiny" of the existing system. This implies all-round transformations designed to alter the model of socialism which took shape in the past under definite and specific conditions, and to create a new and fully viable one. The prospects of such a revolution will ultimately depend on the extent to which it is supported by the broad masses, the working class in the first place. Directly linked to the development of the productive forces, the working class feels most keenly the extent to which economic progress is being shackled by the old model.

Our studies show that over 90% of industrial and office workers approve the reform, believing that it can pave the way for building socialism with Chinese specifics. The working people see that the face of the country has been changing for the better, that production has been growing, that the national economy is being revived, and that living standards have been going up.

Many industrial and office workers, at the same time, are noticeably hesitant about some concrete measures being put through under the reform, measures which affect their interests. Some say that the reform attempts to obliterate the distinctions between socialism and capitalism. There is dissatisfaction over its impact on prices and wages. Some reject these changes out of hand. A part of the industrial and office workers take a suspicious view of individual farming and private enterprise.

There are many reasons for these diverse approaches, but the main ones, I think, are the following. First, our industrial and office workers were inadequately prepared for radical changes. Concrete steps under the reform cannot be equally beneficial for every one: ordinary workers are down-to-earth people, and they regard every problem through the prism of their daily cares, which could obscure their view of the horizons of development. Second, the new and the old tend to coexist in the course of the transformations. Phenomena of past, such as corruption, money-grubbing and abuse of official position, have yet to be eliminated, and they are sometimes associated with the reform itself. Third, a large number of peasants coming to enterprises from rural localities have been joining the ranks of the working class. They have low skills and are inclined to insist on egalitarianism, which is alien to the reform, but which helps them to feel on an equal footing with highly skilled workers.

The party has been invigorating its activities along several lines in order to help the working class gain a better understanding of the gist of the reform and to solve the above-mentioned problems.

The Communists have been doing their utmost to prevent mistakes, especially when these could affect the interests of broad masses of people. They seek to take account of the people's wants, to hear out their opinions, and to use the achievements under the reform to dispel any doubts which may arise. We have been developing a system of education for industrial and office workers to give them a deeper insight into the problems in building socialism with Chinese specifics, into the transformations, and into the difficulties which always attend their implementation. This enables the Chinese working class consciously to enhance its responsibility for giving a lead in the reform and in implementing it.

Working people take part in solving many problems through the trade unions, their most broad-based organisations. But in the course of the restructuring, work collectives now and again express dissatisfaction with the work of the trade unions, insisting that they have only been going through the motions of being "masters". In other words, they want to *broaden democracy in production*, and if these demands are ignored, there could be an adverse influence on the activity and initiative of the working class, and the cause of socialist modernisation could be jeopardised. Democratisation is all the more important because without it it is impossible to create a socialist civilization or to raise the working people's ideological, moral, cultural and technical standards.

The reform of the trade unions is an essential component of the transformations of political life as a whole.

We are faced with the task of clearly defining the social functions of the trade unions and of enhancing their importance. The 13th Congress of the CPC called on the trade unions to be at the heart of economic development and to determine their social functions accordingly. Among these are: protection of the working people's legitimate rights and interests; their involvement in the reform, and their rallying for the best fulfilment of the tasks in economic and social development; assurance of the right for industrial and office workers to take part in the administration of the state and social affairs, and in the democratic management of production; utmost promotion of efforts to raise the moral, ideological and occupational standards of the masses.

The question tends to arise: do not the party, the government and the management protect the interests of those who work at the enterprises? Of course, they do, but they are mainly concerned with the working people's general interests, while the trade unions, especially the grassroots unions, represent and protect the specific and immediate interests of industrial and office workers.

The Communist Party is the vanguard of the working class and the leading force in building socialism. The trade unions work under its leadership but they are, at the same time, relatively independent, and in their current affairs are not beholden to, say, some department of the party CC.

The government, which directs all the work in developing the national economy, may make errors and thus

cause contradictions to arise. In this case, it is up to the trade unions to exercise social control over the government's activities. At the grassroots they see to it that the managerial board should involve workers in democratic management, inspect the decisions and acts of the management, and work for the satisfaction of the working people's wants. It is a most pressing task under the reform to enhance the role of the grassroots trade union organisations, moving them closer to the masses, especially when the contract form of production has been spreading at the enterprises. Only with an eye to all these demands can our trade unions truly represent and protect the interests of industrial and office workers and become a force making a fitting contribution to the large-scale transformations of the economic and political system of the country.

Let me note, in conclusion, that the Chinese working class is committed to developing the traditions of the work-

ing people's international solidarity. It was more than 140 years ago that Marx and Engels formulated their great slogan: "Workers of all Lands, Unite!". Since then, the international working-class movement has scored major victories. However, the way to them has not been a straight one, and mistakes have been made. Serious splits have also occurred. A historical contribution to overcoming the major one was made by Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to China last May. During the summit meeting, Deng Xiaoping said: "Let the winds blow away what has been, let us look forward." I think that these words are a sign of the times, which call for greater solidarity of the peoples of all countries.

1 For details on the reform in China see *WMR*, Nos. 1 and 8, 1989.

2 In 1978, China had 95 million industrial and office workers.—*Ed.*





MAN—THE MEASURE OF ALL THINGS

Academician Ivan FROLOV
member of the CPSU CC

It was the Ancient Greek philosopher Protagoras (485-415 B. C.) who first said that man is the measure of all things. Has anything changed since then? Has the role of man, and of humanism itself, grown larger?

As we approach the close of the 20th century, our world has entered a period of profound change, and we can expect the fabric of our life to go on changing and variously affecting the most diverse spheres: the relations between man and the planet Earth, together with that part of space which man has explored; the relations between nations, each of which seeks its own ways into the future, while having to reckon with the interests of other nations; the struggle between rival social classes and diverse social forces for the attainment of their own aims during which it is hammered home—not always consistently or visibly, occasionally with departures and retreats—that nowadays the same fate awaits us all, *which means that priority must be given to universal human values and ideals*. Fast-paced scientific and technical progress has such a wide-ranging effect on environment and our lives.

All of us—and not just a few select individuals endowed with some sort of special knowledge and powers—must comprehend these striking changes. Marx and Engels predicted that as historical and social changes gain in depth, they will actively involve an ever larger mass of people. We are all increasingly both audience and cast, and this is perhaps one of the most distinctive features of the current revolutionary transformations. Their essence is to offer everyone, every member of society, the widest possible opportunities for developing and realising their abilities, and for actively and consciously participating in building a new life fit for working people.

However, it is impossible to take on the full measure of responsibility for the future unless one understands the gist of the process of renewal sweeping the world.

The history of world civilization is a reflection of the process by which the social being takes shape and is developed in interaction with Nature. This is the way of reason and humanism, which are asserted historically on a worldwide scale. This is going to be perhaps the principal objective at the turn of the century. The greater the successes of socialism and the other revolutionary forces of our day along this line, which is crucial for the destinies of the world, the closer is mankind as a whole to the truly

human forms of existence and development, and the more realistic its genuine progress.

WHY THE LAG?

The philosophical and scientific comprehension of these ideas and approaches also runs along the hard way of reason and humanism: while some steps have been taken, not everything is clear as yet. Theory tends to lag behind life: "All theory, dear friend, is grey, and green is the golden tree of Life", as Goethe put it.

Indeed, the tree of life will grow green forever if mankind is able to realise itself as being a single whole. This is the aim of new political thinking, which is designed to raise civilization to a totally new stage and enable it to create a nuclear-free world in order to end the separation of politics from the universal human norms of morality.

In the nuclear-missile age, which has deprived the human race of its immortality, politics combines with mankind's humanistic moral and ethical norms as the condition for human progress and survival, for the advance of knowledge in general, and of philosophical knowledge in particular.

Marxism has always maintained a humanistic orientation, having inherited and developed the humanistic trends of earlier philosophy, and showed the way to realising the ideals of humanism, liberating human beings and building a society fit for free people. This aspect of Marxist philosophy was unfortunately pushed into the background for a long time, and while at some stages social practice did go hand in hand with slogans of concern for human beings, it was often based on a view of man as a cog in the machine of production. This was a far cry from the true interests of the working people and failed to elevate the individual and to promote his all-round development and creative activity.

The modern world demands that the *humanistic ideals of Marxism and socialism be fully restored*. This is dictated by the objective logic of social and technological progress, both of which can be advanced only if creative people transfuse their life and work with the totality of their true interests, talents and abilities. That is why the CPSU has launched a drive against the technocratic approach to human beings, and for respect of their rights and dignity. Marxist humanism, and new political thinking based on it,

have undertaken to protect and affirm universal human values.

The idea that philosophy is linked to the real world is sometimes expressed in the saying that every age has its own philosophy. There is profound meaning in these words, and one could say that the period of stagnation in our social life was similarly accompanied by a dogmatic philosophy of stagnation. Paradoxically, materialist dialectics, which Marx, Engels and Lenin regarded as an instrument for the critical and revolutionary transformation of society, assumed the altogether improper role of justifying, and providing an apologia for, a far-from-ideal state of things, and was used not so much to resolve the contradictions in society, as to paper over them. The means to this had been prepared by Stalin back in the 1930s, when the whole content of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy was forced into the Procrustean bed of a chapter in his *Short Course of the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*.

The authoritarian and bureaucratic relations established in our society and compounded by the personality cult led to repressions against the people on a scale unparalleled in history. Humanistically, there was absolutely no justification for this whatsoever. *Such is our initial philosophical and anthropological position. Any attempts at compromise, let alone vindication, on this issue are untenable in substance, and must be rejected ethically and morally as antihuman, and thus as antisocialist. Socialism and humanism are indivisible!*

TURNING TO MAN

What are the signs that the philosophy of humanism is being renewed and that it is turning towards man? First of all, there is the rejection of dogmatism and scholasticism. Soviet scientists assert a view of the Marxist philosophy as a dynamic and developing system open for dialogue with other schools of the world's philosophy—this integral, interdependent and contradictory social phenomenon. The Marxist philosophy is prepared to take from them everything that is best and radiant, everything that advances and elevates the values of human existence.

With the subject of humanism at the centre of its research, philosophy reflects the core of the strategy for the social renewal of contemporary revolutionary forces.

As we turn to man and his future, we are confronted with a great many intricate and formidable problems. The philosophy of humanism is a powerful instrument for the cognition of both the external and the internal world. It is able to penetrate the distant and mysterious cosmos, as well as the equally mysterious, though more intimate, microcosm of the individual. It can discern the innermost secrets of the human Ego, its material and spiritual substance. The philosophy of humanism urges us to see in everything concerning man significance not only in knowledge itself but also in how it is used today and how it can be used in the future. It teaches us, therefore, to see

at least three aspects: the scientific; the social; and the ethical, moral and humanistic.

Humanity's present problems can be adequately solved only when these three aspects are taken as a unity in the light of rational realism and a scientific definition of the prospects for our further development. It is clear from this that social progress is the basic prerequisite and condition for human development. Social and moral improvement alone assures it of advance in its self-cognition and generally creates its future.

The philosophy of humanism in the Soviet Union is, in a sense, the ideology of perestroika, since this is a period of transition to a qualitatively new state of society, and to a new humanistic and democratic image of socialism. That, says our party, is its profound meaning and purpose as a natural stage of social development. It is a way which clearly reveals not only the constructive tasks in theoretical (including philosophical), and practical work, but also the job of overcoming what is left of the bureaucratic administrative-command system which tended to suppress, humiliate and even to destroy human beings, and of discarding the theories which used to provide "philosophical substantiation" for such a state of affairs.

Perestroika and renewal are focussing social attention on the individual. Philosophy must reflect the fact that society no longer needs a "one-dimensional" being, some "social automation", but a free and critically-minded individual, with a sense of responsibility, imagination, inventiveness and initiative.

The individual and society, the citizen and the state, man and the collective, all of these are, it was said at the 19th CPSU Conference, different facets of one and the same problem. The philosophy of humanism supports a socialist solution to this problem, one which is an organic blend of collectivist and individual elements.

It is now exceptionally important to establish an understanding of the problem of social homogeneity, of the unity of society and the individual. Homogeneity is not grey uniformity, it is not the levelling down of people and ideas, as the adversaries of the Communists have claimed ever since the communist idea first appeared. While seeking to enable individuality to be expressed to the utmost—in labour, invention, creativity—on the basis of equality the party actively supports the autonomous activity of public organisations in that they express the diversity of our people's interests, requirements and abilities. This is a conscious policy aimed at encouraging initiative, intellectual competition and talents—without these advance, and even the socialist way of life itself, are inconceivable.

It is worth noting that comprehensive research into human problems involving a wide range of scientific institutions was begun in the course of perestroika in the Soviet Union. This is the programme known as "Man, Science, Society: A Comprehensive Study", the fulfilment of which has been assigned to the recently founded national Centre of the Sciences of Man and the Institute of Man. A new journal, *Man*, begins publication in 1990. The

Centre's structure, as of each of its component subdivisions, is flexible and is determined by the concrete problems which arise in the course of research and practical activity in this field. There is good reason to assume that a new type of science is now in the making, a science increasingly directed towards man which is closely linked to practice, to ethical social norms, and to culture as a whole.

Philosophy will also have to do much. The main task here is to find the way to an integral scientific cognition of man as a unity of his social and biological properties, deriving from the Marxist doctrine of the social essence of man and avoiding extremes.

New thinking compels one to take a largely new approach to the interaction between the Marxist philosophy and other modern philosophies. Without in any way playing down the importance of combating ideologies hostile to Marxism, we should now play a more active role in establishing contacts with those trends in philosophical and sociopolitical thought which are our allies in asserting humanistic ideals and values, and in expressing the interests and aspirations of numerous social strata and groups in the struggle for social equality, justice, democracy, and human survival.

When considering the relations between Marxism and other 20th-century philosophical trends, it is also important to stress the following: Marxism is, without doubt, the most influential philosophy of our day, as many of its adversaries have admitted. But the inescapable truth is that some non-Marxist philosophical trends have made a valuable contribution to our understanding of this century's unique and varied experience. Our philosophy's isolation from other modern philosophical trends is, therefore, not the best attitude to take.

For a long time, we described non-Marxist philosophy as crisis-stricken or in decline. We ignored the many new phenomena and processes characteristic of its present stage. Besides the philosophical trends engaged in indicating capitalist society, there are 20th-century philosophers who have subjected capitalism, with its pernicious effects on human beings, to profound and withering criticism. Others have pointed out clearly the global dangers threatening mankind today. The fact that we base ourselves in the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism does not mean that we hold the ultimate truth on anything. Indeed, one of the strengths of Marxism has always been its capacity to rework and absorb the best achievements of philosophical thought.

Soviet philosophers are increasingly involving themselves in international philosophical discussions: they attended the latest, 18th World Philosophical Congress in Britain in 1988, where there was a lively debate between representatives of the most diverse philosophical schools and trends on the state of the science, and on our future on this planet. The framework for the discussions was a theme—the philosophical comprehension of man—which had originally been proposed by Soviet scientists.

HUMANISM AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

The connection between the philosophy of humanism and the continuing class struggle in class-divided societies is a problem of exceptional importance. This basic question is: does the assertion of the humanistic orientation imply that peoples are being deprived of the right to social choice, to struggle in every form against exploitation, violence, poverty and hunger?

First of all, a class approach to all aspects of social life is fundamental to Marxism. It is an approach which still holds good for societies in which there is a contest of class interests. Their struggle is pivotal to social development in class-divided societies.

Revolutions and liberation movements are not invented by anyone, but spring from a sharpening of the objective contradictions, when the poverty and deprivation of the masses become intolerable, when national dignity is humiliated, and when, the people's right to choose is denied.

Whatever the opponents of communism may think of us, and whatever contradictions the communist struggle may have held, our movement originated and exists for the sake of man: for human freedom, for real human rights, and for justice. Hence the communist movement's vast potential of humanism.

But when weapons of mass destruction appeared, they set objective limits to class confrontation in the international arena because of the threat of universal annihilation. That is why the philosophy of humanism supports the priority of the general human interest over class interests. This does not imply an abandonment of the class struggle, but that its character and methods should develop with regard for the specific realities of the modern world.

What does the priority of general human interests mean? Engels says that "Communism stands, in principle, above the breach between bourgeoisie and proletariat, recognises only its historic significance for the present, but not its justification for the future: wishes, indeed, to bridge over this chasm, to do away with all class antagonisms. Hence, it recognises as justified, so long as the struggle exists, the exasperation of the proletariat towards its oppressors as a necessity, as the most important lever for a labour movement just beginning; but it goes beyond this exasperation, because Communism is a question of humanity and not of the workers alone."¹ We are also aware of the classic idea that the proletariat—the exploited and oppressed class—can no longer free itself from the yoke of the bourgeoisie—the ruling and exploiting class—without at the same time freeing the whole of society once and for all, from all exploitation, oppression, class divisions and class struggle.

Classes and the class struggle are historically transient phenomena, and in time they will disappear, while the universal human interest, that of human race as a whole, has existed and will continue to exist for ever. Karl Marx cannot be accused of lacking a class approach, but he

wrote that "the standpoint of the new (materialism.—I.F.) is *human society, or associated humanity*".² This is what Marx has to say in his X Thesis from the *Theses on Feuerbach*, after which comes the famous XI Thesis, in which he says that the task is to *change* the world.

It is therefore better in some cases to emphasise *not priority, but the equation* of class and universal human interests. Generally speaking, this kind of contrast is not always correct because the universal human interest may be identified, wholly or in part, with certain peoples, countries or regions; even with separate economic, social and political systems. The most important thing is that the universal human interest is not something that is "suprasocial", "supraclass" or "supranational". There is here an intricate dialectic of interaction, even of interpenetration.

On its great way to the future, humanity is creating a new type of civilization, one in complete accord with man's essential forces and alone worthy of him. This civilization signifies the dawn of an epoch in which man, as Marx predicted, will truly appropriate unto himself his own comprehensive essence in a comprehensive manner, and so as integral being.

This requires the assertion of a new humanism, with the world of the integral being as its basic content. As new economic, political, scientific and cultural interconnections continue to unify the world, revealing its integrity and confirming the priority of these integral connections, one must also learn to see the common element that not only unites mankind, but also characterises man himself. If one were to take the social relations essential to new political thinking and place them outside man, putting all the new elements within him, new thinking will be detached from its main element, from the humanistic foundation which underlies everything.

When we speak of the new humanism, we mean a *scientific humanism*. Beginning as a class humanism, initially it was based on the idea that an internationalist community could be constructed in the future.

Rooting themselves in the humanistic ideal of society and the concept of man as history's "end in itself", Marxists advocate social and individual activity based on the scientific approach in order to effect changes, including radical, revolutionary changes, which they regard as a means that must always conform to the ends. These ends can be attained only with freedom and democracy, without which progress is impossible. Progress is also closely linked to the urge for universal peace and international cooperation, and a capacity for dialogue on current and historical issues. Its content is asserted in the light of a definite view of the future of man and humanity, and so proclaims justice and altruism, thrift and generosity, compassion and responsibility, an urge for the new, and respect for the present and the past.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, Progress Publishers, Moscow, pp. 581-582.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 8.

THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES ARE YET TO COME

William COFFIN

President, SANE/FREEZE Campaign for Global Security (USA)

The organization SANE ("For a Sane Nuclear Policy") was founded three decades ago, and the FREEZE movement (for a freeze on nuclear weapons) arose in the early 1980s. In 1987 they merged to create the biggest coalition of peace champions in the United States—the SANE/FREEZE Campaign for Global Security.

Commenting in the August 1988 issue of *WMR* on the results of the Soviet-American summit in Moscow, SANE/FREEZE President William Coffin said that the Cold War was coming to an end. Since then, considerable changes have occurred on the world scene. We have again approached Rev. Coffin for his assessment of the present international situation and new developments in the US movement for peace and disarmament.

I do not think the Cold War is wholly a thing of the past now. We may witness some skirmishes yet, but there is no question that the atmosphere in the world has changed dramatically. That, in itself, is very important.

The IMF Treaty has entered into force, but unfortunately, this first step toward defusing the threat of nuclear destruction has not led to more important steps in this direction. The arms race, including the nuclear arms race, continued. We soon found out that land-based cruise missiles were being removed only to reappear as sea-launched cruise missiles not covered by the Treaty. Plans for modernizing tactical nuclear missiles in Europe were pushed through hastily. In other words, there have been no new breakthroughs.

Nevertheless, things are obviously changing for the better. Who would have dreamt during the mid-1980s that by the end of the decade intensive disarmament talks would be simultaneously conducted on three major subjects—a sizable reduction of strategic nuclear weapons, cuts in conventional forces in Europe, and the complete elimination of chemical weapons.

It is important, of course, for these steps to be guided by *new political thinking*, otherwise we will not go far enough. I would describe President Bush's proposals at the May session of the North Atlantic Council as initiatives

based on old thinking: they really amounted to a little less of the same.

The military are now talking about a new doctrine to switch from the concept of national security to that of common security, to non-offensive defense. These ideas are being acted on not only in US-Soviet relations but also, say, between Bulgaria and Greece. They may strike root elsewhere too. But we still have not heard from President Bush the kind of new thinking to match the new military doctrine. For example, at Brussels he did not say a word about the political objectives of the deployment of modern weapons in Europe. He did not even express the hope that eventually, all political international relations would be demilitarized and that all borders in Europe would resemble those between France and Germany, or Norway and Sweden. Meanwhile, only new political and military thinking can help guarantee reliable security for all by creating an integral security system.

GEOECONOMICS INSTEAD OF GEOPOLITICS

It is easier to overcome the legacy of the Cold War psychologically than technologically and economically. The Soviets have been very effective in "depriving us of an enemy." Gorbachov is very popular with Americans: if he ran for President, he might well get elected. To paraphrase Voltaire, if Mr. Gorbachov did not exist, we would have to invent him. I am glad he is not alone: he is an outstanding representative of a whole generation of reformers who are fighting against totalitarianism and its return in the Soviet Union. If European and American leaders do not do everything they can to cooperate with those committed to perestroika in the USSR, they may in fact play into the hands of conservatives and bureaucrats there. This may produce extremely adverse effects for the world as a whole.

As to what one might call the *material roots* of the arms race, means of mass destruction are being reproduced on a growing scale and new generations of weapons are being developed. There are two reasons why this process is hard to stop. First, there is little resistance to it in the United States: partly because the decisions to boost military spending and military programs were taken by those members of Congress who are no longer there, and the present members do not feel that they are really responsible for it. Second, for many people the military has become an economic welfare agency. Millions of workers hold on to their defense industry jobs—not because they want to make weapons but because the jobs pay well, making it possible for the workers to pay off their mortgages and send their kids to college. Incidentally, that is why it is so important to pass legislation demanding that the contractors come up with *conversion plans*. If that can happen, we will see major defense contractors such as McDonnell Douglas, Boeing, Lockheed or General Dynamics being forced by law to pursue economic diversification and switch to civilian products.

I cannot rule out the possibility that, once disarmament begins, Congress will refuse to fund SDI, the Stealth bomber and the MX and Midgetman missiles. In a radically new international situation, no logic can justify reliance on these first-strike programs. In fact, even without them we have enough first-strike weapons in our arsenal.

Both in the Soviet Union and in the United States the burden of the arms race has become so heavy that one can discern objective limits to its buildup. President Eisenhower once said that "the problem of defense is how far you can go without destroying from within what you try to protect from without." We in the United States have already gone too far: every night 100,000 American children are sleeping in beds not their own. Clearly, we house our missiles much better than we house our homeless.

The United States now has the world's largest external debt, the largest in human history. This is making us realize that the clear winner of the Soviet-American arms race is Japan. Today, it is the chief creditor nation of the world. I think *geopolitics is being replaced by geoeconomics, and military power is being increasingly determined by economic might*. It looks like in 50 years the Japanese will be our landlords. Even now it is incredible how much of US industry and real estate they own.

They say that good things happen in this world through a combination of new and better ideas with circumstances produced by old and bad ideas. As Prime Minister Anthony Eden once said, "nations really do the right and wise thing, but only after exhausting all alternatives." I believe this applies not only to the arms race but also to US foreign policy in Central America. That policy has failed. The only city the contras have occupied in 8 years is Washington, D.C. We do not have the naval strength to break Noriega in Panama. The insurgency is as strong as ever in El Salvador. And, although we have tripled our military presence in Honduras, there are still anti-American riots there.

Whereas we may think we have the right to decide who lives, dies and rules in Central American countries, we have not the might because we are determined not to commit our own bodies. We are finding by praxis that old attitudes and options are not working.

A NUCLEAR BOMB THE SIZE OF A TENNIS BALL?

It is always anxiety that produces protest movements. The Freeze movement was made by President Reagan in the sense that his bellicosity during the first four years of his office made people really alarmed that nuclear war might be at hand: he broke off talks with the Soviet Union, increased the defense budget by almost 50% and called the USSR an "evil empire."

As the atmosphere changed, people were worried less about a big war, and they began to worry more about the havoc we had wrought on the environment.

But those who feel deeply and understand a lot about

what is going on realize that until we stop military research and development (primarily through a comprehensive test ban), ever more sophisticated weapons will be produced whose superior technology will more than offset any benefits to be derived from simple numerical reductions. If such research and development is not stopped, sooner or later we will end up with a nuclear bomb the size of a tennis ball. What will that do to arms control? In other words, the peace movement is coming to understand that the *qualitative aspects of the arms race are even more important than its quantitative factors*.

We must not forget that the US military budget has not gone down. We have merely decreased the increase, but the budget itself still uses up almost \$300 billion a year. Meanwhile, there are human needs which must be met in the United States. The number of homeless is countless: who knows, perhaps it is now over 2 million. When you have 50% of students dropping out of high school, the way it is in New York, you know that the educational system needs an enormous amount of thought, reorganization and money. The drug problem has reached epidemic proportions.

There is therefore very strong public pressure in the United States to *bring down the military budget in order to use the money saved to deal with ecological problems and with problems of economic justice*.

In June I was in Nashville, Tennessee. The average income of a Nashville family is \$16,000 a year. Last year, the city's 500,000 inhabitants paid the Pentagon some \$600 million in taxes. The budget of the entire city is only \$681 million, and it is being reduced by 30%. This means that 10 community centers for youth will be shut, no new books will be bought for the public libraries for one year, and services to the elderly will be cut.

So when you show these figures to the public, the press and television, people begin to wonder why they should go overarming themselves against an enemy turned friendly, while our own cities look as if an invading army has passed through.

I think it will be useful for all peace movements to think in an interdisciplinary fashion—to see disarmament, ecology and economic justice as *inextricably linked issues*. Only by solving the first—disarmament—can you release sufficient funds to serve the other two. So we have to act in coalition—in coalition with the environmentalists who have a great deal of support presently, and in coalition with all those who want to see more money go into housing, education, youth centers, etc. These coalitions have to become as large and as active as possible in every congressional district, in order to bring maximum pressure on congressional representatives. That, I think, is a particularly important thing for the peace movement today.

You could say that the US peace movement is a *majority on the periphery*, trying to make its actions and thoughts felt at the center too. Generally though, people who are far from the corridors of power come closer to grasping the essence of what is happening.

Opinion polls show that the majority of Americans want peace. But they have not been forceful enough in their actions. This also indicates that our democracy does not work as efficiently as it should: the will of the majority is not reflected in Congress, and 50% of the public does not vote. That is mostly poor people who do not see that voting makes much difference. The politicians are more dependent on special interests of the rich. The poor find themselves in a "Catch-22" situation: unless these 50% vote, nothing will force the politicians to change their platforms and pay attention to the needs of those who refuse to vote. Our task is to show these people how they can put an end to this paradoxical situation.

OUR INTEGRAL WORLD

There is a growing realization in the United States that it is the world as an *integral whole* that has to be managed, not just its parts. Some 50 years ago it may have been enough to be concerned with the parts. In World War II we worried that this part of the world could not protect itself against that part of the world. Now it is the whole that cannot protect itself against the parts. The whole world is like a prisoner on death row, condemned to wait for the uncertain moment of execution. The reason is that the planet is threatened not only by nuclear, chemical or bacteriological weapons. The toxic waves that arose from Chernobyl recognize no borders. Acid rain knows no frontiers. The devastation of the Amazonian forests in Brazil adversely affects the oxygen supply of the whole world. People are aware of the risks involved in the destruction of the ozone layer and in other terrible consequences of the violence we have inflicted on nature. This means that we must act without delay.

People are also worried that poverty is growing in the United States itself and particularly in the Third World. I fail to see the same resolve to fight impoverishment that I do to fight the destruction of the environment. But it is clear that you cannot have global security in a world sharply divided between the haves and the have-nots. Moreover, it is destructively immoral for one portion of the human race to secure its prosperity at the expense of another and quietly accept the abject poverty of the latter.

THREE PROGRAMS

Our organization has about 170,000 members in 38 states now. We try to work as I earlier described it: by building growing coalitions with other groups. We have three major programs.

The first is to *bring down the military budget* as far as we possibly can because there is absolutely no excuse for these bloated expenditures. I think it is now easier to convince Americans about it.

Our second program is to *keep the nuclear weapons-producing plants shut*. We know that they contaminate the air, the soil and the water. The price of cleaning up these

toxic wastes, the price of fissionable materials and of reactors, the price of building new ones is simply exorbitant. Here, too, the objectives pursued by the environmentalists are close to those of disarmament activists.

We hope that a freeze on weapons can be maintained while we try to seek an agreement with the Soviet Union to end the production of plutonium, enriched uranium and tritium. There is really no need to go on producing them any more. The assumption is that the Soviet plants are as bad as ours, and therefore we have a real chance of launching a new movement to freeze the production of these materials.

I wrote to Mr. Gorbachov about it, and he replied that the idea was interesting. Then he said publicly that the Soviet Union would not only close these reactors but also end the production of the materials indicated if the other

side—the United States—joined this process too. We hope we can convince Congress that it will be a waste of money to go ahead with new reactors producing fissionable materials if there is a chance of working out a "damper" agreement with the Soviet Union.

Our third program is to *bring about legislation on conversion*. We want to convince workers that we are not their enemies: we will do everything we can to preserve jobs and keep unemployment from growing, and they will help us and themselves preserve the world for their and our kids. We hope we can pass legislation mandating and stimulating economic conversion. Then we will be able to win many more adherents to the peace movement among the workers whose only hesitation is the fear of losing their jobs. If we can secure legislation on conversion, I am sure the workers will join our ranks.

* * *

ECOLOGICAL SECURITY THROUGH COOPERATION

Dr Mostafa K. TOLBA

Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

There are two types of global warming going on in the world: one is atmospheric, and the other is political. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) spends most of its time on the first problem. Carbon dioxide, methane and complex fluorocarbons are causing the surface temperature of the planet to rise. Some scientists believe that the global surface temperature has already risen by 0.7° C this century, and the pace of change may accelerate in the coming decades. UNEP is closely involved in efforts to monitor, predict and respond to the impact of global warming.

Meanwhile there is another type of global warming underway—one which is altogether more pleasant, but which also requires a coherent and imaginative response. That is,

Dr Mostafa K. Tolba (b. 1922), a well-known Egyptian microbiologist, was a lecturer at the universities of Cairo and Baghdad and held senior posts in the Egyptian education and science systems. In 1971 he was appointed Minister for Youth Affairs; since 1976—UNEP Executive Director with the rank of UN Undersecretary-General.

As UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said in a *WMR* interview, "the only choice we have in a world in which countries are growing more and more interdependent and in which all the problems are becoming global is one between cooperation and anarchy".¹ Hence the growing role of the United Nations in, and the increasing contribution of its specialised agencies to a search for solutions to formidable global problems. *WMR* will devote a series of publications, entitled "The UN Family Helps Humanity", to these efforts. Here is the introductory contribution in the series, sent in from Nairobi (Kenya), from the headquarters of that agency of the large UN "family" which is immediately concerned with ecological security.

of course, the warming of the global political climate. It is naturally more difficult to quantify the pace of this political warming, but it is certainly significant that Mr Gorbachov and Mr Bush have publicly declared that the Cold War is over.

Environmental threats to human survival—increasingly emphasised since 1985, once superpower relations took a turn for the better—also require *common action* across conflict boundaries. Many thresholds of life-support systems have been crossed in recent years, and systems out of equilibrium behave in unpredictable and potentially damaging ways. The establishment of predictability is thus of high priority. Moreover, seriously disturbed ecosystems require restoration, and preventive measures must be taken.

Environmental security should be *equitable for states, cultures, and generations*. Environmental conscience, search for common gains, and multilateral cooperation must replace attitudes and policies of confrontation. The removal of confrontation between states is an important precondition for the removal of confrontation between humankind and the natural environment.

This may sound idealistic, but on further examination, it is, on the contrary, *common sense*. The reality is that sovereign boundaries and political blocs are already irrelevant in many important ways. Sulphur dioxide, for instance, drifts from Western Europe into Eastern Europe (and vice versa) with the prevailing winds; radioactive material from Chernobyl entered Western Europe. The simple fact is that however much the two European power

blocs may wish that they were hermetically insulated from one another, they are now utterly intertwined—and either they will find solutions together or they will suffer together.

Economic issues can also be phrased in terms of security, including predictability and control. For example, developing countries consider the international economic system a threat to their existence because it makes them extremely vulnerable to changing conditions in the international market. *Social* issues—including the *humanitarian* ones—can be similarly phrased in terms of security, but more readily at the level of groups or individuals. Indeed, it is the individual human being who is the irreducible unit of accounting to which security policies must respond.

In short, it is clear that politico-military, environmental, economic, and social problems are all interconnected. Thus, it makes good sense to include all of them in the concept of *comprehensive international security*.

The interconnections between politico-military and environmental security are multiple. Especially in the Third World, environmental degradation may be the cause of armed conflict; it may be the consequence of armed conflict, subsequently leading to conflict escalation; and it may exacerbate conflicts originating for other reasons. Conversely, policies that ensure sustainable development of natural resources and preservation of a healthy habitat may remove sources of conflict. Furthermore, *international cooperation to alleviate environmental degradation may mollify hostilities*, build confidence, and facilitate conflict resolution.

Finally, politico-military and environmental security are linked in terms of *opportunity costs*. Political attention and material resources spent on the military sector could be used to strengthen environmental security. This applies to East and West as well as to the Third World. Recently, the rapprochement between the superpowers has begun to reduce the role of military factors in international affairs. To allay fears and enhance stability, both sides have been emphasising the importance of cutting back on offensive

capabilities. At the same time, environmental issues are coming increasingly to the fore. There would seem to be new opportunities for shifting attention and resources from the military sector to the environmental sector.

The threat of nuclear war is the ultimate threat to the human environment. The Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (Palme Commission) urged that nuclear deterrence yield to the *political management* and resolution of conflict, and to cooperative endeavours to solve *common problems*. Deterrence may have helped to keep the Balance of Terror during the Cold War, but we paid a price for that uneasy peace. Deterrence has left a plethora of negative effects on international relations; and throughout most of the post-World War II period, arms buildup has been its twin brother. Deterrence is a state of affairs that needs to be transcended.

Deterrence could be gradually transcended in a variety of ways: (a) by the further elaboration of confidence- and security-building measures, in both the military and civilian sectors; (b) by the adoption of less offensive military postures; and (c) by arms control and reduction. Conversely, cooperation in nonmilitary fields may enhance confidence and security and facilitate arms control and disarmament, depending on how it is organised. Therefore, it is important to *move along several tracks simultaneously*, so as to obtain positive feedback among them.

A shift in the international political agenda is envisaged, in which military factors are moved down the scale of importance and nonmilitary factors up. In the context of comprehensive international security, the significance of environmental security extends far beyond the environmental sector itself. In its interactions with other components of security policy, the pursuit of environmental security could become a major agent of change in international affairs, promoting an international order more compatible with human needs.

¹ WMR, No. 4, 1989.

WHAT IS UNEP

- UNEP was founded in 1972 by decision of the UN General Assembly with the task of generating ideas and projects on environmental protection and coordinating the efforts of various states in that field. Its duties include informing the governments and the public on global and local ecological problems, encouraging them to act, assisting in the formulation of appropriate strategies, and harmonising the various UN efforts for environmental protection. Among UNEP's priorities today are studies of the deteriorating global climate, the pollution of the atmosphere and the World Ocean, soil erosion, and also the drafting of rehabilitation programmes.
- The latest, 15th session of the UNEP Board of Governors (May 1989) was attended by representatives of some 100 states and a number of international nongovernmental

organisations. It put forward or reaffirmed proposals for creating an international ecological foundation with part of the military expenditures of major powers; for a UN Centre of Emergency Ecological Relief; for projects of multilateral space-based monitoring; for strengthening the international legal foundations of environmental protection; etc.

- UNEP's budget (roughly \$30 million) is made up of voluntary contributions from governmental and various foundations. The headquarters and five regional centres have a total staff of 160. The organisation maintains a large data base, and keeps in touch with 6,000 institutions and 600 data banks. It has initiated special programmes for studies of the ozone layer and the world climate, and the drafting of a series of treaties and agreements, such as the International Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (Vienna,

1985) and the Montreal Protocol to it (1987), which pledges its signatories to cut by half their production of chlorofluorocarbons, used as the propellants in aerosols. A number of UNEP projects are directed at preventing dangerous climatic changes, such as the greenhouse effect, at developing energy-saving technologies, and at using alternative energy sources. In response to requests from many countries, UNEP is developing and broadening ecological education programmes for young people.

- UNEP has given an impetus to drafting a convention on monitoring the transportation of dangerous waste, has created an International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals, and is taking part in programmes for reducing pesticide use in the Third World, for keeping the seas clean and for the rational use of their resources, etc.

THE EXTERNAL DEBT: ANATOMY OF THE PROBLEM

Fawzi MANSOUR. The external debt originated and has grown as a direct result of the policy of the world capitalist system. What is more, it is a necessary condition of its existence at the present stage, since the former colonies remain within the same world economic orbit even after independence. At the present stage, economic coercion is the basis of relations between the developed capitalist countries and the Third World.

Debt has long been a way of pumping out the surplus-product from the peripheral countries, but it has now become, above all, a means of intensifying other ways of bleeding these countries white and as an instrument of economic and political diktat. As a result, the less developed countries (LDCs) are forced to conduct economic policies which allow of no escape from their dependent condition as objects of plunder.

The debt is directly linked to the activity of organisations engaged in international usury, namely the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The key role in both of these is played by the countries of the capitalist centres and by the main commercial banks of the leading Western powers. It is this "trio" that has turned loans into an instrument of overall control over the economic life of the debtor countries.

Since the debt of the Third World is a condition for the functioning of the world capitalist economy, it is most unlikely that any sort of pressure from inside the system will lead to a radical solution of the problem. That is not to say that the centres have assumed a permanent stand on the issue, or that they are indifferent to it. They know how to adapt, to respond to developments, and to improve their methods so as to capitalise on any changes. Their tactics are also determined by a fear that the "debt time-bomb" may wreck the very foundations of the system.

There has been much talk about the deepening of the

The less developed countries' external debt is an increasingly complex and acute problem, one that political leaders, statesmen and public figures in various countries are trying hard to find a solution to. We present a dialogue held in Cairo at WMR's request between two well-known Egyptian economists: Dr Fawzi MANSOUR (UN expert) and Dr Ibrahim el EISAWI (adviser to Egypt's National Planning Institute).

crisis. At first it was claimed that the world capitalist economy could not bear the burden of a debt of \$100 billion, then of \$400 billion, then of \$600 billion, etc. The current assertion is that it is sure to explode under the weight of the debt. I do not share this view. That capitalism's ability to adapt can be seen from the various policy approaches to different debtor countries—what is allowed Peru is not allowed Egypt—and the fact that this is not determined by some general principles, but by the role assigned to a given country within the framework of the general strategy of the system. That is why even if there is a conviction in the capitalist centres that the debt will have to be surmounted in one way or another, I do not see how they will be able to produce some universal prescription because in each case the

"medicine" prescribed is different, being good from the standpoint of the creditor, but not of the debtor. The interest of the world capitalist system as a whole is here always taken as the point of departure, naturally with an eye to the relationship between the debtor country (or group of

countries) and the creditors. A difficult question arises: if the diagnosis is correct, what kind of treatment will be prescribed?

Ibrahim el EISAWI. You have underlined a very important, external factor behind the origins of the debt problem. But there is yet another factor, the internal one.

Once the colonies had gained political independence, their former masters had to think about new ways of maintaining the relations of diktat and dependence. Debt bondage became one of these: the major capitalist powers pressed the Third World countries to take out loans and taught them to live on borrowed money. This was probably helped along by certain aspects of the situation in the 1970s, especially the appearance in some Arab states of huge oil revenue some of which went to Egypt, thereby creating the basis for a new type of dependence and encouraging the habit of external financing.

F. M. Let me stress that even when LDCs find that they have uncommitted funds, for instance, in the form of petrodollars, this money is recycled through Western financial institutions, such as the commercial banks, the IMF and the World Bank, and as a result, remains under the control of the West, to be used in the same way to put pressure on the young states and exploit them. In some cases—and this is especially true of Latin America—the imperialist centres have forced governments to put their uncommitted funds and petrodollars into circulation as soon as possible.

I. E. But attempts to entice states into a life of debt are futile unless the potential debtor responds appropriately. Ultimately, everything hinges on local politics and is determined by the nature of Third World regimes, most

We are continuing with our series of articles on the subject. (See "The Vicious Circle of Economic Dependence", *WMR*, No. 11, 1988; Khalid HAMMAMI, "Syria. How to Get Out of the Crisis", *WMR*, No. 5, 1989; Satiajaya SUDIMAN, "A Life of Debt or 'Pakdes 24'", *WMR*, No. 6, 1989; Kadhim HABIB, "The Global Character of Third World Problems", *WMR*, No. 8, 1989; Rafic Samhoun, "Controversial Interdependence: What Next?", *WMR*, No. 6, 1989.

of which are unable to boost the national economy, being incapable either of exporting enough goods in a swiftly changing world market, or of satisfying internal requirements from their own resources. As a result, those who tried to trap these countries in a web of dependence and indebtedness found willing victims. And this was not limited, as initially assumed, to loans for imports of certain goods and for generally stimulating the economy. We were led into the trap by our own economic policies, and now we even have to borrow money to buy food.

That is why I would prefer not to separate these two factors: the external and the internal. The capitalist world wants to dictate its will and seems to be acting both as seducer and intimidator. But the governments of the young states were not immune to this danger and failed to conduct the right policy. The two factors conspired to spark off the crisis which has now developed its own momentum—"Give an inch and they'll take a mile". Many LDCs have been borrowing simply to pay off old debts and to keep up with the repayments. In this way vast amounts of money are going down the drain without benefiting national development.

In addition, the loans are often badly mismanaged. Apart from the shameless embezzlement, and the various schemes employed by members of the ruling elite and the parasitic stratum to siphon off this money for themselves, the loans are sometimes used to finance projects for which the money was never intended. In Egypt, for example, foreign loans were used to create infrastructures (roads, the Cairo underground, the sewerage system, etc.). Projects of this sort do not have any rapid and direct effect in the producer sphere, no export products are manufactured, and so the repayment of loans is made more difficult.

F. M. One should not, of course, blame everything on the urge of the capitalist centres for domination. It is we ourselves who ultimately bear the responsibility, and in this context the question arises as to why the debt burden is becoming heavier.

Along with the factors you mentioned, one of the most important, I think, is the erroneous strategy of development, which itself often leads to debt. Let me give you an example from Egypt's recent history. We had the choice either of ceasing imports, and industrialising, with the emphasis on developing import-substitution production, or of stimulating exports, which would mean even greater involvement in the capitalist economy, but as a weak, and not a strong partner. Oddly enough, this is connected with one of the brightest periods in the country's development. I think problems arose in that period of industrialisation, the strategy for which was formulated in the first five-year plan.¹ The starting-point was the manufacture of cars, refrigerators, televisions and radios as a substitute for imported ones; in other words, manufacture of non-essential consumer goods, mostly in demand among the affluent. Given the existence of mass poverty, and in view of our economic potential at the time, this was in itself a great sin

(unfortunately, not the only one): the financing of these industries² proceeded along one of two ways: either at the expense of the working classes or through external borrowing.

This erroneous strategy tied the country even more tightly to the leading capitalist centres and led to further tremendous difficulties. There was not only the problem of paying off the debt contracted for the building of factories and plants; new lines of production which were being built up in the absence of a primary industrial base called for continuous heavy investment because the basic equipment, materials and components were purchased abroad. Essentially, these were mere assembly plants. We borrowed more and more money to build up capacities even if simply to maintain employment.

To sum up: *even when there is a serious intention to advance through planning, a model may be chosen with a built-in debt-boosting potential.* Development strategy is a political problem, and, I think, a class problem with a direct bearing on the economic, social and political conditions in any given society.

We agree, therefore, that it is the Third World countries themselves that mostly bear the responsibility for their debt because everything depends on the policy they pursue.

I. E. I would add that our analysis of Egypt's development over the past several decades has undoubtedly led us to the right conclusion: industrialisation was being achieved with reliance on external aid. But different policies were conducted in different periods. In the 1960s, the debt was not as large as it subsequently became, and the foreign sources of finance were also diversified.³ At the time the debt burden was eased by the fact that a large part of the loans made available by socialist countries for industrial construction was paid off through deliveries of products turned out by new Egyptian enterprises. In virtue of subsequent circumstances, this had no natural continuation, and we cannot say how things would have stood today if, for instance, Nasser were alive and carrying on the old policy. But the main thing about industrialisation policy was that in every case it had a foreign orientation, regardless of whether import-substitution or export industries were being developed.

F. M. I cited the above example because similar things have happened in other countries, and not out of any desire to sit in judgement on the Nasser regime. Here, I think, Algeria's experience has been unfortunate, for the same mistake was made there, although compared with Egypt the conditions were more favourable, notably because of the oil revenues. Nevertheless, Algeria, too, found itself in a state similar to that of Egypt, not in the Nasser, but in the post-Nasser period. Despite decent oil revenues, Algeria suffocated under the burden of the external debt. *This seems to me a common phenomenon: Third World countries inevitably find themselves in this dead end because of their specific economic and social organisation.*

I. E. When analysing the debt-dependence connection,

we must understand that it is not a question of intent: after all, Nasser and Boumedienne, among others, certainly strove for stronger independence. The emergence of dependence is not a subjective process, some of those who wield supreme power consciously seeking dependence, others wanting to avoid it.

F. M. Algeria was faced with a narrow market and inadequate technical personnel. Even more importantly, *despite the slogans, industrialisation was not socialist* (also the case in Nasser's Egypt). To me, this was the crucial factor in the failure of industrial development to result in greater economic independence. Instead, it led to further dependent integration with the world capitalist system.

I. E. There's another point worth noting if we want to do justice to those early experiences of development, which in many cases either led directly to indebtedness or sowed its seeds. The attainment of genuine independence certainly came on the agenda as soon as the colonialists left, and it was given great attention by many outstanding leaders in Asian and African countries. But, at the time, all the aspects of this problem did not stand out as clearly as they do today, after the numerous experiments. I am sure that in Nasser's time the substance of political and financial dependence was understood, but perhaps not enough importance was attached to the fact that dependence may result from the introduction of the Western consumer-oriented economic model. The prospects along this path, and the path itself, did not correspond with that stage of development. True, the alarm was sounded about the consequences, but at the time the idea of technological dependence would not have occurred either to the leadership or to society as a whole. Some articles in the National Charter⁴ pointed out this possibility, but it was not translated into practical action.

F. M. The point is not whether or not it was understood, whether or not action was conscious or unconscious... Basically, everything depended on definite class positions and the balance of class forces.

I. E. If the flaw was in the development policy itself, in internal policy as a whole (which created the conditions for the capitalist powers to drag us into debt), the solution of the problems will have to come from inside. I agree that benevolent foreign initiatives may be good for some countries, but they only offer temporary relief, not a cure.

The world capitalist system has always had mechanisms at the ready capable of turning an explosive situation to its advantage. Financially, the debt crisis does pose a threat to capitalist organisations. The danger lies in a whole group of states suddenly finding themselves unable to pay. Hence the readiness to write off a part of the debt, and to take other measures.

F. M. We discovered this in the early 1980s, when there were signs of bankruptcy among major foreign banks. But it is too early to speak of any disaster.

I. E. Political considerations also have a role to play:

the major capitalist powers do not want to see the removal of certain regimes in debtor countries.

F. M. Because of their special relations with such countries, the capitalist centres will try to give them breathing space, either directly or through institutions under their control like the IMF. They would obviously want to help those of their favourites who are threatened with popular turmoil and revolutions. This offered hope that the diktat would be relaxed. In actual fact, the capitalist centres often treat their pet regimes simply as consumers having no qualms about applying pressure because these underlings are unlikely to go against their own interests. The centres will probably continue their power policy for a while since they are the masters of the situation, while the lot of the debtor is to be humble and loyal. The creditors are mostly concerned not with political stability or economic progress but with the continuance of their domination, even if this damages or brings ruin upon the odd regime. This applies as long as there is a guarantee that the next regime will be even more obedient.

However, I don't think imperialism will be able to maintain as strong a hold on the Arab countries and Black Africa as it does on Latin America because there are too many historical contradictions and problems in its relations with the former.

I. E. The resolution of the dependence problem should lie in correcting the misconceived elements in development policies, which reflect the social nature of the existing regimes. Therefore, the *need is not just to change economic policy, but also the balance of forces in the power structure*, to bring to the fore those classes and social forces which have a stake in a policy of less dependence and greater self-reliance. This means that a *political restructuring* and a redistribution of power are required on top of purely economic measures.

When saying that the solution will come from inside, one should bear in mind that it lies within each debtor country and within the whole group of debtor countries. In saying so, I want to draw attention to the importance of concerted action among the young states in an effort to face the creditors on a common front. This is vital. After all, the leading capitalist powers have been coordinating their policies and holding meetings at regular intervals to discuss ways of controlling the Third World while we have been going it alone.

The situation could change markedly if the dependent countries were to act together in a single block at the debt negotiations. It would then be possible to activate a number of proposals, such as a refusal to pay the debt or deduction as repayment of a definite percentage of export earnings. This sort of thing cannot be done individually. Egypt, for instance, finds it hard to refuse to pay the debt because that could cause the capitalist powers to counter with an economic blockade and tougher pressure, eventually forcing the country to retreat and submit. But such a stand could be maintained if the many other LDCs were

to join in. It may take time for a strategy of this sort to win through, but I believe that this is the right way, although I do not rule out other attempts to improve the situation.

F. M. I still see nothing new in the impasse confronting the Third World countries, no original way out. Nor do I see anything new in all the talk of mutual support or interdependence. To what extent is this truly mutual? Relations must be based on equality.

I. E. Self-reliance does not mean self-isolation from the world. There is an element of mutual influence and interconnection in international life, and a subject of these relations cannot be entirely isolated. This is true of any state. The capitalist countries also rely on each other, but there is more equality in their relations; thus one could say that there are common interests in their commercial and economic exchanges. We don't have this. We talk of mutual support, but in practice the West needs the Third World's oil, and the latter needs technology, capital, consumer goods, etc. One of the scales clearly outweighs the other. Who exerts a greater influence on the terms of trade? That is the gist of the problem, which itself could be defined as turning the *relations of non-equivalent exchange into equal partnership*.

F. M. This process has its beginnings at home, and not abroad. I believe that self-reliance means building up a socialist economy and a socialist society. Nasser's experiment may have laid the ground for an eventual shift to socialism, but this was impeded by the Israeli aggression. Nevertheless, I would not call the reforms of that period socialist transformations.

Apart from everything else, the *socialist perspective requires a scientific strategy of development and this in turn implies self-reliance in the process of accumulation, and orientation towards internal resources in the course of industrialisation*. There lies the difference between scientific and unscientific development, or between socialist and nonsocialist development.

I. E. Returning to the subject of mutual dependence and indebtedness, let me recall Mikhail Gorbachov's celebrated speech at the United Nations. His ideas deserve consideration. Reading his speech, we felt that

it expressed the opinion of the Soviet Union and not, say, of Egypt or Nigeria. The strong speak with the strong about "co-development". But the USSR did not refer to this matter 30 or 40 years ago, because it was itself then at a different stage. Today, with a solid basis, it can boldly enter into the broadest international relations—and the Soviet Union's ties with the external world have been considerably extended.

F. M. The socialist countries themselves are also in debt to other countries and organisations; this in itself does not contradict either socialism or normal economic management. Borrowing is a part of normal business relations, if it proceeds in a wholly healthy situation, of course. Things are different when mistakes are made in socialist construction or economic strategy. In that case, the growth of the external debt is a dangerous sign that may indicate serious miscalculations in the management of the economy.

One final remark. In our discussion on the problems of debt we have kept within the world capitalist system. But the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union, have also given loans to the Third World; but on easy terms, mainly for the purposes of development, and with the borrowing country itself selecting the area of investment. Here we find qualitatively new relations between creditor and debtor. Nevertheless, they cannot be the main factor of social transformations in a less developed country. It is up to the peoples of the Third World to take their own decisions.

¹ 1957-1961.—Ed.

² Although under the first five-year plan private capital was expected to make 39% of all investments in industrial development, the big national bourgeoisie preferred to invest in the services, while some of the most prominent financiers and industrialists hastened to transfer their capital abroad.—Ed.

³ Of the 1,513 million Egyptian pounds invested in Egypt's economy between 1961 and 1965, foreign loans accounted for 417.4 million.—Ed.

⁴ Approved by the National Congress of the People's Forces on June 30, 1962. It set forth the theoretical basis for progressive economic and social reform.—Ed.





POLITICS—SCIENCE: SUBORDINATION OR EQUALITY?

*A Conversation Between General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain
Julio ANGUITA and Professor Grigori VODOLAZOV (USSR)*

Julio Anguita, 48, became General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain in February 1988. I met him at an international symposium on "The Tasks of the Left-Wing Forces in the Modern World", held recently by the Spanish Communists in Marbella, a small holiday resort on the Mediterranean coast.

I found him to be a political leader of the most modern mould: there was nothing pompous about him, no attempt to keep people at arm's length, no spouting of "historic" speeches or directions. He wore jeans and a short-sleeved open-collar shirt and looked very fit; during the breaks he readily mixed with the other participants, passing from group to group, entering into conversations and off-the-cuff discussions—just like everyone else. He impressed me personally by his vigour, charm and humour, and his easy and sincere laugh. His figure and general bearing made me think of someone like Byron (with a beard), or one of the romantic heroes of Jules Verne or Walter Scott. On the last evening, when we were gathered round a blazing bonfire on the seashore and the serious speeches alternated with songs and dances, I once again got the impression that he was simultaneously part of the crowd and somehow central to it. He seemed to have a good ear for the intricate melodies of Spanish folk songs as he joined in the chorus, and his elastic movements reminded me of an elegant caballero joining in the circle of dancers. But he was in no sense a "populist trying to act natural" in order to impress the public. Indeed, he was not playing any role or trying to depict anything. He was simply there, among his friends, whom he liked, and so he sang, danced and spoke in serious and jocular tones. In the course of that evening, he delivered only one "speech", when he stood up on a bench, a makeshift rostrum, and in the flickering light of the bonfire said a few simple, intelligent and graceful words summing up the results of the meeting.

When we sat together on a bench looking out to sea some two or three hours before our departure the following morning, I naturally could not miss the opportunity of talking to him on a matter suggested by the presence of prominent scientists and political leaders at the symposium—a difficult question on which much depends in the activity of the progressive forces: the connection between politics and science in our transformative activity today.

With his permission I switched on my recorder, and below is the transcript of our conversation.

WHOSE FAULT?

Grigori VODOLAZOV. Julio, at the symposium there was a note of mutual dissatisfaction: the politicians took the scientists to task for their lag in research into the new social realities, while the scientists took issue with the politicians.

I am well aware of similar reproaches concerning the

state of things in the USSR. Political workers analysing crisis phenomena in our development say that one of their main causes is the lag of social science behind life and the imprecision of its recommendations. Indeed, Soviet social science bears an enormous responsibility for the "stagnation": political economy was scholastic, the "developed socialism" concept was not a reflection of the true state of things, and history did largely consist of "blank spots".

There are also complaints to be made on the other side. Scientists ask: How political economy was supposed to become a fully-fledged science when vast areas of statistics were withheld from it? How could we have written a scientific history of our country, when politicians kept the archive documents under lock and key, set up a network of closed-stock libraries where one could get a book only by special dispensation, and withdrew from the common round not only the works, but even the names of prominent historical figures?

Then again, the politician is apt to reproach scientists for failing to produce new ideas, trailing behind events and muttering banal truths. The scientist may well counter by accusing the politicians of imposing conditions for research which forced them to waste time producing reports on the decisions of political forums, and which led editors to insist that the new ideas presented to them by scientists had to have appeared already in some political document. Generally, under Stalin this was the iron rule: no veering left or right from the words of the Great Beacon.

Both sides' claims would appear justified, but I want to ask you, as a political leader inevitably considering the connection between politics and science, what ought to be the "normal connections" between them? How can we let scientists, for instance, not only produce commentaries on the latest congress, but also start working out the decisions of the next one (which are bound to negate some of the old decisions)? On the other hand, how and in what forms should politics influence science, so that both science and politics stand to gain? What is the meaning of democracy in science, in politics, and in their relations with each other?

Julio ANGUITA. These are important questions, not just for politics and science but, as a whole, for the normal development of social life. Many difficulties arise when either science or politics lays claim to the dominant and definitive "leading" role in human activity. Politicians telling scientists what to investigate, what research to conduct, what conclusions perhaps should be drawn; or scientists setting themselves above what they see as semi-educated buffoons trying to determine the fate of the world without a degree or a doctorate—all the trouble starts with these delusions of grandeur.

Normal and healthy relations, by contrast, can be established if both the politician and the scientist are clearly aware that their spheres are not absolutely independent of each other, that they are not closed in upon themselves, but are merely separate facets, complementary aspects of the same social phenomenon which must interpenetrate and learn from each other. That is why, we need primarily a clear definition of the place and importance of each of these aspects: and the way they interact.

SCIENCE IS HUMANISM

I think science needs politics because, firstly, through politics is comprehended and formulated what could be

called the social demand for various lines of research, and because politics signals whether a line of research is fruitful or dangerous (from the social standpoint). Let me give you an example.

I recently discussed a very curious problem with one researcher, who said that in the near future science will be able to create human beings without a will by means of genetic manipulation. He spoke of this prospect with enthusiasm, trying to drive home just what science could achieve: it could give man divine power, so that, like God, he will be able to create human beings with a preset range of capabilities. This is a "power" of which I take a sceptical view. What is more, I do not believe that this is a manifestation of human power or of the strength of science. What kind of power is it? It is human self-destruction. Science is not neutral with respect to human interests. It is not merely a sphere of coldly calculated "superhuman" objective truths. From the outset it must be humanistically oriented knowledge, an instrument for the reflection and transformation of the world *for the benefit of man*. It is in comprehending this humanistic vector in the development of knowledge that science can and must help politics by summing up human interests and requirements.

Further, there is the question of applying and using scientific achievements. Here is a textbook example. Gunpowder, which was invented by scientists, can either be used to treat diseases, or to destroy people and things. The use to which it is put largely depends on political decisions. Look at it another way: scientists determine, for instance, how to produce so many nuts for so many bolts. But the decision as to whether they are to go into tractors or tanks becomes a political one.

Also, politics functions importantly as the link between what could be called the "subjective" and the "objective" worlds, i.e., between the world of our wishes and requirements, and the world of objective potential. Look at us here, by the sea—the weather is fine, the climate is marvellous. Naturally, people want to come here and build themselves villas, country houses, hotels, shops, parking lots, petrol stations, and so on. But the result is that nature is overburdened: the air is polluted and the sea is contaminated. Then again, if Western consumer ideal is pressed on the rest of the world, there simply will not be enough resources to go round. It is mainly to politics that we turn to find the most harmonious combination of these two worlds, the world of desires and that of actual potential.

When I say that politics formulates the social demand and determines the ways in which research is to be applied in practice, I am not suggesting that this is done by way of peremptory administrative orders. On the contrary, these should be attractive proposals backed by arguments, not administrative threats. In fact, the comprehension and formulation of this "social demand" is not a straightforward process: it must be pluralistic, like nature itself; it must be perhaps a series of alternative ideas devised by politicians and then put forward for further

democratic discussion and selection by every one, including scientists. The more democratic a society, the more elastic, flexible and numerous are such links.

CHOICE AND SCIENTIFIC OPPOSITION

G.V. You have shown why science needs politics and vice versa, but there is surely a feedback effect in their relations as well.

J.A. Of course, there is. After all, what is politics today? Let us start our reflection on this matter with a reference to the Bible. I am not a religious man, but I appreciate the popular wisdom one finds in the Bible. It tells us that in the old days among the Israelites there were prophets who were able to forewarn against danger, wise men who always spoke their minds. The difference between these prophets and the traditional politicians typical of the recent past is that the latter do not always tell the truth, they do not always reveal all they know, or care about their people. There are many reasons why they do this, but mainly because they believe the truth might cause panic and fear. Like not telling a patient how ill he really is. Like a doctor, a politician has to put the patient at ease and then begin the treatment. But, as I say, that is the traditional politician, and he is no longer acceptable nowadays. We live in an age of the most acute and profound contradictions, and unless we resolve them we will be destroyed. We can no longer be silent on the dangers ahead. If we do not speak up, people who are unaware of these dangers may inadvertently bring tragedy down on the world. Today everyone must have detailed knowledge of the crisis of our civilization and a clear notion of the problems and dangers, together with what each can do to avoid them. People must be told everything as it is, even if it pains them to hear it, because our salvation lies in truth alone. We have reached a point in history when politicians must act as prophets. As such, they have to be prepared to swim against the tide, to disregard prejudice, ignorance, and to challenge stereotypes. But if we are not to turn into false prophets we must have precise scientific information as a basis on which to work. That is why scientific research is held in such high regard and why the politician must respect the scientist. The politician is not omniscient—he must be familiar with science if he is to successfully make changes.

G.V. You could say that a politician needs a scientific ear, a taste for theory. He must not shun science and lose touch with scientific culture. But tell me this: as General Secretary, you must be run off your feet every day. How do you manage to keep in touch with scientific development?

J.A. I must admit that I do not deal directly with politics every day. I spend the best part of some days reading or walking and talking with people who are not concerned with politics at all. I like to listen, think, draw

conclusions and make proposals, which is why now and again I make a point of escaping from some of the "functions". I "fight" to have more time for meetings and conversations with people, which is how one gathers knowledge, like a bee gathers honey.

It is up to the politician to absorb, digest and arrange all kinds of information. He cannot go and tell the people what to do—rather he must listen to them and understand what they want and how to deliver it. In short, what might seem a leisure activity in reality represents intense mental effort, although it is different from office work. But this is the kind of leisure I need since politicians are now in danger of self-destruction. One has to attend so many "compulsory" and "official" meetings, to represent one's party, to answer traditional questions, etc. It can become a routine of meaningless bureaucratic bustle. But if the politician is to produce a serious political alternative among other things he cannot afford to be what might be called "dynamic" (usually regarded as the politician's ideal), but should be wise and thoughtful, perhaps even somewhat slowed-down. Thinking is the business of the political leader.

G.V. Thinking for the purpose of taking decisions with a knowledge of what one is about, in the light of human needs and with reliance on science. But in this series of connections there is one problem arising from the need to rely on science. It is, after all, a system of continuously developing knowledge, a vast debating society, with dissimilar and sharply clashing approaches, trends, and lines. Each school of thought offers its own solutions. How is the politician to decide which to choose? As the leader of an organisation engaged in practical transformative activity, you cannot, of course, afford to wait until the scientists thrash things out and agree on a common denominator. They could go on arguing till doomsday on the relative merits of plan or market, small individual farms or giant state farms, on whether it is worth joining the European Community or not, etc.: there could be an endless series of pros and cons. But the politician has to act and take decisions here and now.

How is he to make his choice? Intuition? But that is, after all, much too shaky a basis for a serious strategy of struggle. Or with a more profound understanding of things than a scientist? But politicians are not "superscientists" and politics is not a "superscience". What if you make the wrong choice, thus preventing a more progressive scientific trend from developing? This has often happened in my own country. Remember how our political leaders opted for the Lysenko school, and so stifled genetics; or on another occasion, how they decided against cybernetics. The lamentable effects of such decisions are still with us.

J.A. That is a real problem. Choice is no easy matter. But I tend to put more trust to intuition. Imagine you have to decide on one way out of the thousands stretching into the future, quite apart from the interaction of an

immense number of diverse factors. You simply cannot expect logic to sort out all the present and future variables. I think of intuition as the ability to decide at a moment's notice on the strength of past experience. A politician must have intuition. I believe it was in his *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* that Lenin stressed the need for "intuition" along with rational logic and precise calculation, if the right political decisions were to be made.

Let me add that I do not regard political decisions as being cut and dried. Once a decision has been taken and is being implemented, it still has to be checked and rechecked. You must be ready to make amendments and additions, even a radical review, in the light of practical results. Also, a preference for one scientific school does not mean you should restrict any of the others by administrative bans. They should be allowed to act as a critical opposition force.

G.V. In this context, what is your view of the fairly widespread assumption among politicians that "science has to be managed"?

WHO IS TO MANAGE SCIENCE AND HOW?

J.A. "The management of science" strikes me as a rather unpleasant phrase. How am I to "manage" you? I can't exactly tell you what and how to research. I may consult with you or advise you, of course. I could say, for instance: it is my impression that this is what people want today, take this into account in some way and help us solve certain problems. That's all! Or I could help you, your department, or your institute to obtain enough funds for you to be able to work quietly and effectively.

For my part, I should like to know what scientists expect from politicians. How can the politician help you?

G.V. First of all, I think that it is important for the politician to remain a politician. He should make no attempt to lay down the law to science; he should not be seen in his speeches to condescend to offer down the truth to social science. The politician's speeches have a different function and purpose. Secondly, I should also not want the politician to try to suggest the kind of conclusions he expects me to reach through my research. Finally, his main business, I think, is to create an atmosphere in society favouring the development of thought and the production of scientific knowledge, an atmosphere of the broadest democracy, glasnost, pluralism; an atmosphere ruling out the use of administrative coercion with respect to scientific schools and trends.

J.A. I agree. Science should develop according to its own laws, the laws governing the production of objective truth. Only if scientists are free and unbiased can scientific discussions go on without interruption (regardless of the decisions taken by politicians at any given moment). Spanish Communists have first-hand experience of a lack

of freedom. We fought against the fascist dictatorship for a long time, and in that struggle we were seasoned as democrats in spite of everything. We simply cannot conceive of acting against freedom, of curbing it in any way for any reason. Different schools exist not because of malicious intent on anyone's part, but because reality itself is complex and contradictory; it does not lend itself to swift and simple reflection; people look at it from different angles, and these inevitably one-sided pictures eventually come together in a larger picture. The important thing is not to prevent, firstly, its formation, and then, its analysis. Science is freedom, and its development requires the broadest democracy.

G.V. But I think you will agree that it is a special type of democracy, which differs from political democracy. It does not operate on the principle of the minority accepting majority decisions. In science a man like Copernicus or Einstein can stand alone against the rest, but even very gifted politicians often fail to realise this. A prominent Bolshevik leader, Aleksei Rykov, who presided at the 14th CPSU(B) Congress, solemnly declared, to stormy applause from the floor, that majority decisions would be the truth of Marxism in those conditions. It was only Nadezhda Krupskaya—a bold and talented woman, and, I believe, still to be properly appreciated as a Marxist theorist—who found the courage to remind the congress of the old Marxian thesis that the truth is not determined by a majority, but by historical practice alone. Democracy in science is dialectics, a pluralism of ideas.

J.A. Yes, of course. But let us not idealise our scientists. In science there is an often desperate struggle between different schools. Each school is sure that it is right, and each wants to win.

G.V. Fortunately, scientists do not have the guillotine...

J.A. You mean the politicians do have it? Sadly, Spanish political history is full of guillotines. All sorts of inquisitions appear whenever there is a fear of the truth. I would even go so far as to say that a policy reveals itself as progressive or reactionary in its attitude to truth, knowledge and to scientists. A policy which fears truth and tries to destroy science is a policy of reaction, whatever slogans it may hide behind.

Although, for instance, a religious, scholastic or dogmatic conception may gain the upper hand in a society such temporary setbacks cannot halt free scientific search. In Spain, a country with long-standing traditions, religion, has often been able to establish intellectual and political domination because it explains everything—the meaning and purpose of life and death—in simple terms. You don't have to rack your brains over these eternal and tormenting questions. This brought about an appearance of social stability, unanimity and monolithic unity (this was, at first glance, how things seemed under Franco). But it was really just a brittle and superficial stability because only

unity in diversity can produce solid unity. Only democratic (and not totalitarian) social systems have true stability. That is why the superficial dogmatic unanimity collapsed when the early evangelical ideas of freedom were introduced to Spain.

If people are free, there emerges a tangle of problems which did not exist under the stagnant, dogmatic uniformity. This is because people cease following orders without a thought and begin to think for themselves, to seek, to argue and to make mistakes. I like Marx's maxim: "Put everything to doubt!". Only the free and unfettered individual can have such a maxim. When scientists are free, they tend to lose their erstwhile absolute clarity, and find themselves faced with a host of questions and ideas which are in something like random Brownian motion. That is what the politician should reckon with.

He should also remember to refrain from involving the scientist too deeply in the political hurly-burly, to resist the temptation to order him about and fill his time with meetings and conferences. Politicians ought to respect the scientist's right to quiet reflection, like Faust in the solitude of his den. I believe that solitude is the most favourable state for a scientist to produce new ideas. Let me give you another relevant example, a parable from the Bible. Remember what the serpent says to Eve: if you eat of the fruit of the tree your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Eve wanted to be omniscient and ate the fruit. Then, as everyone knows, she and Adam were driven out of paradise. This can be interpreted in many ways. Personally, I think it means that knowledge is driven into solitude.

Finally, the politician must be aware that the more a scientist knows, the less he understands what he is looking for. One should not regard this as the scientist's failure to fulfil his social mission. He must be allowed to cast about in constant quest and not to limit himself in any way. When the politician—the practitioner—comes along he tries sensitively to utilise what science has produced. He should not reproach the scientist for being unable straightaway to turn his formulas into a pair of boots. An

excessive desire to use its results can wreck scientific enquiry.

CO-AUTHORS OF A MANIFESTO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

G.V. I very much hope that when the Spanish Communists come to power (the legitimate urge of every political party) you will not forget what was said today. Even now the PCE is not just a party of total opposition, but a party which, I believe, desires to make a constructive contribution to building up democracy and developing the country's culture and science. The symposium here was good evidence of this. You put up for discussion the most important and the most acute issues of the Western world's further social development, and invited representatives of the most diverse schools and trends, Marxist and non-Marxist, to attend. One hundred flowers did bloom here. Scientists have welcomed the fact that you and other party leaders heard what they had to say and took part in debates, in the hall and in the lobbies, on an equal footing and without trying to issue any "leading instructions" from the rostrum.

J.A. Dialogue between scientists and politicians is very important to us. This was the first such meeting. We talked over a very wide range of questions, trying to take an overall view of our Marxist social theory and to determine the controversial points in the development of our theory. The result has been a crystallisation of topics and problems, which we intend to discuss—step by step—at similar annual international symposiums. The tremendous changes in the world since the time of Marx and Lenin demand that we continue to talk in an atmosphere of frankness and freedom. Our task now is not only to modernise our theory, but also to produce a study as significant as Marx's *Capital* or the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. We need a Communist Manifesto for the 21st century, and it will only come from a solid and democratic alliance of politics and science.

SHEDDING THE DOGMAS

THE BASIS OF THE OLD THINKING

Sergio VUSKOVICH ROJO
(Chile)

As one reflects on Mikhail Gorbachov's arguments in favour of perestroika—the revolutionary renewal of socialism (which is the heart of the new thinking)—one inevitably draws the conclusion that since there is a need to overcome the old mode of thinking, it is important to see its sources. I think—and here I agree with Damian Pretel¹—that they are rooted in a small but widely known work by Joseph Stalin entitled *On Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, in which he attempted to summarise the whole of Marxist philosophy.

Let us recall its opening words: "Dialectical materialism is the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninist party. It is called dialectical materialism because its approach to the phenomena of Nature, its method of studying the phenomena of Nature, its method of cognising these phenomena are *dialectical*, and its interpretation of the phenomena of Nature, its comprehension of the phenomena of Nature, its theory are *materialist*."

"Historical materialism is the application of the propositions of dialectical materialism to the study of social life, the application of the propositions of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of social life, to the study of society, to the study of the history of society."²

What are these "propositions"? They are the four basic ones: everything is connected, everything is one; it is in movement; it contains internal contradictions; it moves from quantitative to qualitative changes. These "propositions" (somewhat impoverished because they do not include yet another "law": negation of the negation) were borrowed from Hegel's dialectics. Here Marx did not invent anything new in principle. The first three can be traced

back at least to Heraclitus (6 c. B.C.). The four "propositions" plus the "law" of negation of the negation will be found in modern philosophy (Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling). Moreover, Marx never proceeded from "propositions" but regarded an event or process in a concrete context in order to bring out the general and the particular, the causes and the effects, the internal contradictions and so formulated a system of categories, a logic of concepts (as he did in his *Capital*).

What's wrong with Stalin's method? First of all, it is *abstract*, for it has no spatial or temporal characteristics. Speculative thinking, i.e., thinking in the categories of eternity and infinity, can be applied only to "angels". We find such an indefiniteness within the formula "dialectical

materialism is...". This consigns to oblivion Lenin's valuable idea: "There is no such thing as abstract truth. Truth is always concrete."³ Lenin also said: "The whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demands that each proposition should be considered (α) only historically, (δ) only in connection with others, (γ) only in connection with the concrete experience of history."⁴ He thus urged considering the subject or process under examination in its development, in its many and various definitions. And here one cannot do without negation of the negation, which "destroys" the faceless

The development of Marxist theory is not only a response to the new realities of the modern world, but also the bringing out of the immense theoretical wealth contained within the core of Marxism, the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin. It is all the more important to state this because there are ever more frequent attempts nowadays to present the views of the Marxist classics either as a fine but remote history that is no longer relevant to our day, or as a narrow and dogmatic doctrine incapable of coping with the problems of the latter half of this century.

WMR has been receiving many articles and letters stressing the relevancy of Lenin's ideas and urging that they should be cleared of all vulgar interpretations. Here is the first in a series of contributions on this subject.

bulk and initial indefiniteness of interconnections, internal contradictions, and unity with other phenomena and processes. By contrast, Stalin's "dialectical materialism" appears as the sum total of abstractions which have been enshrined as an absolute, and which should be applied to all things. It ignores the complexity of the process of cognition, which has its own internal contradictions, history and logic of development.

The result was the false notion that a knowledge of three or four abstract "laws" of dialectics was quite enough to reflect the reality. It goes without saying that the substance of things and processes is not identical to the form of their manifestation, and that abstractions have to be used in scientific research for purposes of analysis. But Stalin resorts to them as full-value conclusions.

Besides, this kind of "materialism" (interpretation of natural phenomena) and this kind of "dialectics" (the method for cognising natural phenomena) seem to exist on their own. They are "tied in" artificially, through a superimposition of one concept on the other. As a result, we have a pseudo-science, a scholastic picture of being, i.e., a "philosophy" of pedantry, which engages not in analysing vibrant life, the real world, but in a mere ordering of words, and from which Stalin also deduces his "historical materialism". Once again we find an artificial combination.

Stalin's oversimplified mode of thinking is consistent in its own way: he had a need of "dialectical materialism" in order to declare once and for all: "The proletariat's class struggle is a perfectly natural and inevitable phenomenon."⁵ In other words, it was required to turn the laws of Nature into the laws of social movement, and to present the historical succession of formations as being fatally inevitable. But what was the result? History became faceless. Not a word about *civilization*. No politics as a science and the art of the possible. He ignored the dialectics of reform and revolution, the peaceful and non-peaceful ways and methods of struggle, the role of democracy in the process of transformations. We hear nothing but the ring of one-sided and blunt assertions: "The transition from capitalism to socialism and the emancipation of the working class from capitalist oppression can be effected not through slow changes, not through reforms, but only through a qualitative change of the capitalist system, through revolution."⁶ He adds: "One will easily understand the tremendous significance of the projection of the propositions of philosophical materialism onto the study of social life."⁷

What then are these propositions? By its very nature the world is material, matter is an objective reality, it is primary, while consciousness, thinking, is secondary. Finally, being is cognisable. Let us note once again that these "propositions" of "philosophical materialism" were not discovered by Marx, who has to be given credit for something else: in his *Theses on Feuerbach* he criticised Feuerbach for having failed to see the active role of the subject of cognition, and to bring out the role and significance of individual and social practice in comprehending the objective truth. The "propositions" formulated by Stalin are not a step forward, but are, essentially, a return to the ideas of mechanistic materialism of the 18th century.

This kind of approach is alien to the method of Marx's thinking, for he brought out the specific social laws by analysing concrete historical circumstances (of "this or that state", of "this or that society", and not of "natural phenomena"). He examined them in the context of social life only as analogous reflections, and used them, in particular, for the sake of *comparison*. Putting the accent on the noun—materialism—and reducing attention to the *dialectics* of history by treating it as an adjective amounts to a failure to understand the real genesis of Marx's ideas, and his essential vision of history and the interconnection between Nature and society.

Stalin does, of course, use categories like the relations of production, the productive forces, etc., but he sets forth all this in abstract and oversimplified terms, outside the temporal scale and concrete social contexts. His short essay into history boils down to five basic modes of production: the primitive communal system, slavery, feudalism, capitalism and socialism. He does not even mention the Asiatic mode of production, which Marx singled out. The categories of historical materialism figure as the result of insight. There is no room for the formulation of new problems. Everything is expected to fit the immutable pattern of what has been said.

What were the consequences of such departures from the true Marxist mode of thinking?

First, the development of theory and the method of cognition was halted. It all came down to learning by rote "Stalin's lucid and clearcut conclusions". But Lenin said: "The genius of Marx and Engels lies precisely in the fact that during a very long period, *nearly half a century*, they developed materialism, ... did not rest content with repeating epistemological problems that had already been solved, but consistently applied—and showed *how* to apply—*this same* materialism in the sphere of the social sciences."⁸

Second, a situation took shape in which, apart from the classics, and, of course, Stalin himself, there was no room for other Marxists, such as Karl Korsch, Georgy Lukacz, and Antonio Gramsci. The ideas of some Latin Americans, among them L. E. Recabarren, J. C. Mariategui, and J. A. Mella, were forgotten.

Third, everything that did not originate from Stalin's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism was flatly ignored and discarded as useless and harmful. This applies above all to idealism: the refusal to study its development and analyse new trends in philosophy led to superficial assessments of current phenomena, monologism, stagnation of thought, and backwardness. Instead of developing Lenin's ideological legacy, which is largely linked to a revival of Hegel's dialectical spirit within the framework of Marxist theoretical culture (one needs merely to recall Lenin's article "On the Significance of Militant Materialism"), there was vigilant observance of the then dominant "tradition" of taking a high-handed attitude to "post-Marxist" philosophers.

The philosophical propositions of the "leader of all the peoples" are, of course, not hard to read. They are a guidebook for those who assume that the working people need not go into the specific thinking of the classics. Here the masses look like "juniors" who merely need to be cured of their "naivete". Bad habits are infectious and die hard, which is why even today, with Stalin's work in oblivion, in many cases the old perception of dialectical and historical materialism lives on.

The vulgarisation of the Marxist method is most glaring in the continued claim that "dialectical materialism is the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninist party"—a thesis which often suggests the conclusion that dialectical

materialism is consummate and no longer needs to be developed. It is assumed, moreover, that the only bearer of truth and a special maker of history is the party, outside of which Marxists can no longer exist because the party is in possession of the "secrets" of Nature and skilfully "applies" them to society. But the problem is that scientific, philosophical or aesthetic truth does not belong to any select group of persons, but is, in the final count, the property of mankind as a whole.

The organic unity of subject and object, of theory and practice in the process of cognition is one of the main philosophical innovations of Marxism and its unsurpassed organic originality, as Lenin and Gramsci used to point out. To Marx the category of "praxis" was not a mere synonym of "practice" (as the opposite of theory), but a blend of the two, of thought and action aiming to transform the world. It marked an important step towards scientific concepts of the way to socialism.

Some claim that Marxism is moribund, because it fails to provide the solutions to all the pressing problems of our day. For my part, I think that it is not Marxism, but Stalinism that is in agony. The old mode of thinking, which has "solved the problems" of all that is cognised and is cognisable within the space of a few pages, is dying out. A mode of thinking which is alien to dogma or to the claim of being the "hub of the Earth" is gathering force at the present challenging phase of historical development, when mankind is faced with the problem of survival. Marxism is getting rid of the Stalinist sclerosis, and is deepening its vision of current social trends and diverse, including non-Marxist, spiritual projections of social transformations. We Marxist intellectuals can put them in doubt and refuse to accept some of their aspects. The only thing we cannot afford to do is to ignore them. Nor do we have the right to pass by the new worldwide cultural and social realities, the new "praxis", if modern Marxism is not to become another "Bible". Marxism has to perfect its epistemology to find the answers to questions of today and tomorrow and to become the advanced doctrine of the future.

¹ See Damian Pretel, "Marx's Philosophy: From a Dogmatic Interpretation to Creative Development", *WMR*, No. 1, 1989.

² Joseph Stalin, *On Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, Moscow, 1949, pp. 7-8 (in Russian).

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 86.

⁴ Ibid., Vol. 35, p. 250.

⁵ Joseph Stalin, op. cit., p. 24.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Ibid., p. 33.

⁸ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 336.

FORWARD, TOWARDS LENIN

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Lenin is the most widely read author in the world, we are told by UNESCO. Although he wrote mainly in the first quarter of this century, there has been great interest in his writings throughout the entire 20th century, and the interest in Lenin's legacy has been growing. In the Soviet Union, those who are carrying out "a revolution within the revolution" are trying to clear away the deadwood of ritual quotations and dogmas from what Mikhail Gorbachov has called an "inexhaustible source" of living Leninism.¹

We have to admit, however, that in modern France very few people read Lenin. The question arises: what have we French Communists done in the past few years to help the young generation master Lenin's methodology in the light of the realities of the late 20th century? After all, one can no longer act in the way one has, regrettably, often acted in the past. Some 25 years ago, Leninism was depicted as a set of general truths and principles (in other words, a scholastic doctrine) which provided a complete picture of the gist of modern phenomena. It only remained for the revolutionaries to apply the propositions of this doctrine in practice. It was forgotten that Lenin himself objected to the endeavour to look for answers to concrete questions in the simple logical development of the general truth.²

The true content of his approaches is that one has to make a concrete *analysis of the surrounding world*, and it is an urgent task facing the Marxists to make such an analysis, which implies a "return" to Lenin's method and mastering it by getting rid of the vulgar reading of Lenin's works. This is most important because some political scientists have set up a peculiar monopoly on the commentaries to Lenin's works and have tried to force their own interpretation of them on the Western reader at large. If, say, you want to buy an aid for the study of Leninism in a French bookshop, you are sure to be offered the writings of Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, Alain Besançon, and Dominique Colas.³ Some of them, like *Lénine et le léninisme*, have been published in mass printings in a series entitled "What Do I know?", in which the French reader is provided with basic information about everything in the world in a popularised form.

The writings of these authors have some common features. First of all, I think, they are evidence of the changes under way in the anticommunist conceptions of recent decades. It is no longer the old, "primitive" anticommunism, which any serious Western intellectual must reject, but a sort of "scientific" one. It is being taught as a special subject at universities, and there has even taken shape a hierarchy

of local authorities, some of them having been elevated to the rank of "classics" whose works are favoured with mass printings. There is ever fiercer competition between the "schools". But the essential position of present-day anticomunists has hardly changed. The advocates of anticomunism still often remind one of prosecutors who will be satisfied with nothing less than the death sentence.

Such is the most general impression. A more detailed analysis reveals new trends seeking to discredit perestroika: efforts are made, on the one hand, to ferret out the prerequisites of Stalinism in Lenin's works, and, on the other, to distort his approach to the problems of democracy.

Colas, for instance, declares: "Let us no longer regard Lenin as a brilliant tactician or theoretician of imperialism. Let us look at him as an organiser who regards politics solely from the angle of force and war. We shall find him to be psychiatrist condemning hysteria and attacking deviationists, a surgeon wishing to purge the society of all its discards, the idlers, the rich, the intellectuals, and the kulaks. Let us read Lenin as the creator of a new policy setting up mass terrorism as a legitimate norm of the exercise of power."⁴ These words reveal a clear urge to withdraw the charges against Stalinism. Indeed, the author claims, there were no Stalinist distortions of the October Revolution because they were inherent in Leninism itself, i.e., the distortions were built into the "genetic code" of Bolshevism. The message is that if the Communists are to get rid of the original defect, they must abandon their very substance and their ideals.

To reach these conclusions, Colas uses the method of so-called synchronous reading: a montage of propositions from different writings of Lenin's on a given subject irrespective of their historical contexts. The result, he thinks, gives a new notion of the "principles of Leninism": force, diktat and demagoguery. But what does such an analysis ignore? First of all, Lenin's theory of imperialism as, incidentally, his concept of the development of capitalism in Russia. The Bolsheviks' political strategy and the theory of revolution, which Lenin elaborated, are also left out. Nor does Colas say anything about Lenin's philosophical contribution. According to him, Lenin merely worked out the party doctrine, with the party being a sort of machine, or army contingent. Colas claims that this is precisely the doctrine which led to the "paranoic fever", traces of which Colas tries to find in Lenin's works, donning the mantle of expert in the field of psychology and ascribing to Lenin an almost "irrepressible" urge for "purges", for a cleansing of society by chopping of the marginals. In short, he tries to unravel the mysterious origins of total repression by shamelessly ignoring such "trifles" as Lenin's condemnation of terrorism as a method in the class struggle, the forced nature of some of the Bolsheviks' acts in response to counterrevolutionary White terror.

Because of the popularising purposes of the series "What Do I Know?", Colas has had to cite some historical facts and to present some of Lenin's works, but he makes no mention at all of Lenin's *What the "Friends of the People"*

Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats, which, incidentally, is highly important for an understanding of Lenin's attitude to terrorism. Considerations of an objective and scientific approach do not force the author to alter his general approach and stand. Here is, for instance, his commentary on the well-known "April Theses": "Lenin's strategy is barbarously daring for traditional Marxism, which is over-scrupulous with regard to economic determinism. But is extremely trite when coming from the needs of an organisation or a man striving for power. In April 1917, Lenin, in fact, dared to opt for the pure logic of force, which is perhaps the last argument of his political analysis."⁵

How marvellous this "perhaps" is! But the reader will learn nothing about Lenin's theoretical far-sightedness, which he once again displayed in the spring of 1917, and why should he know anything about it: it is, after all, nothing but a "trite" expression of "the pure logic of force"! Everything is cut-and-dried: the Bolshevik revolution won out, it appears, only because Lenin was less "scrupulous" than his adversaries. But was not General Kornilov's revolt an actual fact? And why did Lenin keep analysing the realities? Colas's answer is invariable: only in order to "give theoretical legitimacy to his decisions".⁶

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has hastened to explain the meaning of such conclusions: it is a "legitimation" and "covering up of arbitrariness". No matter how often Lenin keeps repeating, together with Engels, that Marxism is a "guide to action", one should not believe him: for the "prototypes of modern tyrants", theory is nothing but an instrument of manipulation in the service of the dictatorship of one party, i.e., of their own dictatorship. That is allegedly "the logic of Leninism", and of all the subsequent development of Soviet society.

Should one try to refute this thesis? Let us note that it will cease to be altogether convincing for those who take the trouble to read Lenin. That is why Colas and others of his ilk do not invite readers to look into the works of the great thinker and revolutionary of the 20th century. Indeed, they even suggest that it is not worth studying Lenin's writings or accepting his ideas if the scholarly interpreter has used the most "modern" methods to "prove" that he is not at all a thinker.

The gist of such commentaries on Lenin's works becomes perfectly clear in the context of the efforts being made to discredit Marxism and its followers. It is claimed that the French Communists are twin brothers to the right-wing extremists and merely make a show of accepting the rules of the democracy games. After all, they remain true to their own doctrine: did not Marx and Lenin, after all, resolutely condemn the false and formal character of political democracy in the form in which it was established in France 200 years ago? Did they not try to demonstrate that it is a screen behind which lurks the real power: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? In short, we are presented with the idea, which does not need to be argued, that the followers of Leninism deny the positive value of the norms, principles and ideals of democracy. This is only a short step away

from portraying the Communists as advocates of totalitarianism.

When the CPSU is making vigorous efforts to bring out the full potential of people's power, such Western "scientists" flatly reject the *Leninist origins* of this endeavour. They think (or pretend) that it is a reproduction on Soviet soil of the universal model of Western democracy, and they measure *perestroika* with their own yardstick.

What is Lenin's true concept of democracy? This is a question whose important theoretical significance is closely bound up with the practical tasks of the struggle today. One can safely say that, from Lenin's standpoint, *democracy is not some kind of rigid scheme ready for mechanical reproduction, but a potential requiring sustained development*. In his day, Engels reproached Eduard Bernstein for regarding democracy as an extra-temporal notion. Lenin, too, objected to regarding democracy as a "principle" which is always identical to itself. Let us recall in this context that, as a dialectical philosopher, Lenin viewed historical phenomena in their development. For him, the people's power and self-government are an unfolding and contradictory process. It is contradictory because, while posing the question of equality between the rulers and the ruled, democracy is still a form of "government of the people", i.e., a form of statehood, thereby implying coercion, exercised by one part of the "people" over the other, and containing within itself its opposite: the dictatorship of the ruling class. Only a society free from class divisions can hope to create true popular power, but then there will be no democracy in the direct sense of the term, since the "government of the people" will give way to a "governance of things". That is the basis of the remarkable assertion: "The more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it becomes unnecessary."⁷

This contradiction is not a logical aporia, but part of the living reality. As a phenomenon moving towards its own replacement, this contradiction merely is expressing the historically temporal character of class societies and the state itself. Besides, there is a period of the *historical formation* of democracy, in the course of which the crucial and revolutionary turn from bourgeois to proletarian democracy is effected.

Lenin's dialectical thinking was also evident in the thoroughness with which he drew a distinction within bourgeois democracy between its inherent "stages" and forms of development. And when he criticised it and accused it of being limited, he *always* did so from the standpoint of what he called "consistent democracy", or in other words, *always* for the sake of "one of the component tasks of the struggle for the social revolution", which is "to develop democracy to the utmost".⁸ Any other interpretation of this idea would be a gross distortion. Let us recall that Lenin unambiguously demonstrated the flimsiness of the views of those Bolsheviks who insisted that efforts aimed to attain democratic objective could merely divert the working class from the struggle for its economic and social emancipation.

Lenin *resolutely exposed this high-handed attitude to democracy*. Socialism, he wrote, "is impossible without

democracy because: (1) the proletariat cannot perform the socialist revolution unless it prepares for it by the struggle for democracy; (2) victorious socialism cannot consolidate its victory and bring humanity to the withering away of the state without implementing full democracy."⁹ As for the relation between capitalism and democracy, it is determined in this way: "Capitalism in general, and imperialism, in particular, turn democracy into an illusion—though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, creates democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism's denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy."¹⁰

Lenin called on the working class to use these opportunities by developing them to "the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy, on the one hand, is transformed into socialism, and on the other, demands socialism".¹¹

The French Communists rely on Lenin's legacy in defining the tasks ahead. In his report to the 26th Congress of the PCF, Georges Marchais showed that the elite of the state apparatus, which is closely allied with Big Capital, has been trying to stifle freedom in our country. Today, he said, the *Communists must promote the growing struggle for a new democracy*, under which citizens could express their views on all the problems and decisions affecting them, including those at the workplace. This demand meets the needs of social development, springing as it does from the peculiarities of modern production: if it is to be efficient, there is a need for people playing an active and responsible role in the work collective.

Developing this vital need, working for the rights which help to satisfy it, seeking and testing in the vast laboratory of the popular struggle new forms for implementing this demand—such is the task facing us as the most consistent democrats and simultaneously as Communists. Is this task not akin to what Lenin spoke of in his day, and what now fills *perestroika* with the spirit of democracy?

¹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Perestroika. New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, Collins, London, 1987, p. 20.

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 32.

³ See, for instance, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, *Lénine, la révolution et le pouvoir*, Paris, 1979; Alain Besançon, *Les origines intellectuelles du léninisme*, Paris, 1980; Dominique Colas, *Lénine et le léninisme*, Paris, 1987; *Le léninisme*, Paris, 1982.

⁴ Dominique Colas, *Le léninisme*, dust-jacket.

⁵ Dominique Colas, *Lénine et le léninisme*, p. 61.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 474.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 452.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 74.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 24-25.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, p. 452.

THE CAUSES OF ALIENATION

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It was assumed until recently that the alienation of citizens from socialist society is either a relapse into the capitalist past or the result of mistakes made by the leadership. But logically, this gives rise to the following questions: how long are we to put the blame on capitalism? Are we entitled to claim that such a widespread phenomenon is a social relict? Could it be that the capacity of capitalist social relations to reproduce alienation has been growing, instead of waning?

One has to admit that distortions in the system of administration and government are among the causes behind alienation. People are inclined to identify the administrators with the state (also, incidentally, because administrators arrogate the right to be the sole interpreters and champions of state interests). Similarly, a negative attitude to the mistakes of a person in office tends to be ascribed to the social system as a whole. Does this explanation of the causes of alienation under socialism contain the whole truth? One can contemplate removing discredited leaders and putting more competent and morally upright specialists in their place, but even then there will be no guarantees against distortions.

It is my view that the major causes of the alienation of citizens in our society are built into the existing *system of ownership*. Another important fact is that alienation from property, for its part, produces political alienation from government and from public affairs. What is it then that lies within the sphere of ownership and causes alienation?

First, it is the *stepped-up etatisation of the means of production*. In my country, industry was nationalised and agriculture collectivised within 10-15 years. There is no other case in Bulgaria's history when one type of economic and labour relations replaced another within such a short period. In the process, however, the skills, traditions and the very attitude to labour built up over the centuries were destroyed. In other words, violence was done to the natural course of history. People moved away from their own farms and cooperatives into the state sector and began to perceive state-owned property not as their own, but as "someone else's". Furthermore, the monopoly of state property was absolute. At first, it was declared to be a higher form of property than cooperative property. These two forms subsequently merged, i.e., cooperative property was also etatised. The unification of ownership relations made competition impossible and fettered

enterprise. Economic initiative became the prerogative of the centre, while the producers were left with the function of performance.

Second, the status of the individual within the system of ownership, or the individual's *economic status*, is, I think, a cause of alienation. The political economy of socialism used to regard each individual as an "equal co-proprietor", adding that he could be regarded as such only while being part of the people. And since the people had freely handed over their powers of property administration to the state (it is true that the juridical act by which this had been done was obscured) it followed that everyone was a proprietor at one remove, or a proprietor by proxy. In actual fact, citizens were turned into nominal proprietors, and the state into the real proprietor.

Accordingly, the "equal co-proprietor" concept remained linked to an abstract, statistically averaged-out individual, and was taken to be no more than an ideological postulate. Meanwhile, the concrete individual coming into contact with the means of production offers the only thing he has at his disposal, namely, his capacity for labour. For the individual, the real world of economic and labour relations begins at the enterprise: the individual exchanges his living labour for wages, not as a proprietor, but as someone seeking to make a living. But according to Marx, those are the signs of alienated wage-labour relations in the sphere of ownership and labour (these two aspects of alienation are indivisible), the only difference being that in this case it is the state, not the private entrepreneur, that acts as the employer.

The functions of the state as a system of institutions are performed by a special stratum of personnel. Under the administrative-command system, they personify the economic power and take the decisions on the appropriation and distribution of the income of enterprises, on investment, taxes, deployment of labour-power, etc. That is why, I think, it is not right to accept the view, which we find in some works and documents, that property under socialism is "no one's", that it is "anonymous". It is nothing of the sort as far as the central departments and the state apparatus are concerned.

In these circumstances, two separate strata in fact take shape: the *administrators and the administered*, a relation which evolves into the basic feature of the hierarchical division of labour. In the light of their daily experience, people begin to draw a clear distinction between themselves and the administrators, the "authorities", and in this way the alienation from the means of production is transferred to the institutions of the state. That is, I believe, the root of alienation from public life, because both basic structures of society—property and power—evolve into something external and alien to the individual, who loses control over them.

I do not claim, of course, that there is an immediate economic basis for every form of alienation, but in our society it first originated in the economic sphere. The early

symptoms appeared in the 1960s, while alienation became massive in the 1970s, when embezzlement, mismanagement, "escaping" labour and plain passivity among workers on the shop floor became widespread. That, I think, is one of the essential causes of the slowdown in economic growth rates in Bulgaria over the past 10 to 15 years.

Alienation from political institutions and their representatives is now most glaring and concentrated, the catalyst here being social deviations and distortions, such as privileges, nepotism, corruption and the like. A few years ago our party held a broad and frank exchange of opinion on these matters, and measures to combat the negative processes were mapped out, but the effect has, regrettably, been short-lived.

At one time, theoretical thought in Bulgaria rejected the very notion of alienation under socialism, assuming that it had been abolished through the socialisation of the means of production (meaning *etatisation*), i.e., at one go. Only in the early 1980s did our theorists ask: does alienation exist under socialism, can it be produced by the specifics of the new social system, without being inherited from another system? The question was merely formulated, because at the time no convincing answer was produced.

All the major political forums since the July 1987 Plenary Meeting of the BCP CC have stated the existence of alienation from property and from some institutions of power in Bulgaria. What is more, we now regard the overcoming of alienation from the means of production as the key criterion of success in restructuring the economy. But in actual fact this is not yet being achieved despite the radical structural and normative reform undertaken in the national economy.

From the standpoint of social consciousness, one will now hardly find anyone expressing the view that the socialist system under which we live has been able to eliminate alienation; a poll taken among workers in early 1989 showed that only 0.2% of those polled saw no signs of alienation in Bulgaria's social fabric.

All this is an inducement to a *theoretical quest*. The social sciences are already shedding the obsolete ideological clichés, and there are discussions and efforts to present a full-scale explanation of the alienation phenomenon. But these are only the first few steps. I think that our social science still lags behind the demands of development along this line.

What then is the way out?

If it is true that the roots of alienation lie in the established system of state ownership, *this system has to be changed* if alienation is to be overcome. Indeed, the process is already under way in transforming normals and structural-organisational measures. We have opted for a

pluralism of the forms of ownership alongside ownership by the state, we intend to develop cooperative, group, family, individual, communal and mixed ownership (with foreign participation). The purpose is to create the conditions for *competition* among them, thus establishing a direct *economic link* between the individual and the means of production.

New normals do not, of course, automatically do away with alienation. The important thing is how the newly accepted forms of ownership will function in practice and whether they provide guarantees against relapses into the command style of administration. I say this because the stereotypes of the supercentralist model are deeply ingrained in the thinking and behaviour of the apparatus, which is inclined to usurp economic power once again. That is why there is such a need for mechanisms of control from below, and for the executives being accountable to the elected bodies. *Democracy and self-management*, the latter being the highest stage of the former are therefore a key condition for overcoming alienation.

My assumption is that even if the current economic reform in Bulgaria is successful, alienation will not entirely go away once and for all. This undesirable phenomenon will probably be overcome with the spread of the cooperative movement, lease contracts and other forms of economic management ensuring direct links between the individual and property. But alienation will once again find a nutrient soil where wage-labour is used (it is allowed on a limited scale in our country in individual firms and at mixed enterprises). Still one should not make haste with forecasts. Rather, we should first analyse the new elements emerging in our economic life.

However that may be, the key task, I think, is to work out a modern *theory of alienation* to explain its origins, development and forms under socialism as the basis for deciding on ways to overcome it. As far as theory is concerned, this appears to require two conditions: first, a continued de-ideologisation of social science; and second, a concrete empirical study of our own society, the intensity and social character of alienation within it, the historical movement of this process, and its dependence on economic and political reform.

However radical our reasoning about alienation may appear to be, it is mostly guided by logic and often has a speculative ring to it: we are not in possession of the actual facts. As far as I am aware, the social sciences in some other socialist countries are in a similar state, and that is why, in particular, there is an especial need for dialogue, for exchanges of research experience and for joint studies.

The overcoming of alienation is not some peripheral problem but one of the central problems of our restructuring, and our social scientists can do much to help solve it.

FAITH AND POLITICS

Frei BETTO
(Brazil)

■ **As a clergyman, what Marxist ideas do you think are especially relevant?**

Marxism is the theoretical foundation of the socialist system, so I would like to say a few words about the political principles followed by the socialist countries' governments and people, the latter including not only Marxists but also Christians.

First, there is the idea that war is inadmissible, which is shared by believers and non-believers alike. In the developing world, including Latin America, one sometimes gets the impression that averting a catastrophe depends entirely on East-West goodwill and understanding. In reality, however, the safeguarding of peace calls for a policy which can be described figuratively as the principal Christian symbol, the cross: reason and disarmament along the East-West line should be complemented with fundamentally new North-South economic relations. There will be no tranquility in the world until a new economic order is established.

The socialist countries' course of democratisation seems to be equally important. Christians professing the liberation theology fully approve this process and perceive it not as a concession to someone or a return to capitalism, but as the improvement of the more advanced social system.

■ **What will you say about Marx's well-known saying that religion is "the opium of the people", and about today's atheism in general?**

A few clarifications are in order right away. First, Marx drew that conclusion from the reality of the 19th century Germany, where religion served a reactionary state, sanctified its oppression and indeed was the opium of the

Following up on the dialogue of Marxists and believers in WMR, the Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean put a few questions to Frei (Brother) BETTO, the well-known Brazilian clergyman, theorist of the liberation theology and member of the Dominican Order. Here we publish his replies.

people because it prevented them from critically analysing the concrete situation.

Second, Marx never identified faith in God as such with the opium of the people. The difference is significant: the task of science is to analyse the practice of religion and its reflection in the cultural life of society, but not faith itself.

Unfortunately, some Marxists seem to be leaning towards metaphysics and reduce their criticism of religion to a denial of the existence of God. Generally, Christians are not dismayed at the Marxists' atheistic world outlook, and there are many non-believers among the followers of other ideologies as well. It is a matter of freedom of con-

science, of the innermost need of everyone, and we have no right to force faith upon anyone. What confuses and saddens us is the frequent emphasis on militant atheism in the Marxist doctrine. But Marxism emerged as the revolutionary theory of the proletariat rather than a theomachist philosophy. Marxism grows out of the struggle

of the working people, and at the same time promotes the further development of that struggle. In other words, the start and finish of the Marxist thought is the practical activities of the working class. But there occur reverse logical patterns, with some people starting from theory to practice and then returning back to theory. I think it to be an absolutely erroneous approach.

Marx drew his well-known conclusion from an analysis of the religious situation of his time. It was quite correct and rested on empirical, scientific findings. But it should not be considered absolute truth because primarily the policy of the Prussian state was the opium, although not every policy is synonymous with narcotic.

Atheism is not problem No. 1 for Marxism in Latin America. In October 1980, the Sandinista revolution, the world's first revolution carried out by Christians and Marxists in close cooperation, issued a special document, which reads, inter alia: "...Our experience is proof that when Christians relying on their faith can meet the needs of the people and the challenges of history, their faith itself leads them onto the road of revolutionary struggle".¹ In an interview which made up the basis of my book *Fidel and Religion*,² Fidel Castro also noted that, like policy, religion could be not only opium, but also a miraculous remedy, depending on whether it is used to defend the oppressors and exploiters or the oppressed and exploited.³

In Latin America, where more than half the world's Catholics live today and where around 65% to 70% of them will live by the beginning of the third millennium, Christianity is working for the emancipation of the people. Since the vast majority of believers here are the dispossessed strata of the population, the Medellin (1968) and the Puebla (1979) conferences of the Latin American Episcopal Council passed resolutions in favour of the poor. Unlike in

Frei Betto (Carlos Alberto Libanio Cristo) was born in Belo Horizonte in 1944, and studied journalism, philosophy and theology. In his youth, took part in the student left Catholic movement, and under the military dictatorship in Brazil was twice imprisoned (in 1964 and 1969). In 1974 helped organise grassroots Christian communities in Brazil; visited Cuba, Czechoslovakia and the USSR. A member of the International Ecumenical Organisation of Third World Theologists and the author of several books, including *Fidel and Religion*, translated into more than 20 languages and published in dozens of countries.

Western Europe, the churches in Latin America are crowded by workers and peasants. Marxists do not miss these facts, but, regrettably, occasional dogmatists among them believe that religion, which draws inspiration from the Gospel, is unable to change or to help in building a new world.

There have accumulated many errors in relations between Marxists and believers, errors rooted in the past, when a number of churches were closely linked with the ruling regimes and when simplistic, sectarian, Stalinist approaches to religion prevailed in the communist parties. But today, I think, there are better opportunities for dialogue than ever. Bias often is the main obstacle to cooperation, and it can be removed only through learning more about each other.

■ **Many people think that civilization is in crisis today, and the Vatican shares this view. What do you think can Catholicism do to overcome it?**

The Catholic Church is active in efforts for peace, and deplores the oppression of the developing countries through debt and considers it a crime. The Vatican has made official statements and issued documents on this score.

In Latin America Catholicism is trying to contribute towards the solution of urgent problems, and in doing so relies on the dispossessed as the subjects of the liberation process. Figuratively speaking, we are trying not to catch fish for the needy, but to teach them to fish, to help them acquire weapons for their own emancipation.

Our pastoral efforts in Latin America aim at strengthening popular organisations, making the trade unions more militant, and bringing the people closer together in parties and other political associations, and not necessarily in confessional groups. We stand for the establishment of not Christian or Catholic alliances, but of a party which will unite all those whose philosophies drive them to fight for the triumph of peace, truth, justice and freedom.

Internationally, however, the Church is ridden with many contradictions. Rather broad clerical circles are in solidarity with US policy of aggression, erroneously identify Christianity with capitalism, and berate socialism as the offspring of the Antichrist. And conflicts between the authorities and believers in socialist countries only play into the hands of imperialist propaganda, which is trying to prove that there is an insurmountable antagonism between Christianity and socialism.

■ **And what can the Church do to help improve the world moral climate?**

Morals seem to have become a priority in both capitalist and socialist society. I will try to make myself clear.

The socialist countries are rethinking their past, criticising their own mistakes and practices, and carrying on far-reaching transformations to meet new challenges and

develop their productive forces. The final objectives and methods of Soviet perestroika, the rectification of mistakes on Cuba, modernisation in China and democratic renewal in Czechoslovakia are different, of course, but all these and other countries are trying to develop economic mechanisms which will lead socialism to the forefront of modern technology, genetic engineering and science-intensive industries. But there is a risk that economic goals will obscure such an important problem as the political education of the younger generation.

Revolution and socialism cannot be allowed to be perceived by the young as a series of mere facts from the past or anniversaries celebrated every year. Another point: the rapid growth of communications has made the various "curtains" between the two systems useless. Western advertising with its cult of consumerism easily reaches the remotest corners of the socialist world.

I often wonder if socialism can offer a concept of the ideological and political education of young men and women that is attuned to current changes. Is there any efficient work done in that area? I do not think there is: emphasis is laid on the economy at the expense of morals. But they must by no means be ignored because a decline of morality may endanger the materialisation of the dream about a human society that will be happier, richer materially and spiritually, more just and, what is most important, peaceful. It is my firm belief that religion has many ethical values to offer perestroika.

■ **What is your attitude to new political thinking and to the idea of a nonviolent world? Some of the theologians of liberation are known to allow for a recourse to violence.**

We stand for world peace and do not want any violence, but we have it forced on us by various oppressors, latifundistas and dictatorial armies. Or look at the policy of aggression pursued by the United States in the central part of our continent!

The Medellin and the Puebla Episcopal conferences noted that in Latin America violence was an inalienable element of the ruling structures. Traditionally, ever since Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Church has been recognising the right of the oppressed to rise against the tyranny, naturally, if its existence is unbearably long and if the evil caused by the oppressors indubitably exceeds the losses and suffering that will be involved in the overthrow of despotism. That principle was reaffirmed in the encyclical letter *Populorum progressio* (Popular Progress) of Pope Paul VI.

■ **The liberation theology identifies the US with ancient Rome and Latin America with the cradle of Christianity. Are these parallels justified?**

The reason behind this is historical coincidence. Christ lived in a small province pining under the heel of the Roman Empire, and the Latin Americans live on a continent oppressed by US imperialism. Naturally, reading the

Bible, the poor make such a comparison, and the early Christian communities are a source of inspiration to us.

We never separate our religious practice from the demand for justice. Three-fourths of all Latin Americans—about 300 million people—go hungry. In Brazil with a population of around 145 million, 10% of the population pocket half the national income, while 13 million people are jobless and more than 40 million are living in abject poverty. Millions of children, deprived of parental care or educational and job opportunities, roam the streets like stray dogs.

It is not God who is to blame for these and many other privations. God wishes people well. Christ said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (St. John, X, 10). Liberation theologians ascribe the reasons behind poverty, exploitation and social inequality to the existing order and follow the example of Christ, who, contrary to the Pharisees who claimed that illness was divine punishment, proved its earthly origin. By curing the sick and following profound moral principles, Christ was perpetrating a sort of subversive actions and died as political prisoner.

We are the pupils and followers of the Redeemer, and our faith inevitably acquires a political meaning in a world torn apart by so many conflicts. In other words, the Church is not a swarm of angels soaring in Heaven: there will be conflicts within the Church so long as there is no harmony in society. Those conflicts, however, are not bound to affect the essence of faith or our unity around the Gospel commandments.

■ **What is the attitude of the Vatican to the liberation theology?**

For a long time now Western journalists have been trying to put a condemnation of the theology of liberation into the Pope's mouth. Yet not a single papal document over the past decades contains a word of disapproval about it. Some of the conservative hierarchs would like the Vatican to be worried by our existence. But in Latin America we cooperate with the Episcopate; we do not deny the divinity of Christ, and neither do we proclaim Marxism a new faith. Characteristically, in April 1987 Pope John Paul II addressed a message to the Episcopal Conference of Brazil, noting the usefulness and importance of the theology of liberation to the Latin American Church.

■ **Processes of democratisation are gathering momentum on the continent. What is the role of the Church and believers in them?**

Authoritarian regimes have been succeeded by bourgeois-democratic governments in many countries, particularly in the Southern Cone region. But most of them are

led by the same groupings. Brazilians often say that the dictatorship has merely changed its appearance by taking off the military uniform and putting on civilian clothes, but the interests of the ruling classes, which are the direct opposite of the aspirations of most of the population, have not been affected in the least. That is why the restoration of democracy is formal rather than real. The people are still exposed to privation and denied the goods and benefits to which they are entitled. Needless to say, they have no voice in political decision-making. How can anyone talk about popular rule (meaning not just regular elections, but the meeting of the needs of all citizens in food, housing, education and health care) in Brazil, saddled with a more than \$120-billion external debt?

Our annual exports total \$20-22 billion, of which roughly 4% of the GNP are paid out in interest. The Europeans face the A-bomb threat, but the bomb hanging over the Latin Americans' head is no less dangerous. It is called external debt, and it also makes no difference between believers and atheists, dooming people to hunger, poverty, disease, unemployment and illiteracy, and claiming thousands upon thousands of human lives. A solution to this problem must be found as soon as possible.

In our view, today two things should be done in the first place for the triumph of real democracy: firstly, payments of interest on the debt should be stopped, because the poor cannot pay the bills of the rich; secondly, a series of domestic reforms, particularly in the system of land ownership, should be introduced.

The Episcopal Conference of Brazil fully supports such an approach, and has noted repeatedly that an agrarian reform should be carried out without delay.

The Latin American clergy considers the struggle for democracy and social justice to be part and parcel of their evangelical mission. Pope John Paul II has often made this point in his encyclical letters as well. One cannot think about the Church without thinking first about the rights of the poor and the people in general. This is perfectly clear to us, and the interests of Catholics, Protestants and Marxists fully coincide on this. Europeans sometimes fail to understand that the dialogue of Christians and Marxists on our continent covers practical matters as well as theoretical principles. But this is really so because, given the urgent social problems facing us, we have no time for academic debates. Reality demands common efforts.

¹ Quoted from: *Fidel y la religión. Conversaciones con Frei Betto*, Havana, 1985, p. 331.—Ed.

² For details see Esteban Oña, "Fidel Castro Reflects on Religion", *WMR*, No. 1, 1987.—Ed.

³ *Fidel y la religión*, p. 333.—Ed.





WHY WE HAVE THE PEOPLE'S TRUST

Jyoti BASU

member, Political Bureau, CP India (M), Chief Minister of West Bengal

The Indian Communists have much experience of work in local organs of power. Back in 1957, the party's candidates won the elections in Kerala and headed its government for many years; the CPI(M)¹ and the Left Front later won the elections in West Bengal and Tripura.

Rafic Samhoun, representative of the Lebanese Communist Party at WMR, met in Calcutta with the chief minister of West Bengal (population over 60 million) and asked him to describe the activity of the state government, and the Communists' role in expressing the will of the electorate. He also asked him to give his views on the present state of the world and the communist movement.

■ **Your party has deputies in the assemblies of several states and has formed the government in two of them: Kerala and West Bengal. What is the "secret" of the CPI(M)'s electoral success? What are the forces on which it relies?**

We have been in power in West Bengal for almost 12 years, and we have been returned to power in three general elections in that period. In January 1978, the CPI(M) headed the government of a new front in Tripura, and together with other left-wing parties formed the government in Kerala two years ago.

Generally speaking, there are two main points. We have always tried to show the people through their own experience that we rule the state better than the previous government of the Indian National Congress, which was in power for almost 29 years. We respect democracy, rely on the masses and are in constant touch with various organisations of workers, peasants, middle classes, students, teachers, youth and women, and we discuss our decisions with these organisations. That is the principle on which we work. The second is that we have a minimum programme for the people, an economic and social programme for the people of West Bengal. And another thing: we never promise the people what we cannot do. We are clearly aware that fundamental changes cannot be brought about through the formation of a government in this or that state.

Jyoti Basu was born in 1914; he became a Barrister-at-Law in the UK. He joined the CPI in 1940; he has been active in the trade unions and is a vice-president of the Centre for Indian Trade Unions. Until 1964 (before the split in the CPI) he was a member of the leadership of the CP India. He is now a member of the Political Bureau and of the CC of the CPI(M).

The main thing is that the people are able to compare what we are doing and what was done before us in this state and what is being done in Congress(I)-run states. This helps to raise the prestige of the Communists not only in West Bengal, but throughout India. The people help us in the struggle for radical economic and social change, and that is why we concentrate our efforts on work with the masses and in putting through concrete programmes for the working people.

In the countryside we carry out our policy through the Panchayat system,² and in the towns through the municipal councils, which now receive one-half of the budget appropriations. 70% of the Panchayats are controlled by the left parties, and the rest by the Congress(I) party.

It took some time to gain experience in working with the Panchayats, and their democratisation and growing activity have generated new processes in the Bengal countryside. Thus, there are planning committees in every district and the people's representatives tell them what they want, what should be given priority, say, like drinking water, roads, schools, hospitals, small irrigation projects, etc. The Planning Board examines these proposals and announces the amount of money that has been allotted. Of this, the planning committees duly inform the local inhabitants. The important thing to note is that planning begins from below: and such a democratic practice is not to be found anywhere else in India.

We take a similar approach in our work with the municipalities. In our state there are about 114 such elected municipalities, of which 11 are with the Congress(I) and other opposition parties, and the rest are with us, the left parties. Under the Congress regime, the municipalities were virtually inactive and no regular elections were held. We, for our part, have already held three elections to the

municipal councils and the Panchayats. We have decentralised the powers, that is, we have done what we want the central government to do: to give more freedom to the people and the state governments.

I cannot say that we have been as successful in the towns as we have been in the countryside, but I hope that, as we gain experience, we shall be able to do much more over the next two or three years.

There is every indication that the deprived sections of the people generally support our policy. It has given them greater self-respect, because they see that neither the local administration, nor the police are against them and the Government keeps a strict vigil so that injustice is not perpetrated against them.

■ **Could you list some of the actual successes of your state government?**

We are now doing everything in our power for the benefit of the people and for democracy. 70% of the people in West Bengal live in the villages, and for that reason land reform is the first point of our programme.

Of the land distributed among the peasants over the past 10 to 12 years, a quarter has been distributed in West Bengal alone. We now have about 300,000 acres of land. Far from all the land that should have gone to the peasants under the law has actually gone to them because of resistance from the former landlords, and these cases are being fought in the courts. Another 150,000 acres are held by the government. Some plots of land are not for farming, so we plan to put them under forest plantations and to hand them over to rural cooperatives.

Generally speaking, the land reform law is being implemented with great difficulties, but we have still managed, for instance, to look after the interests of the agricultural labourers, who form about 30% of the peasantry. We have also helped the share-croppers, who work on the land of others and have to give up one-third of the crop to the landlords. They had no fixed rights as tenants. We have ended this disgraceful practice. We have registered thousands of share-croppers in West Bengal, and this is a great relief for them: no one can now drive them off the land.

Nothing like it was ever done in the past. We also protect the interests of middle and poor peasants, and even of rich peasants, by providing them with various facilities: water, irrigation, bank loans, seeds, fertilizers, etc. We have also been improving the irrigation facilities. Just now, only 39% of the land is irrigated, and we want to take the figure up to 50%, which will mean two or three crops a year. Already there has been tremendous increase in the food production in the state.

Concerning the social sphere, let me note, first of all, some of our successes in education. During our first term, we made education free in the secondary, 12-class schools; something West Bengal has never had before. We now have more schools and universities, but much still remains to be done. Parents sent their children to school,

but in the economically backward areas, they often don't have enough food to eat. We have a programme to provide some food to school children during the mid-day. Most of the primary, secondary, college and university teachers support our Left Front government. This also applies to the government employees, 70% to 80% of whom support our government and our policy. The workers also know that we look after their interests.

We have been able to halt the growth of unemployment in the countryside. How? The central government and the state government have several schemes for providing jobs when the agricultural operations are over, as in building roads, digging wells, erecting irrigation facilities and other things. In the past, agricultural labourers could hope to work for no more than six months a year, but now they can work for up to nine months and millions of mandays are created through implementation of various programmes.

All over India there are acute problems concerning caste, ethnic minorities, religious groups, etc. But we have kept peace in our state and have had no communal troubles here. The scheduled castes and tribes are protected by the constitution, and we see to it that this is done in practice although it is not so easy to do so. Unfortunately, there are some places in India where if people from the so-called lower caste draw water from a well, so-called higher caste people won't touch that water. We have managed to overcome this. And here, let me add, one thing has been in our favour. Back in the 19th century, during the British rule, there were social reformers in Bengal who were against untouchability and wanted the caste system abolished. They have not been entirely successful, but their ideas are a great help to us today.

■ **You mentioned the complicated relations between the state government and the central government. What do you have in mind?**

Indeed, we do not have very good relations. Under the constitution, India is a federal state, but in practice power is more centralised than it should be. That is why we do not have enough powers and are fighting for the correct centre-state relations. For political reasons, they don't want us to succeed in West Bengal. The Left Front came to power in accordance with the constitution and has to cooperate with the central government. When the Prime Minister calls meetings on all the economic, educational and other issues, we state our point of view, argue and criticise the Centre's policies. We put forward our suggestions. No agreement is reached on many issues.

Let us note that finance, the activity of major enterprises, the banks, foreign trade and the army are within the competence of the central government. But there are many items which are within the competence of state governments. There is, however, continuous erosion of state government's powers, while more and more powers are concentrated at the hands of central government. But this does not serve the cause of India's unity

because political problems are created in addition to economic problems by such efforts at centralisation.

We have to discuss the state budget every time with the central government. About 70% of those funds are raised by us, and the rest is allotted by the central government. Part of this comes in the form of loans, which later have to be repaid. That is our difficulty, the impediment in our work, but despite this, we now have a sound budget and we had no deficit last year. But when the budget was considered, we have had to increase taxes (though very little has been imposed on the common man), because the central government raised the railway fares, the prices of many essential items, so that the cost of living has gone up. We have to provide dearness allowance to meet the cost of living, but this does not cover the entire population, only a few people like government employees, teachers, professors, about 950,000 all told. The working people in factories and establishments both in the private and state sectors have established their right to get dearness allowance and bonus.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees who poured into West Bengal from Bangladesh, are a specific problem. The central government has tried to ignore this problem in the past and even now various difficulties resulting from this problem persist.

■ ***What are your relations with the big bourgeoisie? What is the role of middle and small enterprise and of the state sector in the economic programme of your state?***

When the Left Front formed the government, the entrepreneurs of large industrial units panicked because they were afraid of us as Marxists and Communists. But later on they understood that our policies were not aimed at doing away with the private sector, big or small. Our powers in this respect are also limited. We are also in touch with the industrial houses, the monopolists, the big ones, the middle ones, and so on, and we explain to them the cooperation that is needed. We have a minimum programme for the uplift of the masses. In the present Indian situation, we are working in a mixed economy where the private sector has a definite role to play. In our state (West Bengal), whenever there is some conflict with the trade unions, the Labour Department tries to work out a settlement. There is a coordination committee for business activity, and it includes the Chamber of Commerce, and the industrial houses. There are a great many small labour-intensive firms in the state as well, and we promote their development because of the severe unemployment in the country.

We have announced a policy in West Bengal of having a joint sector with the private entrepreneurs. We have got down to putting through several projects in electronics, etc. and have a plan for a big petrochemical project, in the hope of increasing the output of consumer goods and products for industries. We have set the task of providing

thousands of people with facilities which were denied to them earlier.

We have widely recruited local capital. We have 15 industrial growth centres helping to build up the infrastructure—the water, roads, communications, etc.—with funding from the state government. Housing construction is being carried on by the state in the towns and villages. Private house builders are also building houses.

We believe that Rajiv Gandhi's "new economic policy" is aimed to weaken the public sector, and there is a loss of confidence in its efficiency. We have been drawing public attention to this fact and mobilising the masses in defence of the public sector. But the difficulty lies in the fact that the public enterprises are entirely controlled by the central authorities and they do not take the labour into confidence. The states can step in only in the event of a labour conflict. But let me add that many of these trade unions are under the influence of the left parties.

■ ***How important is the problem of democracy in your practical activity?***

Whatever we do, our prime concern is to abide by the democratic forms, whether in agriculture, land reform, education or industry. And however modest our steps along this course, they meet with a response among the people, especially the deprived strata, the workers, peasants, middle classes, "lower" castes, and the various communities.

We have been working to strengthen the democratic institutions, through which we strive to solve the complicated social and economic problems. Our policy has an influence on life in other states as well. The working people put pressure on the local governments and ask: why are there no communal disturbances and clashes among the castes in West Bengal and Kerala? Why are the poor there under the protection of the government? Why is a land reform under way? etc.

In short, we do have achievements, which give us confidence. They are the handiwork of the people. We try to prove in practice that the Communists can run the government much better than the Congress(I) Party. But we also have to explain to the people why there is continued poverty in the state even when the Communists run the government. Not everything depends on us. Planning is done by the central government and we do not have much voice in it. The growing unemployment, the spiralling prices, inflation, sickness in factories and other similar phenomena are largely generated by Delhi's policy and are having an effect throughout the country. We can do little to ease the impact of these harmful processes on the condition of the working people in West Bengal. We have, however, with our limited resources, taken over 27 factories and are trying to make them viable so as to preserve hundreds of jobs. Just now, 160,000 factories in the private sector in India are sick, some have closed down, others are about to be shut down. 90% of the funds of the industrial units are provided by the nationalised banks. But

the central government does not take the responsibility for saving these units made sick by the managements and other factors.

■ **Are there any exchanges of experience between the members of the CPI(M) working on the governments of the various states?**

We do have delegations from Tripura and Kerala. Each state has its own specific conditions. We exchange experience in solving economic and social problems, and warn each other about potential miscalculations and mistakes.

■ **What is your attitude to the present state of the world, the communist movement and restructuring in international relations?**

There should be more and more discussions amongst communist parties in the world, and we were very happy when Moscow took the lead to get together most of the communist parties for a discussion. While there is no single world centre to direct the communist movement throughout the world, the differences and problems rooted in the past remain. We believe that a dialogue could help to solve these. The CPI(M) has always held that Communists must have regular bilateral meetings. We now have contacts and dialogue with most fraternal parties in the world. We were invited to the Soviet Union, China (I myself went there last time in 1988), other socialist countries and Japan. The exchange of ideas between Communists is sometimes reflected on the pages of *WMR*. Great changes calling for thorough scrutiny are under way in the world. We may differ in our views on various issues, but we must seek mutual understanding. We believe in socialism and we think the socialist system will succeed despite the difficulties being faced by the socialist countries.

The leadership in some socialist countries is reappraising the past, its negative and positive aspects. Our party has followed these events with interest, studying the past and the present situation, and taking note of how the CPSU regards its own condition and the ways of overcom-

ing the difficulties. We agree with some of these ideas, and disagree with others.

Perestroika and glasnost are also manifested in international affairs. The CPI(M) supports the Soviet government's initiatives aimed to avert war and strengthen peace. Mikhail Gorbachov's concrete proposals at the United Nations are of great interest. The real successes in disarmament are a source of tremendous satisfaction. We strive to promote them in every way. The two communist parties of India are pooling their efforts for the large-scale struggle for peace.

In the light of the principle of proletarian internationalism we, Communists, support democratic movements throughout the world. No matter how far away from India mass repressions and interventions may occur, the CPI(M) has organised rallies and demonstrations in support of the peoples. Calcutta has been and remains a real centre of working people's solidarity.

No experience or system can be imported. It is up to the people of each country to decide their own destiny and to solve their own problems, but we believe that, in any case, the working people, especially in the developing countries, should take the lead in establishing a democratic system of government to cater to the needs of the people. They are striving to achieve this through democratic elections. I wish them all success.

In West Bengal we have a rich experience and take into account the concrete situation. We have stated in our party programme that we shall fully utilise all the rights that we have under our parliamentary democratic system to advance the cause of the people. We must continuously politicise them while adopting measures to extend relief to them so that they understand the correct path of advance and the impediments that stand in the way. We have stated that danger to parliamentary democracy will not come from the people; it will come from the ruling classes.

¹ The Communist Party of India (Marxist) was formed in 1964.

² The Panchayats are elected organs of self-government.—Ed.

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A BOOK TO READ

HOW TO WRITE A PARTY'S HISTORY?

Bitter is the bread of a historian concerned with modern politology, and his reward is more often criticism than praise. The book by Prof. Norbert Kolomejczyk, *Polish*

*United Workers' Party, 1948-1986*¹, has a history of its own. A few years ago the Ksiazka i Wiedza Publishers announced a competition for the best book about the PUWP. Clearly, it was a great challenge to produce a succinct presentation of the tumultuous postwar events related to the activities of the party and its role in the emergence of people's Poland, to analyse and evaluate them, and to stick to the truth with all its controversies, which is the only moral way for the historian to deal with his material. The publishers invited more than 30 authors to take part, only 12 agreed, and just 4 sent in their manuscripts. The jury awarded the first prize to Prof. Kolomejczyk.

The book, put out in late 1988, immediately became the focus of lively debates. Public attention and even excitement were provoked not so much by the subject matter as by the fact that the author kept pace with the renewal processes in Polish society and broadening openness and democracy. Even his methodological approach to recent history raised many questions: *How should the relationship between the party and society be discussed? What is the sensible proportion of positive material and criticism? What is the dialectics of continuity and change?* These and other problems became the subject of a discussion among scholars, publishers and journalists, organised by *Nowe Drogi*, a theoretical journal of the PUWP Central Committee.

The questions formulated by the author and those which were raised in the discussion are of a general, fundamental character, and answers to them are essential to the evolution of a concept of party historiography. That is why the subject merits the interest of not only Polish specialists and readers, and below is offered a general outline of the discussion.

The introduction to the book is entitled "Can One Deal With and Study the History of the PUWP?" This doubt is just a figure of speech, the author notes: "As a political movement of the working class, the party has been in existence for over a century, and as the Polish United Workers' Party has been functioning in socialist Poland since 1948, i.e., for more than 40 years. It therefore has its own history, which is part and parcel of the enormous process of the change and development of our country and people, our state and society, and the Polish working class in particular" (p. 5).

Amplifying this thesis, Prof. Hieronim Kubiak offered the view that the main point in studying the history of the party is not so much to chronicle its activities as to interpret them in the context of specific social circumstances. The author's commitment to a certain ideology should be backed with a comprehensive analysis of the concrete historical situation. If one reduces one's review of the history of the PUWP to a detailed listing of facts, it will be impossible to reveal the mechanics of its turning points, the reasons behind the replacement of individual groups in leadership, or the relationship between the goals formulated by the party and its actual accomplishments. Isn't it important to find out precisely why did the PUWP as the ruling party decide to duplicate the power structure in its own apparatus, thus building a dual-power system? The decision-making processes being secret, all responsibility lay on the government agencies, while the bodies of political power were relieved of it.

Some scholars say that until recently one could not write a truly scientific history of the PUWP because the party did not have the political will to tell the truth about itself. Now it has an interest in objective historiography, primarily to defend the truth about its past in order to make confident progress into the future.

Another scholar, Dr Zbyslaw Rykowski, points out that

before history comes the philosophy of history, which he calls *historiosophia*. The authors of earlier books about the PUWP proceeded from the premise that the party is the motive force of society as a whole, the beginning and the end of all society. But this concept falls short of reality because any party has to adjust to the society in which it operates. The drama of the Polish situation was that the PUWP did not make sufficient effort to represent social interests to the maximum possible extent. Usually, just a few leaders spoke on the party's behalf, and they thought they knew better what judgements to pass and what should be done and how. Kolomejczyk cites many party resolutions to make this point. And social crises were a result of the conflict between the opinions of the PUWP leadership and those of the majority of society.

Prof. Andrzej Werblan agrees that the philosophy of history is in a sense the starting point and base of any study of the past and notes that the new book is a significant step forward in terms of philosophy and methodology. The merits of the book are primarily honesty, lack of deliberate omissions and a desire to give the reader food for thought. However, according to the Professor, the efforts of the party to sort out its history in earnest have given rise to even more questions, and historians are yet to come up with answers to them.

One of such questions is the sovereignty of the Polish state, which is immediately related to the assessment of the conditions and therefore possibilities for the political guidance of society. This problem has so far been side-stepped or misrepresented, while our political opponents claim that the country did not have any sovereignty at all. The historical truth seems to be that Polish sovereignty was curtailed for a number of reasons, and that the extent of that curtailment varied with time. Hence different policy-making "resources".

No book about a party can do without an analysis of its social base. As regards the PUWP, there have been two myths: one says that the PUWP has always represented the working class and the people, and the other that most of the people have always rejected the party. A related problem here is one of trends within the party as a reflection of the political choices made by the PUWP. It is important to analyse the nature, motivation and declared and real principles of such trends.

In his replies to the criticisms and suggestions made in the discussion, Kolomejczyk admits that his book is only a stage leading to further work. Political changes in Poland make it imperative to revise with dizzying speed both the perspective and the methodological approach to party history. There was one approach to many issues at the time the book was being written, another as it went to the publishers, and yet another after the 10th Plenary Meeting of the PUWP Central Committee 1989. The volume of information available and the possibilities to interpret it are constantly broadening, but researchers still find it difficult to get access to the authentic source material related to party affairs. The use of publications by Western and

emigre writers—material from "over there"—cannot fill this gap.

Our historiography is fragmentary, especially when it comes to the external factors which influenced the policy of the PUWP leadership to a considerable and sometimes even to a decisive degree. Greater glasnost and openness and a new look at the past in the Soviet Union prompt the conclusion that many of the conventional perceptions of these factors of Polish history were a priori, and have to be drastically revised.

As the author of the book notes correctly, we should study the party's activities in the context of concrete structures and cause-and-effect relations, i.e., to consider the party as a part of society. This is the methodological base of any new study of the subject.

Dr Witold KOWALSKI

¹ Norbert Kolomejczyk, *Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, 1948-1986*, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1988, 348 pp.

DOCUMENTS

A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE FOR BRAZIL

THE ELECTION PROGRAMME OF THE PCB

Presidential elections are due in November in Brazil. The candidate for Presidency from the Communist Party is the leader of its Parliamentary Group, Roberto Freire. His election programme, reflecting the collectively elaborated line of the PCB, states that it is the task of the party to build a socialist society that will ultimately ensure freedom, an end to exploitation, the all-round development of the country and equal opportunity for all its citizens.

Socialism in Brazil, notes the document, will not be a copy of others' models, but the creation of the Brazilian people, matching the realities of the country and its historical and cultural traditions. Its construction presupposes the primacy of social ownership of the means of production. The 72-year experience of socialism will help Brazil chart its own course with the least risk. Thus,

the document goes on, while retaining autonomy for enterprises and different forms of property, including private, the Brazilians will strive to find a correct relationship between state planning and the development of the socialist market.

A major feature of the new system is government by the people. This is characterised by a variety of opinions and a broad social base, a willingness to compromise on the part of genuinely responsible parties and a rule-of-law state, resolute opposition to authoritarianism and putschism, and at the same time a *move towards socialism in Brazil. Democracy is not only a phase of this movement, but also the very essence of a society* in which social justice goes hand in hand with political pluralism.

The advance towards socialism, in the PCB's opinion, will be a nation-

al cause rather than one party affair. In order to realise this Socialist alternative there is a need to consolidate civil society, strengthen its institutions and democracy for the masses, and improve the mechanism of their participation in the social process.

The party considers its task to be that of achieving, on the basis of a national project, the unification of all democratic, progressive and left-wing organisations favouring modern democracy. Such a project is intended to become a programme for the new cabinet and a platform for the bloc of forces supporting it.

The PCB document points out that this bloc's electoral victory would be a giant stride towards the formation of a new political leadership of Brazil capable of directing the country in the great structural changes needed to ensure national progress and social justice.

IN BRIEF * * * * *

CUBA New statistics on the Communist Party of Cuba show its strength at some 600,000 full and probationary members. Industrial workers account for one-third of this figure and managerial office workers, for 20%. Professionals and technicians make up 13% and peasants, 2%. Those aged 36 to 45 number 38% of the total; those in the 46-55 age group, 23%; those over 55, 15%; and those under 27, 3%.

PERU In July, a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) discussed the political situation in the nation and the tasks of Communists on the eve of the municipal and general elections slated for November 1989 and April 1990. As the

Central Committee stressed in its resolutions, with the domestic political situation aggravating and the right-wingers becoming more active, the Communists intend to step up their struggle for human rights and for greater consolidation of Peru's General Confederation of Workers. The meeting reiterated the policy of strengthening the Left Unity coalition as a revolutionary mass front.

ROMANIA In November 1989, the 14th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party will be convened. Its agenda includes discussion of the Central Committee and the Central Auditing Commission reports and a draft set of guidelines for Romania's socioeconomic development in the coming five-year period and up to the

year 2010. The congress will also elect the PCR General Secretary and the party's governing bodies.

UNITED STATES The tasks of US Communists in the new conditions of ideological struggle was the theme of a CPUSA conference held in Chicago. More than 600 delegates from party organisations across the nation worked out a common stand on several topical issues. It was also decided to launch a drive to recruit new members. Particular attention is to be paid to work among Blacks, Chicanos and other US minorities subjected to discrimination in all spheres. The delegates elected a representative commission to draft a new version of the CPUSA Programme.

NEWSPAPER FESTIVALS * * * * *

DENMARK Copenhagen has hosted a traditional festival of *Land og Folk*, the Danish communist newspaper. Members of different political parties, mass movements and organisations working for peace and environmental protection took part in various meetings and discussions. Many festival events were connected with the forthcoming 70th anniversary of the Communist Party of Denmark. DKP Chairman Ole Sohn stressed that despite its respectable age, the party was young in spirit and thought, had a rich store of experience

and was ever ready for renewal and for further vigorous efforts to promote social progress, peace and disarmament.

ECUADOR A festival of the Ecuadoran Communists' *El Pueblo* weekly has been held in Guayaquil, the nation's largest city, attended not only by Communists but also by members of other political parties, mass organisations and by many young people. Speaking at the festival, CC General Secretary Rene Mauge Mosquera of the PCE noted that it was a

major task of the party to transform *El Pueblo* into a daily.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC An annual festival of *Neues Deutschland*, the newspaper published by the SED Central Committee, has been staged in Berlin, attended by some 40 delegations of communist and workers' parties. Political events were organised, and the participants were entertained by more than 2,000 professional and amateur performers.

WMR INTRODUCES

MIECZYSLAW RAKOWSKI, FIRST SECRETARY, CC, POLISH UNITED WORKERS' PARTY



In July 1989, a Plenary Meeting of the PUWP Central Committee elected Mieczysław Rakowski First Secretary of the CC. He replaced Wojciech Jaruzelski, who had become President of the Polish People's Republic.

Mieczysław Frantisek Rakowski, born into a farmer's family in Kowaljkow, Bydgoszcz Voivodship, in 1926, began his working career at the railway car repair works in Poznan. He volunteered for the people's *Wojsko Polskie* in 1945,

graduated from a political officers' training school, and served in the army till 1949.

Then he got a master's degree in journalism and joined the press and publishing department of the PUWP CC. From 1952 to 1955 he studied at the Institute of Social Sciences, and defended his candidate's thesis a year later. After two years (1955-1957) at the propaganda department of the PUWP CC, he headed the weekly *Politika* for over 20 years. In 1981 he was appointed deputy

chairman of the Council of Ministers of Poland, in 1985-1988 served as Vice Marshal of the Sejm, and from September 1988 to August 1989 as Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

Mieczysław Rakowski joined the Polish Workers' Party in 1946 and the PUWP in 1948. In 1964 he was elected an alternate member of the CC, and in 1975 became a full CC member. A member of the Political Bureau since 1987, he was elected a CC Secretary in June 1988.



BREAKING OLD TABOOS

Lodonguiyin TUDEV

CC member, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party; Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper *Unen*

Journalism is a relatively new thing for our people, originating in the national-liberation struggle in Mongolia at the turn of the century. The first few Mongolian newspapers and journals, as we know them today, appeared outside the country, in the Russian city of Irkutsk and in Harbin in China. The newspaper *Mongolyn Unen* (Mongolian Truth) was published in Irkutsk and became the flagship of our revolutionary press. It is now called *Unen* (Truth) and is the major publication of the Central Committee of the Mongolian Revolutionary People's Party and the government of the republic, the most widely read paper in the country with 10% of the population subscribing.

Many fine journalists have been trained in the course of *Unen's* struggle and rise to maturity. We now have over 70 newspapers and journals with a print run of 1.5 million copies. We also have a countrywide radio network, and two television channels—national and Interviision—for the urban and part of the rural population. The agency Mongolpress was set up a few years ago, and it issues a bulletin called *Tsag uy* (Time), while journalists (97% of whom have a higher education) now have their own publication, *Satgulch* (Journalist), a quarterly issued by their Union.

Almost 30 years ago, as an inexperienced youngster, I was taken on to the staff of *Unen* as literary secretary. I had to start from scratch and learn from the older generation. Many a time I had to blush for my mistakes, but I feel grateful to my tutors to this day. Three years later, I was appointed editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Soyol utga zokhiol* (Culture and Literature), and now, just short of a quarter-century later, I have had the good fortune to return to my native element: I have been entrusted with the running of *Unen*.

Casting my mind's eye over these years, I can safely say that great changes have been taking place in our press: both journalists and readers in our country have been changing out of all recognition. But there are values which we have always cherished, such as the old Mongolian moral precept: "The best must be avidly acquired, and the worst relentlessly shed." To this very day we still have to "shed" what is bad, and sometimes even to work hard to eradicate it.

I remember a young journalist who wrote a humorous story about a bureaucrat which he called "The Stone Lion".

It would have probably passed unnoticed had not one eminent reader discovered his likeness in that lion. He burst into my office and asked in threatening tones:

"Who gave permission to write about me?"

While I was trying to think what he meant, he blurted out:

"Whom do you mean by the stone lion?"

"It's a humorous story, it's not about anyone in particular."

"So much the worse. You're not allowed to publish metaphorical stories without permission from the top. This stone lion points right at me."

"You do not look like a stone lion."

"Of course, I don't! But the cunning author has the lion wear a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, like the ones I wear. I'm going to complain."

He did complain, and I had a hard time arguing that the story was not about the man who recognised himself in the stone lion. Hardly had that conflict died down, when we had another rumpus. We published a humorous story entitled "The Mayor and the Forest King". It described how many young fir-trees had been cut down in a suburban wood on New Year's eve on orders from the chairman of the City Executive Committee, who was then harassed by the forest king. The same man burst into my office once again, shouting:

"Now even my son has identified me in your paper. You have gone too far. Even science fiction writers aren't allowed to write like that. Put on your coat and come with me."

"Where are we going?", I asked.

"To the proper place, to the Central Committee. This is the second time you have published a libel against me. As chairman of the Ulan Bator City Executive Committee, I did give permission to cut down 1,600 fir-trees, but I did that to help the working people raise the ideological and educational level of our New Year's celebrations. And you stand like a barrier between the people and the leadership."

We went to the Central Committee, and the paper was given a verbal warning and strictly forbidden from publishing any "ambiguous things".

These two cases were hardly exceptions in our journalistic practice. There was a flood of protests whenever

we depicted anything like a negative image of some chief or official. If we criticised a veterinary surgeon, the entire veterinary service of the country was in a huff. If we criticised some accountant, we were accused of discrediting a profession that was important for the country. They were all intent on keeping their collective slate clean. The journalists were continuously bombarded with denials. They had no choice but to put the critical items to one side and switch to eulogies and paeans of praise.

In those days no one, of course, lodged any complaints about excessive praise, while harassment for criticism was quite obviously encouraged. The "no-conflict theory" was the guiding light for our practice, and so journalism for the people gradually developed into journalism ... for the chiefs. Every aspect of our life was praised. Criticism ran from top to bottom, and dealt mainly with abstract phenomena and depersonalised shortcomings. Deception and the falsification of records were rife.

Journalists were also involved in cooking the books. The papers were full of figures and lists of those who had fulfilled the plan on or ahead of time. The press tended to skirt round the problems which cried out for immediate discussion and solution. Blank spots appeared in reports on the state of affairs, and the areas of life closed to journalists increased. Official censorship protected not only state secrets, but also the administrative-command system running the economy and culture in the country. The result was that even those who worked in the mass media began to censor themselves, and this self-censorship was very much tougher than the official one. The periodical press gradually alienated itself from readers, and journalists from the truth.

That was the state in which our press existed by the start of restructuring in our country. In accordance with the party's new policy on the mass media, which it regards as powerful instruments of greater openness and social control, *Unen* was faced with the task of getting rid of superficial judgements, verbiage, ecstatic appreciations and inertia, and of giving priority to incisively analytical articles on the key problems of our economic, social, political and cultural life. We had ahead of us a stiff fight against bureaucratic practices, formalistic approaches, red tape and the suppression of criticism.

We decided that restructuring begins at home: we strove to teach every member of the editorial staff and all our correspondents the meaning of the renewal begun in our country, and to help them draw the practical conclusions and change their thinking and mentality. But some lacked the civic courage and others the ability to come to terms with the new situation. Yet the majority, however, began to learn to work in accordance with the requirements of democratisation and ever greater openness.

Unen has been gradually taking on a new look. The first to go was the plethora of figures and reports, then the empty words and the eulogistic epithets. The hardest thing was to get rid of the patronising nature and declarative

tone of the articles. The paper took an active part in the countrywide discussion of the proposals for restructuring party and social life issued by the MPRP CC Political Bureau in the autumn of 1988. The results of that discussion were broadly reflected in the decisions of the Fifth CC Plenary Meeting of the party in 1988.

We are now covering a much wider range of topics, with hard-hitting reports on defects in capital construction, education and public health care, on the unity of economic and social policy, and on the need to improve our living standards. Many of our items deal with the financial responsibility of management and the need to combat administrative-command methods, all kinds of abuses of power, embezzlement and waste. We try to shed more light on the course of restructuring, on economic problems and on the efforts to remove the blank spots in the history of our state and party. The paper criticises not only whatever impedes the advance of socialism, but also relates the positive experience of front-ranking collectives, while at the same time advocating the introduction of leases and economic contracts, and the rational use of labour, material and financial resources. We stress unrelentingly that the success of the renewal of our economic and social life, and of the improvement of the Mongolian political system depends on the practical efforts of every work collective and every citizen.

On the whole readers approve the incipient changes in our press. There are people, however, who have started to attack journalists for their incursions into forbidden zones.

The Mongolian press is becoming an important instrument of restructuring, renewal, democratisation and social control, and here I want to say something about the conflicts between it and some of the state agencies. *Unen* once carried an article on foreign trade, a taboo subject in the past. Protests came in from the ministry about newspapermen adversely affecting foreign partners, thereby harming the state. In fact, our criticism did not upset any of them.

Our journalists have also penetrated another hitherto restricted area. We prepared a detailed report on certain unpleasant incidents in the armed forces. When this report was being typeset, another dispute broke out between the paper and the censors. Referring to an instruction, they refused to allow publication of the article, whereupon, for the first time, the editors assumed full responsibility for the report.

There was a tremendous response to this report, with a record number of letters from readers. The military were somewhat displeased at first, but eventually thanked the journalists and got down to putting their house in order.

The recent abolition of official censorship acted as a spur for journalists, encouraging them to investigate the burning issues of the day more boldly and to use hard facts to assail anything that might hinder the renewal of socialism. But we still have another form of censorship. It is not only deeply embedded in the mind of almost every

journalist, but also obtrusively "guides" them, forcing them to tread carefully before writing anything, to keep on the right side of the authorities. Meanwhile, bureaucratic practices, social injustice and abuse of power are still to be found in our society. Not a situation in which newspapermen can rest easy. Restructuring demands that the press and other mass media actively participate in the processes of renewal under way in the country, and lend support to those who have taken the common cause to heart.

Journalists have begun to raise problems hitherto regarded as taboo, such as the question of peremptory authority or infallible leadership. A young journalist, B. Erdenebator, wrote an article about a lumber enterprise

which contained snatches of local songs berating the managers for ruthlessly felling forests with no thought for reafforestation. The chief of the enterprise waxed indignant and took us to court, which, regrettably, failed to support the author of the article.

There is no doubt, however, that restructuring, underway throughout society and proceeding with the active participation of the press, will get rid of the sad legacy of the stagnation period. The party—the initiator and organiser of the renewal—relies on the journalists, who follow Lenin's precept that information must be full and truthful. That is the kind of information Mongolian journalists are now giving—and will continue to give.

* * *

A COMMUNIST RADIO STATION

Giuseppe CALDAROLA

CC member, Italian Communist Party (PCI);
Director, *Italia Radio*

For more than a year now, *Italia Radio*, the country's first national radio station of the PCI, has been on the air. Its signature tune is well known to hundreds of thousands of listeners. The station broadcasts nine hours a day, and taking part in its programmes are political figures, trade unionists and intellectuals subscribing to different views. But the audience, too, continuously plays an active role.

Prior to the establishment of *Italia Radio*, our party relied mostly on its newspaper *l'Unità* and the *Rinascita* weekly to conduct work among the masses in order to link Communists with the electorate and shape public opinion. For many years though, the paper and the weekly have been deep in crisis: their circulation has been declining, and so has their influence. The two left dailies very close to the PCI—*Paese Sera* in the Rome-Florence area and *l'Ora* in Palermo—have also encountered grave difficulties.

Signs of crisis were therefore obvious in the PCI information system by early 1988. There were several reasons for that. First, there were strictly publishing problems—specifically, we were late in switching to new technologies at our daily newspaper; besides, our printing capacity failed to meet the challenge of the market. Second, there was a problem with the overall concept of *Rinascita*: it took the weekly too long to evolve from a "theoretical" journal into a periodical which would analyse national and inter-

national developments, be a forum of ideological debate, and would not copy either illustrated weeklies or magazines with a predetermined political orientation. Third, we did not have enough access to the information market: it had been cornered by three to four monopolies which were connected with major financial and economic centres and controlled virtually all advertising. Finally, the crisis of the communist press was compounded by the PCI's loss of votes in elections and by the overall drop in the party's popularity during the past decade.

Radio broadcasting in Italy is not subject to any regulatory legislation. There is now unprecedented expansion of local stations linked with business enterprises. Their programmes are a motley combination of music, commercials, sports broadcasts and, occasionally, news. There are few exceptions to this rule, and *Radio Radicale*, a Radical Party station, is one of them. It offers live coverage of debates in parliament and at its party congresses and publicises Radicals' policy. In Milan, *Radio Popolare* often features reports from factories located around the city. Among other local stations, Catholic ones, often connected directly with the Christian Democratic Party, play a distinctive role and have an audience of their own, particularly in the South.

Government-run radio and television are still reeling under the impact of the "lottery"—the division of airtime between the ruling parties, a step which has done great damage to the quality of information.

One can say that the PCI was an outcast in the information market. In this connection it is worth recalling that during the early 1970s, after a protracted and agonising effort to overcome its strictly negative attitude to local radio and television broadcasting (out of commitment to support the government's information monopoly), our party began organising its own local radio and television stations. But almost all of them were soon closed.

In addition to these reasons, there were two more factors in favour of opening *Italia Radio*. First, the radio audience grew, and an "old" medium regained its strength at much lower costs. Second, no radio station in Italy

specialised in political subjects, although public interest in politics was on the rise.

What, then, is *Italia Radio*? It is a kind of radio newspaper of the Communist Party. It covers almost the entire nation: it is linked with about 20 local stations which offer their own programmes when compulsory national broadcasts are off the air. *Italia Radio* can be heard from 6.30 to 12 noon and from 15.00 to 18.30, except in special cases when we broadcast around the clock (for example, when the votes are counted during national elections or when extraordinary international events occur, such as the referendum in Chile at which Pinochet was defeated).

The station works according to a schedule of news bulletins which, constantly updated, are transmitted every 30 minutes. We attach great attention to prompt coverage of major events, and we alternate brief news items with detailed reports, using either internal information channels or direct hookups with the world's more important capitals.

Aside from news broadcasts, we also have regular daily programmes. At 7 a.m. we review the press. It is a dialogue between our journalist who talks to one of his colleagues, often someone not working for a communist newspaper or periodical. Although *Italia Radio* is not an official organ of the PCI, we shape our work in line with the party's stand. This is reflected in interviews with political figures or trade unionists on some topical subject, in questionnaires and dialogues, in debates and "opinion polls by phone" when we call our listeners and ask for their attitude to certain events or opinions expressed by those invited to our studio. At noon, our programmes acquire an even more pronounced journalistic thrust because the news items we cover must be presented in greater depth with the help of a commentary or analysis.

As a rule, our Saturday morning programmes are devoted to topics which have a bearing on day-to-day problems of concern to society and to the individual; we also transmit a review of the foreign press. On Sundays, we offer a summary of the past week's events (including various interviews, surveys and dialogues). A direct wire to the PCI is also a regular Sunday feature: one of the party's leaders replies to questions phoned in by listeners, and the station does not play the role of a "filter". Increasingly often, non-Communists and people who quit the party speak out at such radio meetings. The more important news items are singled out, the PCI position is articulated and compared to the attitudes of other participants in the dialogue; to be sure, listeners also can voice their own views (whether in support or in disagreement) and critical remarks. These are our "feedback" channels.

By enlisting the cooperation of a wide range of people, including participants in current events, *Italia Radio* shapes public opinion. Ours is something more than the usual radio station: we also act as an organiser. For example, on Saturdays *l'Unità* publishes various items on topical day-to-day issues such as pensions, banking services, consumer protection and the like. Those who read this "lesser legal encyclopedia" in the newspaper's "Life

Buoy" section can call our station the following Tuesday and ask for assistance: experts will answer their questions and offer competent advice. But that is not all. The following Friday the *Italia Radio* experts' replies to these questions and to letters sent to the "Life Buoy" section will be published in *l'Unità*. This is how the party's press and radio work together to help people defend their interests.

Or take another example. In late January 1989, after a long struggle, the trade unions finally forced the government to grant partial but important concessions concerning taxation. A valuable contribution to this was offered by *Italia Radio* which made its channel to CGIL Secretary General Bruno Trentin and one of his close aides who explained and discussed with workers decisions adopted by trade union confederations.

Italia Radio therefore serves democracy by providing information, promoting public activity and working as an organiser. It is a kind of microphone in the midst of Italian society, in front of people with their concerns, their thoughts, their convictions and their doubts. Our party thus has an additional opportunity to keep track of events, talk directly to the masses, follow public sentiment and promptly explain the PCI position.

Italia Radio is also a channel of free and informal communication with other parties. It is no accident that the mass media often cite our station as a respected source of information.

The PCI's objective in launching *Italia Radio* was to have a national medium working 9 hours a day and a ramified network of interconnected local stations which would effectively probe various problems and influence the mood of the public. Ours is a wholly journalistic enterprise. Let me stress once again that it is not an official organ of the party, all the more so because, for the first time in PCI history, the team of the station's personnel is led by a journalist who holds no political post.

I cannot cite any exact figure indicating the size of the *Italia Radio* audience. But hundreds of people respond each time we ask our listeners' opinion about this or that programme. Our listeners are mostly politically mature people, Communists—but, as I said, not only Communists. Our audience is primarily concerned with specific problems, but our radio responds to a variety of ideas, comments and recommendations. During a live broadcast of PCI General Secretary Achille Occhetto, one of the listeners said it would be useful to arrange a meeting between the party's top leaders and Pope John Paul II. Occhetto agreed, and the next day many newspapers headlined the news that the PCI General Secretary wanted to meet the Pope.

I believe that over the first 18 months of its operation *Italia Radio* has achieved positive results. They are in concert with the decision of our party to improve the work of *l'Unità*, *Rinascita*, *Paese Sera* and *l'Ora*—a decision which calls for a political and journalistic search for new methods and ideas capable of meeting the challenge of our time.

EDUCATING THE PEOPLE

Gezahegn GEBRE

CC alternate member, Workers' Party of Ethiopia,
Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the party's leading
newspaper *Serto Ader* (Worker)

In a WMR interview a media executive from Ethiopia describes the press of that large African country, which follows the road of socialist orientation, its development and the role it plays in popularising the party's policy, educating the people and mobilising their forces for transforming society.

Ethiopia has a three-millennium history. Over the centuries, however, its people have been pining under the harsh sway of slavery and feudalism. Faced with the grim legacy of the past, the Workers' Party, established in 1984, is trying to accomplish the historic task of rebuilding society along socialist lines. We want to help the mass of people to leave behind age-old poverty, misery and backwardness as soon as possible, and to achieve living standards on a par with the present-day level of civilization.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS OPENNESS

Clearly, these goals are hard to achieve, but a start has been made in the difficult political, organisational and educational work, and the media are a dedicated helper to the party in this effort. Before the 1974 revolution, the Ethiopian media were underdeveloped, and were mainly used as a means of protecting the interests of the ruling class, primarily of the royal family and the feudal landowners. The first steps of the popular revolutionary power included, along with the nationalisation of the land and industry, the expropriation of surplus housing space and a war on illiteracy, the development of a *democratic press, TV studios, and a ramified system of radio broadcasting*. The latter was especially important at a time when most of the population could not read. It did not take us long to explain the tasks of the national democratic revolution to the people and to convince most of them that we had chosen the correct road and that our prospects were realistic.

Preparations for forming a Workers' Party as the political vanguard of society gave the press a new-function, and it helped in uniting various social groupings, in explaining and disseminating Marxism-Leninism, and in popularising the ideas of socialism and the policies of the people's state. At that time the weekly *Serto Ader* began

to be published as the newspaper of the Commission concerned with organising the party, and then it was continued as the press organ of the CC of the Workers' Party. Today it has a print run of 200,000 copies and comes out on six pages (or more when warranted by some occasion). The newspaper is distributed mostly by party committees, or in their absence by government and public organisations, and thus reaches the remotest parts of the country.

Generally, the network of newspapers and magazines keeps growing. For example, the weekly *Yezareitu Ethiopia* (Ethiopia Today) was published under the old regime; of course, it was very different from what it is today. The theoretical journal of the party's Central Committee, *Meskerem* (September), is so called after the month in which our revolution was carried out. The women's and youth organisations, the peasants, the armed forces and the individual provinces all have their own periodicals. Most of the press comes out in Amharic, the prevalent language spoken in the country, but there are Arabic- and English-language periodicals as well.

Our press has already won public recognition. It is instrumental in encouraging the gradual *development of public openness, the airing of issues in society, and the involvement of the mass of people in politics*. But in Ethiopia with its virtual lack of democratic tradition and its still low educational standards and political culture, these processes are different from what they mean generally. We are still at the start of our road towards democracy and socialism, and the press, radio and television try first of all to explain to the people their role of an immediate participant in politics, economic affairs and social life.

What issues do our media focus on?

CHANGES IN NATIONAL LIFE

Ethiopia is predominantly a farming country: 85% of its population live off the land. However, food still is a difficult problem due to a number of grim circumstances, such as the protracted drought, the backward economy and the military operations the republic has to wage against the separatists and foreign aggression.

So food supply is one of the key subjects in the media. The press keeps in touch with the day-to-day life of the people and helps the party to *organise them for fighting the famine, popularises the advantages of agricultural cooperation and advanced farming methods*, and gives coverage to the situation in the provinces. We send out our reporters to cooperatives and private farms, especially to those which have some innovations that would be useful to all, and follow up our publications to see how novel experience is applied. We are supporting the national peasants' association, which has a membership of almost five million. The association is doing a great deal to help meet the peasants' basic needs, to assist them with harvesting and marketing their produce, and to promote cooperative forms of production.

These things may seem mundane, but the growth of farm production and the solution of the food problem are our paramount task, all the more so since Western propaganda is out to portray even the drought as a result of revolutionary change in Ethiopian society rather than a natural disaster aggravated by backwardness inherited from the past. We counter such allegations primarily with the truthful reporting of the situation and changes for the better in Ethiopian agriculture.

The problems of other sectors figure prominently in the press as well. Our major industries are nationalised, but they are not yet efficient. The socioeconomic situation remains grave. It seems that the high-ranking conspirators who attempted a counter-revolutionary military coup in May 1989, planned to exploit, in particular, the people's worry about their lot. But putsch or no putsch, it was becoming clear that economic policy had to be revised. Analytical reviews in the press and readers' letters helped towards such awareness. The 9th Plenary Meeting of the CC of the Workers' Party discussed the situation very openly, thoroughly and with a great sense of responsibility, and worked out a *new approach with due regard for our realities*. The mass media are widely discussing the decisions that were taken.

This coverage is very important, we think, because the people should know about the plans to develop small and medium-sized enterprises, which can be launched by cooperatives, commercial organisations and individual Ethiopian nationals, including those who live abroad; they should be aware of the privileges offered to investors in industry. We also report on commercial ventures with the participation of foreign capital and on the partial re-privatisation of hotels.

In explaining the essence and meaning of the new economic policy, we point out that a greater role for the private sector in economic growth and the attraction of additional foreign investment and technological inputs will help to use the natural resources rationally, to boost employment and to raise living standards. At the same time we emphasise that the new policy *does not mean an abandonment of the socialist way of development*, but will help to build a sound economic base for such development.

Questions of ownership attract public attention in this context, and the press gives them adequate coverage by tackling theoretical problems and offering practical illustration. The ten-year development programme, approved five years ago, envisaged that we will have cooperative and private property on a par with state property in the key economic sectors and service industries. This is the aim of the recent resolutions, which concretise and update the ways and means of accomplishing the goals of the party's economic strategy.

According to our information, including what we learn from readers' more and more numerous and substantive letters, the current measures are drawing a *positive response from the people* and giving a fresh impetus to

initiative and effort. The press, radio and television are trying to drive it home that national socioeconomic progress and better living standards can be achieved only through the efforts of the working people as a whole.

SEEKING NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Hostilities in the north of the country are a serious impediment to the accomplishment of the tasks of national development. They began long before the revolution, and have been lasting for almost 30 years now. Many lives have been lost in that senseless slaughter, every now and then incited from the outside. Faced with the actions of the separatists, who would like to tear two large provinces, Eritrea and Tigre, away from Ethiopia, some of the people have had to flee their homes for the safety of refugee camps. Enormous damage is being caused to the national economy.

From the early days of the revolution, our government opted for a *peaceful settlement of the conflict*. Attempts have been made to achieve that goal both through direct contacts with the separatists' forces and through the mediation of friendly countries. It is not our fault that they have so far been unsuccessful: the other side has frustrated all our efforts. Meanwhile, there is no alternative to the political solution, as the press says on behalf of the people and as representatives of the different social forces point out in their radio and TV addresses.

A series of new peace initiatives have been put forward recently. The extraordinary session of the National Shengo (Assembly) of Ethiopia, held last June, invited the opposition parties, organisations and movements to enter open, public talks without any preconditions and in the presence of foreign observers in order to put an end to the fratricidal war. We cite countless examples to show that these initiatives are broadly supported by the Ethiopian people and welcomed by the international public, and stress that these latest proposals constitute *serious steps of an entirely new character, steps based on the principle of national reconciliation*, which has already proved its worth in our age.

The country has a real chance of reaching a peace settlement on a truly broad and just base with due respect for the interests of both sides. But imperialist propaganda against Ethiopia has been stepped up precisely now that there is a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel, which seemed a dead end not long ago. Certain forces, which have long been trying to subvert our socialist choice, are clearly fearful of the possible settlement of the "northern problem" and stabilisation in the country. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Ethiopian press has now been put to the test of defending the revolution against hostile ideological and political actions and exposing outside attempts to provoke confrontation among our people.

Journalism is not yet developed adequately in many African countries. Professional training, communications and technology available to the African media are behind today's level. But there are signs of progress, promoted,

in particular, by a regional journalism centre set up in Addis Ababa. Its efforts in personnel training will shortly help the Africans get a better idea of the life on their own and other continents, and not in a Western interpretation. We do not yet have a higher school of journalism, but training courses are already functioning. We also make use of schools of the International Organisation of Journalists in socialist countries and other forms of international assistance, such as the invitation of well-known journalists from other countries to meet our young talents, to address seminars, etc.

Few of the journalists who now publish Ethiopian newspapers and magazines and produce radio and TV

programmes have had specialised education. I myself have a university degree in politics and economics. While working at a party school, I occasionally wrote for newspapers, and the party leadership decided to give me an editorial job. Such a road to journalism was natural in the past, but now, I believe, *new personnel for the national media should and will have better professional education and training.*

The press of people's Ethiopia is making progress, as our society, the party and the political system as a whole are. Growing stronger and gaining experience along with the development of the revolution, it is playing an ever more important role in the country revived to a new life.





THE STRATEGY OF COALITION

Greek Communists and Their Partners Say...

The Coalition of Left and Progressive Forces, led by Harilaos Florakis, Chairman of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), scored a major success in the general elections last June. It won 13% of the votes, secured 28 out of the 300 parliamentary seats (in spite of the unfair system of representation), and together with the New Democracy Party backed a caretaker government, which will be in office until the new general elections in October.

The Coalition is not a temporary alliance motivated by political expediency. Its strategic goal is to win power and to transform Greece along democratic and socialist lines. The predictions in some media organs that the alliance would disintegrate right after the elections have proved wrong. The coalition is living on and growing stronger, and is open to other progressive social movements. A year ago such a striving for unity in the country's Left would have been unthinkable. WMR staff writer Aris PAPANTHIMOS, a member of the Communist Party of Greece, interviewed leaders of the coalition.

What is behind such a rapid process of rapprochement? What has cemented the left forces?

Leonidas KIRKOS, MP, General Secretary of the Greek Left Party (EAR). The crisis of the system of government and the moral degradation of the leadership of the former ruling party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), faced the Left with the question: what is to be done? The crisis was brought to a head by the scandal involving the banker Koskotas, which was Greece's Watergate. Public opinion demanded an immediate cleanup of politics and the democratisation of the state apparatus, of which PASOK functionaries have been unchallenged masters over the past few years.

In this situation the only sensible course of action was to draw closer together and to heal the rift in the national communist and left movement, which occurred in 1968, but which has even deeper roots, going back to the origin of the Third International. At present, however, the rift makes no sense. The fact that as many as 17 parties and organisations in the country were laying claim to the banner of socialism made the left forces the laughingstock.

The KKE and EAR leaders decided to set aside their differences and personal grievances and to initiate a rapprochement. It proved anything but easy. In particular, the Communist Party had to renew itself, to drop many of its erstwhile positions, to commit itself publicly to the democratic road to socialism as the only acceptable one, to recognise pluralism, and to take a more realistic stand on the country's participation in the Common Market. The two parties overcame resistance in their own ranks and

signed a common platform, which made it possible to build a broad left coalition.

Dimitrios CARAGOULES, alternate member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Greece. A coalition was an imperative in left cooperation: otherwise the Left would have been unable to play any substantial role in the life of the country. Over the past few years political debates among the Left have centered on the need for such cooperation. The KKE has been doing everything possible to achieve left unity.

On the other hand, the general public has been increasingly aware that the two-party system (New Democracy and PASOK) that took shape after the fall of the dictatorship in 1974 is unable to resolve the pressing problems of Greek society. Living standards have been deteriorating, the country's international positions declining, and its failure to rise to the present challenges has been growing more pronounced. A profound political, economic and moral crisis set in. There was an urgent need to overcome it, but that was clearly impossible without a tangible contribution from the left forces.

This is what is behind the rise of a powerful public movement in favour of a coalition. Initially there was the view that the Coalition is an attempt at a renewal of the communist movement, but this is not so. The Coalition was set up to cement the broadest possible forces of the left and progressive spectrum, and not just the Communists. It is not a new party, but is intended to create a sociopoliti-

cal alliance which will win a majority of the people over to its side and form a progressive left government.

Andreas LENTAKIS, MP, Chairman of the United Democratic Left (EDA). The Coalition is the historical starting point in overcoming the crisis of the left forces which has lasted over the years. This crisis is a product of not only our "specific circumstances", mistakes and miscalculations, but also of the crisis of world socialism. Over the years we believed that socialism was what we saw in the USSR and other socialist countries. But that model proved unappealing, and very different from what Marx had envisioned. That is why it is very important to rethink and redefine the socialist ideal in the present-day situation.

KIRKOS. This process seems to have begun simultaneously with perestroika in the USSR. The Greek left forces would have been unable to achieve unity without perestroika, glasnost and new political thinking. We enthusiastically welcomed the ideas of perestroika, which helps renew the socialist ideal on a world scale. Its success will again make socialism an attractive perspective and help mobilise the peoples to fight for social progress. Mikhail Gorbachov is the herald of an age in which the leaders of big and small countries will together look for ways to a better future for humanity.

Vassilis FILIAS, Chairman of the Socialist Alliance (SE) and Chairman of the Council of the Civil Aviation Board of Greece. A correct understanding of the problems of perestroika is very important to the left forces the world over. Firstly, we must realise clearly that setbacks in building socialism do not debunk our ideology as a whole or amount to the bankruptcy of Marxism. Secondly, perestroika is not a reformist movement, and does not involve the abandonment of revolutionary strategy or, as many Greeks unfortunately think, the principles of Marxist social analysis. The Coalition will neither achieve its objectives nor win majority support if it does not take a clear-cut stand on these and other important issues. Our programme is still vague ideologically, and we have to overcome this weakness.

Anna FILINI, independent member of the Coalition's Political Commission. The Coalition must be open to other independent left forces and become a forum for the entire left spectrum. To this end it is necessary to freely discuss pointed political and ideological problems not only at the leadership level, but also among the grassroots. An honest dialogue will win back to our ideals all those comrades who have grown disillusioned or shifted their votes to PASOK. Without them the left alternative can hardly be revived.

■ **The Political Commission of the Coalition has passed a number of important organisational decisions. Standing local support committees are being set up. They do not follow the strict principles of communist party organisations, but operate independently and with maximum openness. A permanent structure has been built at the leadership level. Does all this mean that the member parties of**

the Coalition are being gradually dismantled and that a new broad left party is being established instead?

KIRKOS. Eventually, the Coalition can evolve into a single organisational structure. It will then be much more efficient than today, when each ally keeps its autonomy. The Left will be able to take a step from pre-history to its modern history. This will take time, of course. In the first place we must develop a new political culture to enable diverse trends to coexist within one party without the suppression of a minority, on the one hand, and without factionalism, on the other.

LENTAKIS. In the beginning, I think, such closely related parties as EAR and EDA can merge because they have essentially the same ideological and political platform. We can overcome personal grievances and differences and unite. But on the whole, I do not see any need for the merger of all the coalition parties at the moment.

Stathis JOTAS, MP, former deputy defence minister in the PASOK government. I do not rule out any possibility. The idea of a merger can be discussed and decided upon together. But the main thing for us, those who were struggling within PASOK, now is to organise a "third force" within the Coalition (the first one being the KKE and the second the representatives of "Greek Eurocommunism"). Many of the former Papandreou supporters are vacillating, but they do not go over to our side until we form a single party of all those who have dropped out of PASOK over the past few years. If we create such a third political organism, the Coalition will grow stronger.

FILIAS. I don't think that the idea of the merger of all the coalition forces into a single party has objective grounds; rather, it is wishful thinking. Those who have left PASOK to join us admit that that party is bankrupt, although it won 39% of the votes in the June elections. The only way out is to replace it with a new socialist alliance, which will function as an autonomous structure within the Coalition.

FILINI. I still believe that our ultimate goal is a single party. Of course, the conditions are not yet ripe for such a move. If we make haste, we will not help the Left develop its dialogue. EDA as it was before the junta seized power in 1967 had been a good example of left unity. Steps towards establishing a single party should be very cautious in order not to lose those segments of the Coalition which still disagree with this idea. No one wants new splits.

CARAGOULES. The Coalition unites diverse forces and prominent public figures. They have drawn up a programme pointing to a different road for Greek society, which makes the Coalition a lasting and not a temporary alliance. Unarguably, we have ideological and political differences, and along with the infusion of new members this diversity will grow, while on the other hand their positions will draw closer together. Given the present differences of views, it would be wrong to attempt to unite the coalition forces into a single party.

Nor does the KKE seek such unification: its purpose is

to broaden in every way the political and social spectrum of the Coalition. As for the organisational measures, including the formation of central and grassroots structures, they are aimed not at blocking the activities of individual parties, but at raising the efficiency of their alliance with a view to achieving unity of action and engaging the mass of people, while the identity of every partner will be fully respected.

■ **All the members of the Coalition recognise that the motive force of unity is pluralism and democracy within the Coalition itself and individual parties. How can this invaluable principle be protected?**

CARAGOULES. From the start we have been working collectively and democratically, although the forces making up the Coalition are very broad and diverse. This does not mean, however, that we can sit back and relax. The purpose of our recent organisational changes is to make our alliance more efficient, to promote collective decision-making and to broaden democracy within the Coalition. Its structure, we believe, should be appropriate to its character, and not duplicate individual parties. Our paramount goal is to encourage independent initiative in grassroots committees, to make them open up to the people, and to foster free exchanges of opinion within the frame of united action.

As for democracy within the party, it is an important issue, related in a sense to the party's work within the Coalition. The KKE is democratic, but its 12th Congress (1987) stressed the need for further broadening democracy in the party, diversifying party life, making the elective bodies more efficient and enhancing the role of every Communist in them. That is why we are urging a breakthrough in the party work, so that the KKE could rise to the challenges of our time.

LENTAKIS. We recognise the principle of equality and pluralism for all, of course, but we cannot disregard the "weight" of all our coalition partners either. For example, the KKE and the EDA are equal partners, but objectively our influence is weaker than that of the Communists because we are a very small party. However, it is not true that the strongest is always right, and that is why dialogue and democracy in decision-making are so important.

KIRKOS. Democracy in the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Lenin's time is an excellent historical example. The party leadership was made up of such opposites as Nikolai Bukharin, Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin, and Lenin was able to put the abilities of each of them to the service of the party and the revolution. I am certain that if Lenin's principles had prevailed, the Bolsheviks would have taken a different road.

The time of professional revolutionaries is over, of course, and today's communist parties must be open. The EAR Central Committee, for example, holds open meetings, and different trends coexist freely in our party. Not long ago we had in the party a strong opposition to the Coalition, but no sanctions were taken against it, and the

comrades themselves eventually realised that they were wrong.

Personal example is the best possible proof of one's commitment to democracy. Generally, socialism cannot exist without it. The sooner we recognise this and master a new political culture, the better.

FILINI. The Revolutionary Communist Party (EKKE), of which I was a member, believed that it had absolute truth in its pocket. Other left forces thought they knew it. Fortunately, such times are going away. However, while in words all of us recognise the need for democracy and pluralism, in practice we have not yet learned to act consistently in the spirit of these principles. It is necessary that everyone could stand up and speak his or her mind freely without fear of being isolated politically or victimised in other ways.

FILIAS. My vision of pluralism in the Coalition is that of the coexistence of different trends around a common central ideological axis. Not everyone claiming to belong to the Left is a real leftist. Some of such people, for instance, believe in neoliberal economic prescriptions. What we need is a left orientation in every field, and we should develop our pluralism around truly left ideologies and practices. I reject pluralism which means general ideological mishmash because then everyone will lose identity, and the left alternative, deprived of real meaning, will become a myth.

■ **The Coalition's common programme is not a final, static document. It is being enriched with new ideas, born of the dialogue of the left and progressive forces. Differences still persist on some issues. What is the basis for a sensible synthesis of all the opinions?**

CARAGOULES. The programme of the Coalition is not the resultant of the political programmes of the participating forces. It envisages far-ranging social transformations pointing towards democracy and socialism. Of course, compromises had to be made, including by the KKE. But the important thing is that we have come together in our desire to look forward and seek bold answers from the Left to new realities.

A few months ago the Greek press claimed that the KKE had "shed Marxist dogmatism", that "a restructuring of the colours of Greece" was afoot, that the EAR had subscribed to "the anti-European position of the KKE", etc. The truth is that on these issues the common programme does not differ from the conclusions of the 12th KKE Congress, which spoke out, among other things, on democracy, socialism and the Common Market.

I do not mean to say that the goals of our party have not evolved; such an evolution is only natural at a time of rapid change. But it would be wrong to think that we "are copying Soviet perestroika in Greek". However, we think it important to study it and to learn the lesson of revolutionary transformations in the socialist world. Perestroika is very valuable to the theory and practice of the communist move-

ment. But the problems confronting us demand that instead of copying it, we should develop our own ability to meet the challenge of the times. In this sense we are yet to do a great deal to refine and develop the programme goals of both the KKE and the coalition.

LENTAKIS. I think that the Coalition, like the left forces the world over, should take action around such major objectives as disarmament and world peace, the removal of ecological dangers, the prevention of unemployment resulting from the scientific and technological revolution, and the prevention of the negative effects of the demographic explosion. Marx and Engels could not foresee all these new phenomena in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, and a modern "socialist manifesto" of the left forces should be written today.

JOTAS. The main thing is to have a clear idea of where we are going and at what pace. To this end we should work out in detail such programme goals as the country's withdrawal from the North Atlantic Alliance and the removal of nuclear weapons and US military bases from our territory. Today the demand that Greece pull out of NATO would be unrealistic because of the unfavourable alignment of forces in parliament. The situation with the US military bases is different: parliament decided long ago that they should go by 1988, which means that they are illegal already today.

The progress of the social programme and the pace of structural changes and reforms pursued by a left government will depend on the concrete political situation in the world and especially in our region. We think that Greece must make a contribution towards the dissolution of the two military blocs and towards East-West rapprochement. New political thinking and Mikhail Gorbachov's actions have been creating a good international climate for the sensible step-by-step implementation of the programme of the Coalition of Left and Progressive Forces.

FILIAS. From the point of view of our programme, it is very important to reject the logic of assimilation into the capitalist system. We must not be doomed to serving capitalism merely because today the country does not have the conditions for resolutely breaking away from capitalism. That would be a betrayal of even the reformist concept of socialism, and a deviation from the coalition of the radical revolutionary forces. It cannot be ruled out then that pent-up discontent will be used by fascist-minded groupings. The European Left seems to underestimate this danger, while the petty bourgeois, who can rally around the revolutionary banner, in its absence lend an ear to fascist demagoguery. These are very serious problems which should be analysed in depth on the basis of sound knowledge of political history and Marxism.

■ **The Coalition has three ministerial posts—justice, the interior and labour—in the caretaker government formed after the June elections. But why didn't it join PASOK and instead entered a caretaker**

government controlled by the conservative New Democracy Party?

CARAGOULES. Our goal in the June elections was together with some PASOK-related forces to form a progressive democratic government. However, this proved impossible both because of the election returns, though favourable to the Coalition, and because of the failure of the PASOK leadership to learn the lesson of their electoral defeat.

In the concrete post-election situation the Coalition proposed a tripartite caretaker government with the task of cleansing public life from the effects of political scandals, democratising the state apparatus, and preparing new, absolutely honest elections. PASOK did not join that government.

We think that the Tzannetakis cabinet is a success for the Left, primarily because it has paved the way for a normal democratic process without immediate new elections, which would most likely install New Democracy as a single ruling party. The government has come up with a series of positive steps, in particular, on the media, on removing the consequences of the civil war, and on making state purchases more open to public scrutiny.

Placed squarely in the centre of politics, the Coalition has proved that it is able to assume responsibility for governing the country as well as work in opposition, and that the Left can produce answers to the country's pressing problems already today. The initiative of the Coalition and the formation of the Tzannetakis cabinet have helped to clear away many obstacles from the road of the left forces and enabled them to reach new social strata, including those still under conservative influences.

KIRKOS. If we had formed a government with the present PASOK leadership, we would have gone bankrupt. That party entered the scene as a truly popular movement, but after eight years in power it has become a totalitarian bureaucracy with a personality cult and even with growing profascist tendencies.

FILIAS. At the leadership level the PASOK is a new right-wing party. From behind the cover of "progressive" and "socialist" slogans it is pursuing conservative policies in every field, and uses radical phraseology only to dupe left-leaning audiences...

The leaders of the Coalition do not rule out the possibility of forming a new democratic government with the participation of honest PASOK politicians. That possibility will depend on the extent to which the party will be purged from corrupt, right-wing and profascist members, and to the alignment of forces after the next elections. Whatever the developments within the PASOK, the Coalition intends to be active in the political struggle in order to block the restoration of the two-party system. This is the only way for the left alternative to become reality.

Athens, August 1989



BEYOND TRADITIONAL PARLIAMENTARISM

Latin American Social Democrats and Communists Exchange Opinions

Popular rule in the light of new political thinking is one of the subjects in the focus of the dialogue unfolding between the Communists and the Social Democrats today. Recently Soviet scholars and representatives of the more influential Latin American Social-Democratic parties met at a seminar sponsored by the CPSU in Moscow to discuss the democratic alternative in Latin America. WMR arranged an interview with two of the participants, Demetrio SODI DE LA TIJERA, a member of parliament from the ruling Institutional Democratic Party of Mexico, and Jose RANGEL BARON, director of theoretical training of the Gonzalo Barrios Foundation of Venezuela's ruling Democratic Action Party. They discussed questions prepared by the journal with Jose ARIZALA, a WMR Editorial Council member and member of the CC of the Colombian Communist Party. Below is an account of their conversation.

■ **How do you define democracy and its major preconditions? What are the distinctive characteristics of advanced democracy?**

SODI. Democracy has been a weapon of struggle and a tool of public life ever since the time of Plato and Aristotle. It is a way of action and a means of resolving various day-to-day questions of human society. And political parties have assumed organisational and executive functions in the democratic development of society.

Today and in the future democracy should be perfected in order to be able to control itself and resolve the problems confronting society. Such perfection will never be achieved, of course, because democracy always has to adapt itself to changing circumstances and to meet majority interests in culture, the economy, the organisation of society and education by ensuring that people do not just elect their government, but also have a role in running the various affairs of their country.

ARIZALA. Generally, democracy means majority rule. Today this means not just rule in people's interest, but people's *participation* in decision-making, which presupposes universal suffrage, secret ballot, the adequate representation of citizens in government bodies, and the participation of worker organisations in discussing and deciding social questions.

The principles of people's rule are universal, but in societies divided into antagonistic classes economic and political power is in the hands of a minority. Contradictions between the individual and society and between civil society and the state are expressed in the existence of classes. Generally, this is how I see the problem.

As for advanced democracy, I think it is a political

system which has eradicated militarism and arbitrariness and formalised individual and socioeconomic rights and freedoms constitutionally and legislatively, and which fully respects civil liberties, meets the interests of the working people, and provides practical guarantees for the right to work, to housing, to education, to social security, and for the right to strike freely, etc.

In many industrialised capitalist countries working people fought for centuries to win broad political freedoms. This year we mark the bicentennial of the French Revolution, which, like the Great October 1917 Socialist Revolution in Russia, was a turning point in human history.

RANGEL. I agree with the definition of democracy as a form of human social organisation. It presupposes respect for certain basic requirements in the economy, in politics and at every level of society. The people must participate in all decision-making that touches on any part of their lives. Democracy cannot but improve itself through personnel training and retraining, which presupposes the democratisation of political parties themselves and the development of self-control within them. One example here is the Soviet Union, which has tapped its inherent philosophical and ideological potential in order to renew society.

Democracy today demands a greatest degree of social activity in an increasingly complex and interdependent world, one in which decisions taken at a national level can have international consequences. This is further proof of the fact that democracy is inseparable from freedom and social justice.

SODI. I share my colleague's views and would like to add that to me democracy is a living and dynamic process. If this were not so, it would be hard to understand

why a country like Mexico, which has had a parliament for 70 years now, still has to look for new, modern ways of ensuring a broader public role in the administration of social affairs and greater public openness. I see similar processes in Venezuela, in the Soviet Union, and in industrialised countries, which have to carry on democratic processes continuously in spite of their wealth of experience. Of course, there are bound to be temporary setbacks on that road.

The progress of democracy is sometimes blocked by low voter turnouts. The reality of virtually all the leading capitalist powers shows that there are no acute social conflicts (and therefore no attempts to settle them electorally) when economic growth is adequate. Conversely, in a number of underdeveloped countries the contradictions of capitalism are so great and the socioeconomic differences so glaring that traditional parliamentary democracy is unable to resolve the economic and political problems of society.

As for advanced democracy, it should take into account all aspects of the development of civil society—economic, social, humanitarian—guarantee respect for political rights, and also encourage a search for ways to social equality.

DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT ARE INDIVISIBLE

■ *What is the correlation between the economic situation, and the cultural and historical features, of Latin American countries and the level of democracy achieved in them?*

ARIZALA. It is generally believed that the higher the economic and cultural level of a society, the more viable democracy is. An educated people are more aware of the advantages of a democratic system, of its being essential to national well-being. Democracy is stabler in countries which give priority to education and maintain only token armed forces, such as Costa Rica. Or take Chile: the well-developed political culture of the people and the continuity of the democratic tradition in that country brought Allende's Popular Unity to power in elections, and then put an end to the political career of the dictator Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite.

RANGEL. I don't think there's any point looking for democratic stereotypes that could be exported all over the world. Each people tackles its tasks as it sees fit, although we are all aware of global problems. The perennial opposition of the two ideological systems has done precious little to resolve common human problems. Today we are glad to see socialism moving towards democracy, and democracy towards socialism.

The maintenance of democratic regimes and the anti-imperialist struggle are continuous processes in Latin America. We think that our way lies in a social system that would neither constrain our energies nor serve monopo-

listic or imperialist interests, whether under socialist or under capitalist banners.

The Latin Americans were cast in the role of now a tool, now an object of alien policies in a world divided into antagonistic blocs, but life has taught us that only unity, only a common desire for true integration gives us a voice as a geopolitical entity, because Latin America is a single continent culturally, linguistically, historically and politically. This is the guarantee of our future in the increasingly complex human community.

The world is approaching the 21st century, and all countries in the East and West, North and South share responsibility for resolving the global problems of our time. If we fail to meet the challenge, we will be finished even without a nuclear catastrophe. Ecological problems will not be resolved, the threat of nuclear war averted or growing hunger relieved so long as explosive tension persists between the largest blocs and so long as their attitude to the backward and oppressed nations remains unchanged.

Our meeting in Moscow, exchanges of opinions and discussions have helped us realise the present challenges facing Latin America and even the industrialised societies. What is the use of development if basic human needs, especially the striving for freedom, are not satisfied? And why talk about freedom when whole nations cannot obtain the basic necessities, and are barely keeping above the poverty line? Anyway, development cannot be reduced to economic growth. Brazil, among other countries, has made good economic progress over the past few years, but has not resolved its most urgent problems. It would seem that the economy has to be democratised in order for wealth along with jobs to be distributed fairly among people. Then there will be more justice in life, and peace, development and freedom will triumph.

SODI. Individuals and nations have a natural striving for the democratic organisation of society (in their day Amerindians worked the land on a communal basis). But they often had rulers who had no use for the ideals of harmony and collectivism. Today there seems to be a direct relationship between the educational and cultural standards of a nation and the real chances of democracy in any given part of the world. Nations with rich historical and cultural backgrounds have found it easier to rid themselves of foreign oppression, and thus of the retardation of democratic processes associated with it.

DO DEMOCRACY AND PRIVATE OWNERSHIP MIX?

■ *What is the relationship between democracy and socialism on the one hand, and private property, on the other?*

RANGEL. The important thing is not property itself, but social returns from its private or public forms. The state often simply alienates people from property by monopolising the right to it. This is what happens when public

lands are misused by a negligent state unaware that land is a most important factor of development. Instead of claiming the monopolistic ownership of the land, the state should perhaps distribute it to the people so as to make them co-owners of that wealth.

ARIZALA. But I think that a society without private ownership of the means of production promotes (although it does not ultimately decide) the democratic law and order and the progress of freedoms. A system based on private property, which aggravates inequalities between classes and individuals, is a different matter. Such a system makes the dispossessed dependent on the property-owners and limits the rights of the working majority. And the foreign policy of such a system is a reflection of its inner nature. Colombia has first-hand experience of the pernicious influence of US imperialism as it robs us of our natural resources and supports wholly undemocratic governments.

RANGEL. In my opinion, economic progress is the primary condition for the institutional codification of democracy. It is on this basis that effective steps can be taken towards social and cultural development and adequate living standards. Private property is a basic right under pluralistic and democratic regimes because it is a manifestation of free choice. The state, I think, should only control and regulate the relationship between the different forms of property and fix their contributions to raising living standards, primarily those of the dispossessed classes. If we go by the definition that democracy is rule by the people, then the poor make up the majority of the population, at least in Latin America. Hence the need to work out requisite mechanisms for redistributing incomes in accordance with the norms determined at every level by the democratic institutions themselves.

SODI. It seems to me that the ultimate abolition of private property in Latin America, at least in the near future, is unrealistic in view of the sphere of influence to which it belongs. However, conditions in Mexico have made it possible to introduce an agrarian reform of a socialist nature, namely, to take land from big latifundistas and distribute it among the people. Other major steps have been taken, such as the nationalisation of the power industry and natural resources, including the oil-fields, and a social security system extending virtually to the entire population has been created. The banks were nationalised six years ago, but that major step has not justified the people's expectations for a fairer distribution of national wealth.

Clearly, our goal should be an economic system with a far greater social emphasis than today. It should not be a wholly capitalist economy controlled by a handful of financial, industrial and commercial tycoons. Paradoxical as it may seem, even transnationals can be made to give more attention to the social aspects by influencing their investment policies and by improving labour legislation to benefit the working people and their militant trade unions, which, in cooperation with progressive parties and enjoy-

ing state support, could drastically restrict the speculative ambitions of Big Capital.

POLITICAL PLURALISM AND DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

■ How would you define the fledgling notion of socialist pluralism? What are its limits?

ARIZALA. I think that socialist pluralism means the existence of different constitutionally and legally guaranteed political parties and ideological trends within the frame of the new society which is going to succeed capitalism. Historically, very different forms of political organisation arise on the basis of socialist infrastructure during the transition period, just as under capitalism we have authoritarian and democratic regimes, parliamentary republics and even constitutional monarchies.

A one-party system, as in the Soviet Union, is a product of the specific conditions of historical development rather than a logical result of the Marxist doctrine. Lenin's first government was for some time a multiparty one (Bolsheviks and Left Socialist Revolutionaries). However, most socialist countries still have restrictions on the functioning of antisocialist parties.

As for Latin America, the various socialist and left trends here are the condition for forging a collective vanguard capable of struggling for a single democratic and socialist government.

RANGEL. I couldn't agree more. The important thing is not simply socialist, but ideological pluralism. The principle of peaceful coexistence and the different roads of sociopolitical development chosen by the peoples lead to a kind of transition system which does not involve ideological dogmatism or totalitarian politics, but aims at achieving a new level of mutual understanding and political participation.

SODI. To my mind, pluralism—socialist and capitalist; in culture and in history—is the salient feature of contemporary society. Until recently we were blinkered by a "two-system" perception of the world: either traditional capitalism in the US mould, or Soviet-style communism. But now we have realised the substantial differences between the socialist systems in China, Hungary, the Soviet Union and Cuba, and the original socialist choice in Nicaragua. At the same time Mexico has a mixed-economy capitalism with strong government regulation, and industrialised countries, their own brand of capitalism.

■ Can the civilian authorities in Latin America fully control the armed forces, and if they can, under what conditions?

RANGEL. First, I think, we should look back at the history of the political role of the armed forces in democratic processes. The picture is clear: when sovereign nations were emerging from the independence struggles, the army was fulfilling a mission of liberation as

it battled with anarchy and various forms of oppression. The problem is, however, that having accomplished their tasks, the military tend to remain at the helm, which is not at all what they ought to do.

On the other hand, in countries with strong democratic traditions, such as Venezuela and Mexico, the armed forces perform the special task of watching over and protecting the existing constitutional structures. I don't think that the army ought to intervene in political decision-making.

ARIZALA. For my part, I don't see how the army can be controlled by the civilian authorities in Latin America: civil society is yet too weak, and the military have a substantial role to play in politics. For example, the Argentine military are a veritable armed caste. The armies should be cut back as much as possible, and the civilian authorities should exercise tight direct control over the armed forces. Of course, democracy should be extended in the ranks as well; in particular, there should be provisions for the promotion of privates to officer rank (impossible today, at least in Colombia), the military should have the right to vote, and education in democracy should be provided in barracks and military schools. Moreover, the "national security" doctrine must be scrapped, violations of the law by the army made public, officers and men guilty of such violations dismissed from the ranks, etc.

Only if these conditions are met can the pressure of the armed forces on the civilian authorities be relieved.

SODI. I cannot deny that in many Latin American countries civilian control over the military is a utopia, at least in the near future. But in Mexico, which is a special case, the army is fully subordinate to the government and, I think, will under no circumstances pose a threat to the country's democratic development. Yet we had bitter experiences in the past: 18 months after the Mexican Revolution, which had taken a heavy toll of the people, the army, loyal to the former dictator Porfirio Diaz, again seized power. The armed forces had to be disbanded and a new, truly popular army raised; Mexico has had such an army ever since.

Theoretically, the military can be controlled, proof of which is supplied by the experience of countries in which the armed forces have been constitutionally subordinated to the presidential, parliamentary and judicial authorities over the years.

RANGEL. That is why in the democratic states of our region the president, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, coordinates the relationship between the various branches of power, including the military.

■ **Is the democratic alternative compatible with the violence involved in the national liberation struggle?**

ARIZALA. History is replete with examples of armed struggle aimed at liberation. But we should also admit that violence cannot be considered a democratic method. Weapons are meant to coerce and subjugate, not to per-

suaire. However, there is the lawful right to self-defence. If imperialism exports counterrevolution, and if the ruling classes resort to violence, the peoples cannot be denied the right to defend themselves, even with arms. In Colombia the ruling classes have been using violence against their own people for years, and the backlash has been the rise of a powerful guerrilla movement.

RANGEL. Violence always results from the suppression of the weak by the strong. It must not be used as a means of achieving or strengthening democracy. All systems, however democratic, breed a certain element of violence. Apart from that, violence is not only physical coercion. For example, when industrialised states undercut the export revenue of the developing countries and press on them unfair terms of economic, scientific and technological exchange, they practise a form of violence which is a serious destabilising factor in the development of democracies in Latin America.

In neighbouring Colombia, democracy has fallen on hard times. The Colombians would do well to reconsider the system of relations between their parties, which still relies on hegemony. Clearly, when people see no real chance of having a say in decision-making, they resort to violence. If the working people, whose consciousness grows far faster than the state institutions improve, are not given a fair deal, their wrath will sooner or later crush those institutions.

SODI. I still think that in many cases national liberation cannot be achieved without recourse to violence, especially when popular will comes up against the strength of the armed forces. The only option then is to disband the armed forces and replace them with a popular army, although the specific circumstances of every country should always be taken into account.

RESTRUCTURING AND SOCIALIST THOUGHT IN LATIN AMERICA

■ **What is the significance of perestroika in the USSR and other socialist countries for the destinies of democracy in Latin America and the rest of the world?**

ARIZALA. One can say that perestroika is the best thing that could have happened to the CPSU, the Soviet Union and the Communists of the whole world. We are seeing socialism merge with democracy, overcoming its unwarranted aloofness. It is a return to humanism, a fusion of necessity and freedom.

The CPSU has carried out a searching and critical self-analysis, shed the harmful vestiges of the past, returned to the sources of the freedom-loving revolutionary traditions of the socialist and communist movements, and thus ushered in a new phase in the development of world socialism and in progress towards communist ideals. These processes are evoking broad responses in Latin America and other parts of the world, and will un-

doubtedly contribute to fresh successes in the struggle for democracy and socialism. Ultimately, it is perestroika that will help abolish violence and achieve world peace for present and future generations.

RANGEL. In recent years the world has witnessed a process of technocratic growth which has expanded the spheres of domination in every field, ostensibly to promote development, without bringing freedom. Today, man is trying to make peace with himself, and returning to the springs of natural ethical values. In Soviet policy I see a desire to give back to humankind the great and hitherto forgotten behests of the French Revolution. It is important to understand that the ideas of the outstanding thinkers of that age are again gaining ground.

The moral and physical development of the individual is a two-fold process. One-sided development is abnormal, like a one-legged man—materialistically or spiritually. The soul and the body should grow in harmony. The Soviet Union has realised this, as all the peoples in the world must. So I am optimistic about the practical prospects for human reconciliation, not just for the sake of a better life on earth, but for the preservation of our civilization. The extremes of capitalism and of a much misunderstood and distorted communism have been the main brakes on progress this century.

SODI. I absolutely agree with Jose on this. Changes in the USSR, with its huge political, economic and social influence in the world, can hardly be overestimated.

Although in the past we were aware of the Soviet Union's successes in education, health care and social security, there were always grounds for criticising authoritarianism, dictatorship and lack of democracy there. Now Soviet perestroika will enable all the democratic countries and left forces in Latin America better to understand and meet the aspirations of their peoples, who need not only higher living standards, but also broader freedoms, democracy and participation in politics. Far-ranging changes and the repudiation of dogmatism in the Soviet Union are opening up great opportunities for the development of socialist thinking in Latin America.

UNITY FOR ADVANCED DEMOCRACY

■ **What do you think of the chances for cooperation between the Socialists, the Communists and other left forces in the struggle for advanced democracy? What are the lessons of that struggle and the possible forms of joint work?**

RANGEL. There are broad opportunities for such cooperation. We have melted the ice of mistrust between the antagonistic blocs, and we are discussing our common problems and looking for solutions. This process involves both the left and the right forces. Countries and peoples everywhere are advancing towards a new world order—one which will make it possible to meet the vital needs and aspirations of the masses. It is important to find new forms of cooperation and coexistence, to build new world economic relations by making economies mutually complementary, to expand production, to use technology better, etc.

It is highly significant that representatives of many Latin American political parties and colleagues from the CPSU have met here in Moscow to discuss serious issues of our time. We are taking back a wealth of marvellous experience. I hope that the seeds of cooperation and understanding that we are sowing today will germinate and let us enjoy the benefits of living in a civilised community under conditions of harmonious development, freedom and social justice.

SODI. In the past, relations between the Socialists, the Communists and other left forces were so poisoned by dogmatism that no agreement between them was possible. In many regions the Left is categorised as Leninists, Stalinists, Trotskyites, Maoists, etc. Perestroika is blowing away the cobwebs of dogma and revealing to us the dynamics of the left movement and socialist thinking, enabling us to find points of contact and remove differences in order to build left unity, something which seemed impossible in the past. Processes of unification have involved broad sections of the people in a number of Latin American countries. The Socialists believe that the lofty goals of prosperity, democracy and justice for all demand great sociopolitical flexibility.

ARIZALA. As our discussion has proved, there are new arguments in favour of closer cooperation between the Social Democrats, the Socialists and the Communists in their efforts towards common goals, such as independence, people's rule, human rights and progressive economic and social reforms. Cooperation can take different forms, including united action, individual accords and long-term alliances. What we have in common is not just our roots and traditional links with the working people, but also the general perspective of a struggle for advanced democracy which goes beyond conventional capitalist parliamentarism and offers Latin Americans a vista of greatness.





MARXISM AND THE IDEAS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE VERDICT OF REASON

Robert STEIGERWALD

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Can the bourgeois revolution in France be regarded as the source of Marxism, of the ideology and politics of the working people? In our most beautiful and most important song we sing: "Die Internationale erkämpft das Menschenrecht!" (The International will win the rights of man).¹ The lack of human rights was what led the masses to storm the Bastille. The working-class movement has always been a movement for human rights, and to that extent we Marxists are heirs to the French Revolution.

In a more profound, political sense there is also the problem of the legitimacy of revolution, and it was no accident that every effort was made to avoid this aspect of the anniversary celebrations organised by the bourgeoisie: human rights against revolution was their motto, but we regard the two as a unity, not as the two opposite sides of a contradiction.

As we mark the bicentenary of the French Revolution, we accept what Engels said about it in his *Anti-Dühring*: it was a revolution that wanted to drag everything before the bench of reason, since the thinking mind was alone to be the measure of all things. All injustice, all superstition, all privileges and oppression were to be abolished. Everlasting truth, everlasting justice, equality and the inalienable rights of man were to reign supreme. "We know today that this kingdom of reason was nothing more than the idealised kingdom of the bourgeoisie; that this eternal Right found its realisation in bourgeois justice; that this equality reduced itself to bourgeois equality before the law; that bourgeois property was proclaimed as one of the essential rights of man; and that the government of reason, the Contrat Social of Rousseau, came into being, and only could come into being, as a democratic bourgeois republic."²

But Engels went on to emphasise that in the struggle against the nobility the French bourgeoisie was, on the whole, able to claim that it simultaneously represented the interests of the various working strata of the period. In the course of the revolutionary movement, independent action

was again and again taken by the class which increasingly took shape as the forerunner of the modern proletariat. Such was the conspiracy led by Gracchus Babeuf, whose ideas were also reflected in those of the utopian Socialists, who are, after all, our own ideological and political "ancestors".

Consequently, the attitude to the French Revolution on the part of its heirs is a dialectical negation: rejecting its reactionary elements and cherishing its revolutionary impulse, we thus raise its humanistic content to a higher level. One has to admit, however, that this negation has far from always been dialectical.

Lenin had full ground to say that Marxism did not emerge away from the highroad of world civilization, but as an answer to questions mankind's progressive thinkers had already formulated. Marx's doctrine "emerged as the direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism".³ This was possible only because Marx made an in-depth study of material, social and ideological developments in England, Germany and France: England provided the economic material for his analysis of capitalism, the philosophy of Germany, the starting point for working out his own world view, and France, for drawing up his political theory.

For all its limitations and shortcomings, Marx continued to regard the French Revolution as something of a model, for it was in France that the class struggle was again and again fought through to the end, more so than in other countries. "France," Engels wrote, "demolished feudalism in the Great Revolution and established the unalloyed rule of the bourgeoisie in a classical purity unequalled by any other European land. And the struggle of the upward-striving proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie appeared here in an acute form unknown elsewhere. This was the reason why Marx not only studied the past history of France with particular predilection, but also followed her current history in every detail, stored up the material for future use and, consequently, events never took him by surprise."⁴

Marx made a thorough study of the writings on the history of the French revolution, and especially of its high point, the period of the Convention and of the so-called Terror. He regarded the Convention as embodying a maximum of political energy, political power and political reason. He studied the speeches of Louis de Saint-Just and Maximilien

Robespierre, the official protocols of Convent debates, the works of Babeuf, and the memoirs of Levasseur de la Sarthe, which did much to clarify his view of classes, the class struggle, the substance of social transformations and historical development. They told him that social revolutions spring from economic conditions and the class struggle, and that the state represents the interests of the class which is currently in power and which uses it to oppress the other classes. Revolution highlights the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class. This struggle has become a salient feature of our age. The French Revolution proved that the ruling class will never give up its privileges willingly, that it is prepared to fight for these privileges tooth and claw, and that far-reaching transformations are only possible through the hardest of revolutionary battles.

Marx wrote several works to analyse the French Revolution and to draw conclusions from its experience. Take the few but exceptionally important articles he wrote for the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.⁵ Marx was then on the way to becoming a "Marxist", and he compared the existing order in Germany and in France: revolution on the other side of the Rhine, deepest backwardness on this side. The Germans were up to date only in philosophy, proclaiming in theory what the French were putting into practice. There was a need to unite those forces in Germany which suffered most from reaction—the proletariat and the progressive thinkers. That was the first step to the idea of joining the working-class movement and the progressive theory, a notion which subsequently developed into the idea of a Marxist workers' party.

He also outlined the doctrine of social revolution. There was a strong bourgeoisie in the France of 1789. It came out boldly against the crumbling feudalism, taking a stand for freedom generally and expressing, through its own specific class interests, those of social emancipation in general. But in Germany there was a pitiful bourgeoisie incapable of fighting for a political revolution. Even the most consistent of bourgeois revolutions—that in France—could afford to confine itself to the political sphere, because the economic and social basis of capitalism had already developed under feudalism. Besides, the French bourgeoisie would not and could not do away with the actual inequality of the exploiting and the exploited classes and remove the social basis of this exploitation—private ownership of the means of production. Germany, said Marx, was unable to liberate itself in a revolution confined to the political sphere because of the existing order of things. The revolution had to be a total one, both political and social, but a social revolution could only be carried out by the class of workers who were deprived of rights and of property.

In these articles we find an idea whose importance it is hard to exaggerate for our own revolutionary theory: no class can play the leading role "without arousing a moment of enthusiasm in itself and in the masses, a moment in which it fraternises and merges with society in general, becomes confused with it and is perceived and acknow-

ledged as its *general representative*; a moment in which its demands and rights are truly the rights and demands of society itself; a moment in which it is truly the social head and the social heart".⁶

The revolutionary movement of the people and the emancipation of a given class coincide when society begins to regard all its failings as being concentrated in a particular class, which is the embodiment of all the obstacles and all the general barriers. "For *one* estate to be *par excellence* the estate of liberation, another estate must conversely be the obvious estate of oppression. The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the immediately adjacent and opposed class of the *bourgeoisie*."⁷ There was, unfortunately, no such force in Germany: it was still in the making. Marx believed that this force was the fettered proletariat.

Marx made considerable headway in devising a theory of the state and of society. He debunked the illusions of bourgeois ideologues who claimed that the state represented everyone's interests. With private ownership of the means of production dominant, such common interests could not really exist, and there was nothing for the state to represent. The illusion had to be exposed, and the actual contradictions had to be identified. This awareness led Marx to the conclusion that everyone's interests could only be met through public ownership. When the real social contradictions are restricted and subsequently overcome, there will be no need for the state—an illusory institution representing an illusory common interest. This was the beginning of a concept in which Marx referred to the withering away of the state.

In *The Holy Family*, the first work Marx and Engels wrote together, Marx polemicised with the critics of the French Revolution, stressing that it had been carried out not by ideas but by the masses, with the bourgeoisie leaving an imprint on this gigantic class battle.

Marx's analysis of French materialism is of exceptional interest to us today. Its core was the idea that men are naturally equal and that the social milieu plays a part in forming the individual. If men want to live as befits human beings, their social environment must be made humane, and if they act in accordance with this basic aspiration, it stands to reason that the general human interest must be set over and above the private interest; this is the way to build a humane society. These ideas, Marx held, inevitably lead to socialism, whose French version is akin to German humanism. Following up on these ideas, one could say that communism is an expression of the struggle for freedom by the masses which have been dehumanised by capitalism. We find, therefore, that at the new historical stage, the ideals of Marxism are akin to those of the French Revolution.

Its spiritual legacy contains three essential ideas: the *rights of man*, the *rule-of-law state*, and the *separation of powers*.⁸ We Marxists have duly appreciated these ideas in historical terms, although we tended, with good reason, to

regard them as being mainly bourgeois. True, now and again the conclusion was drawn that they belonged to the past and had ceased to be relevant to Marxists. This assessment needs to be corrected in the light of the experience gained. This has to be done dialectically, i.e., not merely by returning to bourgeois ideas, but by raising them to a higher level. Let me explain my point.

Central to the *rights of man* proclaimed by the French Revolution was their private property-related individualistic aspect, and Marx noted this as a reflection of the rights of the private proprietor. The working class was able to secure its objectives only in fighting the bourgeois class and its political machine. This is why Marxists long gave preference to collective rights and tended to underestimate individual rights. We did, of course, stress quite correctly that individual rights could be met only by means of certain protective measures taken by society collectively, and in practical terms this led us to "forget" the continuity between bourgeois revolutionary humanism and Marxism. The negation was not a dialectical one: we failed to see the healthy seed which could sprout into something richer, and often simply destroyed the seed. We have paid too high a price for ignoring the truth which, as experience shows, should not be ignored: defence of the individual rights of man against state or social arbitrariness is an *elementary juridical demand*. If we reject the distortions of individual human rights by the bourgeoisie, it does not follow that we are at odds with the individual insisting on his or her rights. Here Marxists are faced with new tasks in theory and practice.

The same thing has happened to the idea of the *rule-of-law state*, which emerged as the political banner of the bourgeoisie in its fight against the arbitrariness of feudalism. Resistance to it meant that the actions of the authorities had to be regulated by law. The Marxist critique of this idea is most vividly symbolised by a scene in one of Anatole France's novels. A beggar brought before a magistrate for vagrancy tries to explain that he had nowhere else to spend the night except under the bridge, while the magistrate instructs the beggar that stealing bread and sleeping under bridges is a breach of the law for poor and rich alike.

The formalised criticism of the bourgeois rule-of-law state led to the socialist countries' giving inadequate attention to the legality of actions taken by state agencies, and this, I feel, was due to the habit of letting things drift, although there was a healthy rejection of it in other cases. The tragic experience of the Stalinist period showed the great importance of socialist legality.

The idea of the *separation of powers* is also very important to us. Even in a socialist state, the party (or its governing bodies) has no "right" to ignore or sidestep the laws: they are binding on one and all. No one can impede the courts in the administration of justice, and this should be guaranteed through the electivity of judges, public control over their activities, and unwavering observance of socialist legality. The separation-of-powers principle is now being

asserted under socialism on the basis of rule by the workers and peasants, the people's ownership of the means of production, and constitutional law and order designed to prevent any arbitrary breaches of civil rights. We find here a "return" to the initial idea on a basically new level.

An analysis of the ideological legacy of the French Revolution drives home the importance of the great efforts we Marxists have to make in theory and practice.

¹ The English version goes like this: "The Internationale shall be the human race".—Ed.

² Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 19.

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 23.

⁴ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 396.

⁵ Published in Paris in German under the editorship of Karl Marx and Arnold Ruge. Only one double issue appeared in 1844. The works of Marx and Engels in the yearbook marked their advance from revolutionary democracy to materialism and communism.—Ed.

⁶ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 184.

⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

⁸ The separation of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.—Ed.

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THE TRADITION OF HUMAN BROTHERHOOD

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The Chilean Francisco Bilbao (1823-1865), one of the great utopian socialists of Latin America, insisted that historical processes were immanent to our continent, believing that revolutionary movements in this part of the world were in the nature of a Robinsonade outside the global context. Nowadays, it is unacceptable and scientifically untenable to regard Latin American history in that light and outside the context of the French Revolution. Let us recall that Goethe believed that the French Revolution ushered in "a new epoch in the history of the world", and Hegel compared it with a "magnificent sunrise", when the "world stood upon its head".¹

There has always been a wide range of views of and attitudes to the French Revolution, and one should stress

that the Marxist assessment of it is identical with the opinion that the action taken by the French popular masses in 1789 was of exceptional significance. Marx and Engels said it was the greatest revolution ever known in history, and in *The Civil War in France*, Marx spoke of the "gigantic broom of the French Revolution",² a metaphor applied to revolutionary movements to this day.

Culture had an exceptionally important role to play in preparing that historic revolution. There were, first of all, the *Encyclopaedists* with their profoundly critical and iconoclastic approach. They pitted the power of human reason against religion and theology; the "mundane" potentialities of science against superstition; man's primacy against God's primacy; the materialist view of the world against the theological view; the interests of the nation against those of the Church and clergy; the sovereignty of the people against the "divine" origins of the state; the separation of powers against the absolutism of power; the proclamation of universal human and civil rights against the infallibility and omnipotence of the monarch. The *Encyclopaedia*, published between 1751 and 1780, contains all these elements of the new world view.

The incontestable influence which the *Encyclopaedia* and its authors had in other parts of the world, notably, in Latin America, is certainly due solely to their *universality*, which originated not only in the theoretical postulates of the revolutionary thinkers, but also in the fact that these postulates were in concert with the vital needs of a changing world, both in its geographical and historical dimensions. That is the only explanation why the ideas and ideals of the French Revolution had such an impact on the struggle for independence in Latin America, a liberation movement rooted in the very history of our continent and not caused by any external influence. Of great importance in this connection are Marx's ideas about the revolutions of 1648 in England, and of 1789 in France. He says that "these revolutions reflected the *needs of the world at that time* rather than the needs of those parts of the world where they occurred, that is England and France"³ (my italics—R.L.A.). Hence the kinship of the French Revolution with the worldwide processes of the day, including the War of Independence of the Latin American colonies, which had its own logic and boundaries, while reflecting "the needs of the world at the time", the universal causes and objectives which made it akin to the revolutionary battles in the country of Voltaire.

The similarity and concurrence of action by the liberation movement in the Latin American colonies and the scale of the action in what is now Venezuela make it possible to use this example to illustrate the French influence.

Virtually throughout the continent, as early as the 16th century, there were independent communities of black slaves who had fled from their masters and who were the source of an armed struggle: the Cumbes and the Cimarrones in Venezuela; the Palenques in Colombia; the Quilombos in Argentina and Uruguay; and the Mocombos in Brazil. Those associations were the source of rebellions

and uprisings which paved the way for the War of Independence. Thus, around 1552, there was an uprising in Venezuela led by Miguel, a Black, against the slave masters in the local mines; 1603 saw numerous insurrections by a fairly numerous group of pearl divers on the island of Margarita. The so-called Andresote rebellion of 1732 in Valle del Yaracuy involved slaves and freed Blacks. There were also the continued guerrilla operations by the Cimarrones around Panquire and Tuy Valley between 1771 and 1774. One major uprising by enslaved Blacks in Serrania de Coro in 1795 was led by Jose Leonardo Chirinos. Three years later, it was discovered that another uprising was in the making on the plantations of Cumana, Carupano and Cariaco and another year later, an insurrection by Blacks and mulattoes in the province of Maracaibo.⁴

One may well ask what connection there was between this Latin American process and the French Revolution. First of all, historians note that Haiti was the second state (after the USA) with a republican form of government to appear on the continent under the direct impact of the revolutionary developments in France in 1789. The Haitian example, for its part, had an indubitable influence on the insurgent movement throughout Latin America. On the other hand, the French example in a way anticipated the objectives of the liberation movement already under way in the colonies, enriching its fairly primitive philosophical postulates with the most advanced ideas of the period, something that was clearly manifested during the uprising in Serrania de Coro and the conspiracy in Maracaibo, in both of which the ideas of the French revolutionaries were proclaimed.

The views of those who started our national liberation struggle were so identical with these ideals that some Venezuelan historians regard the events in Serrania de Coro as the first Latin American response to the storm of liberation in France, whose example and revolutionary spirit were primarily and most keenly embraced by the dispossessed part of the population—the slaves who fought against the colonial rulers under the banners of equality and liberty. This casts doubt on the fairly widespread view that during that period, only the educated section of the colonial society accepted the ideas of 1789.

When enumerating the events which opened the way to our independence, one must also mention the well-known Gual and España conspiracy of 1797, i.e., two years after the Serrania de Coro uprising, and two years before the abortive insurrection in Maracaibo. The movement, led by Captain Manuel Gual and Constable Jose Maria España, was entirely inspired by the ideals of 1789. In 1796-1797, a group of Spaniards arrived in Venezuela, having been expelled from Spain for involvement in a French-type republican conspiracy. The leading conspirator was Juan Bautista Mariano Picornell, who landed in La Guaira in 1796, to become the one who drew up an ideological platform for the Gual and España movement, which is seen as the most serious attempt at liberation in Spanish America until that of Miranda in 1806.⁵

Many of the political documents adopted in Venezuela at the time have their origins in the French Revolution. There is, first, the main one: *The Rights of Man and Citizen* (1797), which included, in Picornell's translation, the relevant part of the French Constitution of 1793, the basis for the proclamation of America's independence and national sovereignty, of the abolition of slavery and of other radical democratic demands. The Gual and España insurrection ultimately confirmed the universality of the French Revolution, demonstrated the international solidarity of the revolutionaries, showed the basic trend of the period—the struggle against precapitalist oppression in the spirit of the struggle for liberty—and highlighted the militant spirit of Latin American patriots.

As one reads the documents of the struggle for the independence of Latin American nations, one is reminded not only of the philosophical sources of the French Revolution, but also of its institutional practices, which, it is true, did not always accord with the proclaimed ideals. It can be quite easily shown, in general, that the declarations of independence of Latin American countries, like the fundamental laws which determined their state structure, were suggested by the political writings of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau and other leaders of the Enlightenment, to say nothing of the fact that the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen produced by the French Revolution was incorporated into the Latin American constitutions. Consequently, new spiritual values were officially recognised and set in motion, the universities were modernised, and the works of the Encyclopaedists, notably, *Du Contrat social* and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, were translated into Spanish.

Such were the books which gave food for thought to Bolívar, Miranda, Hidalgo, Morelos, Nariño, Torribo Rodríguez de Mendoza, Mariano Moreno and other heroes and thinkers striving for emancipation and committed to the revolutionary era ushered in by France. There were also other influences coming from the USA, England and the Enlightenment in Spain itself.

When comparing the popular action before the War of Independence with its subsequent political content, one will find that the new ideas were not adopted either wholesale or in abstract terms, but acquired meaning and played a specific role depending on the social group applying them or on requirements of the moment. Whereas the uprisings and conspiracies were aimed mainly against the Creole nobility, sought to abolish slavery, and, with the exception of the Gual and España movement, were a purely internal affair, the War of Independence was led and directed by the same nobility against the arch-enemy—foreign colonial domination—and did not at all rule out the preservation of slave-holding oppression. While the popular insurgencies were clearly class-based, the class element in the War of Independence was merely an addition to the powerful national liberation impulse. The former were a response from the most oppressed strata, while the latter reflected the

interests and aspirations of the exploiter groups in the face of an external power.

Those are the underlying differences in the class attitudes: when rising to struggle towards the end of the colonial period, the popular masses fought for their interests against the Creole landowners; when the War of Independence broke out, and especially at its later stage, the oppressed found themselves in the same camp as their erstwhile oppressors.

The fact that the Creoles headed the struggle for independence and got the most benefits out of it also explains another feature of our history: the *erstwhile oppressors did everything to adapt revolutionary ideas and principles to their own dominant role*. They could not build their states in contravention of their own interests, but neither were they able to propose a philosophy which the popular masses could accept as their own militant banner. It is not surprising, therefore, that once independence had been won, or, the "domestic tyranny" had been ended, as Bolívar put it, the content and tone of the speeches and proclamations of the new masters and the character of their action and ideas became symbolic rather than conducive to concrete efforts because these would have implied concessions and reforms in favour of the peasants and the working people generally.

Once the republican form of government was established and somewhat stabilised in Latin American countries, the local oligarchies on the whole preserved the institutional system based on the juridical and institutional postulates of 1789, but their practical implementation fell far short of the requirements of democracy, liberty, equality and brotherhood. But did not something similar happen in France as well, when the rights of man and citizen in fact became the rights of the bourgeoisie? *In the oligarchic republics of Latin America, the banner of the bourgeois democratic revolution could be raised only by the people*. Is that not evidenced, even if no more than indirectly but quite graphically, by the drama of the civil wars on the continent? And we seem to find the same state of affairs to this very day when we look at the nations dominated by internal and external reaction.

Hence the question of the contemporary significance of the great ideas of the French Revolution. Marx and Engels spoke repeatedly of the kinship between the materialism of the Age of Enlightenment and socialism.⁶ Elsewhere Engels says that in its theoretical form, *socialism follows up on the principles of the French Enlighteners*, and adds that in this sense "the proletarians took the bourgeoisie at its word.... Since the French bourgeoisie, from the great revolution on, brought civil equality to the forefront, the French proletariat has answered blow for blow with the demand for social, economic equality, and equality has become the battle-cry particularly of the French proletariat". This argued the need to abolish the social classes and suggested "the continued appropriateness of the ideas of the 18th century".⁷

For his part, Lenin gave a high appreciation of the

French Revolution and said that it "demonstrates to this day the vitality and force of its influence on humanity".⁸ Moreover, a close reading of the works left by the founder of the Soviet state shows how broadly he applied the experience and ideas of the Jacobins in the fight against csarism and for the building of a socialist society. We find examples of this on the pages of his *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, where he analyses, along with others, the question of the interconnection between political liberty and a democratic republic with the struggle for socialism.⁹

One of the reasons why *capitalism has renounced the ideas of its youth* will be found precisely in their present significance for the transformation of the world, and their kinship with socialism, which has become the chief revolutionary force of our day. That is why it is a key task of the advanced political forces to take at face value the bourgeoisie's own slogans of the Age of Enlightenment by carrying on a struggle for authentic, instead of mythical "liberty, equality and brotherhood", without which mankind cannot hope to move on to a more perfect society.

What then can one say in this context about Latin America? It certainly fits into the framework of the international revolution, with its own specifics, and does not, of course, renounce the democratic ideas and social institutions it has inherited.

Nevertheless, the popular masses find themselves deceived because *independence has not brought about a radical change in the economic structures* and has not significantly relaxed the class domination. For the popular masses, independence has become a *revolution betrayed*, which has denied them liberty, equality and brotherhood. Since these objectives are now again in the forefront, the ideas of the French Revolution have gained fresh strength. This conclusion is all the more justified because until recently, our history largely consisted of a succession of dictatorships which have always trampled on the sacred rights of man and citizen. This is a danger that has yet to be fully overcome, because the local democracies still retain many of the old defects; the traditional dictatorships of clans and groups give way to one-man dictatorships, so hampering the exercise of popular sovereignty.

Our "democracy" distorts the collective ingredient of the state by being reduced in practice to periodical electoral exercises and deals between various candidates. The frequent and unwarranted interference by the executive in every section of the social fabric violates the principle of the separation and equilibrium of powers. The virtually permanent use of oppressive measures is a chronic violation of human rights. The spread of corruption criminally undermines the equality of men before the law, while the external debt conspires against the sovereignty of the nations. The unequal agreements with the International Monetary Fund

and similar financial agencies result in an unfair distribution of income, and aggravate social problems.

These and other defects of our Latin American democracies *call for a Rousseau, with his rejection of social inequality, a Robespierre, with his revolutionary boldness, and a Babeuf, with his yearning for liberty.*

When considering the prospects before our continent, one has to emphasise the historical necessity of its second independence, this time from the United States. It must be a continuation and a consummation of the 19th-century wars of independence, issuing a challenge to imperialism under the revived slogans of the French Revolution, on whose behalf the 1790 Constituent Assembly declared that the French nation renounced any attempts to start wars of conquest or to use force against the liberty of any other people.

When Mikhail Gorbachov says that there can be no socialism without democracy, we seem to be witnessing a *fraternal handshake between the two great revolutions*. Ultimately, "we are all passengers aboard one ship, the Earth and we must not allow it to be wrecked. There will be no second Noah's Ark".¹⁰ This fiery call for peace among nations puts one in mind of the French revolutionary tradition of the *brotherhood of men*, which today acquires a new and even more potent meaning.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 16.

² Ibid., Vol. 22, p. 328.

³ See Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 161.

⁴ For details see Federico Brito Figueroa, *Las insurrecciones de los esclavos Negros en la Sociedad Colonial Venezolana*, Cantoclaro, Caracas, 1961, pp. 41-80.

⁵ Francisco Miranda (1750-1816), a leader of the liberation movement in the Spanish American colonies. In 1806, he organised two expeditions to the coast of Venezuela for the purpose of its liberation.—Ed.

⁶ See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, pp. 115-119; Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 16; Vol. 4, p. 141.

⁷ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 16, 98-99.

⁸ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 38.

⁹ Ibid., Vol. 9, pp. 23-24.

¹⁰ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Perestroika and New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, Collins, London, 1987, p. 12.

KOREA IS ONE

CHOI DOK SIN

Deputy Chairman, Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

The peaceful unification of my country, Korea, is a hope I have cherished all my life—a life full of painful doubts, frustrating illusions and sudden twists of fate. After more than 30 years in the South, almost 10 in exile, and now, in my declining years, in the North, I have assumed the responsible post of deputy chairman of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland.

For 5,000 years the Korean nation lived on the hallowed soil of its ancestors before it was partitioned by external forces more than 40 years ago. Partition is a real tragedy for my people: 10 million parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters have been divided for long years by the 38th parallel, not knowing what has befallen their kith and kin. But there is more to this long split than the human dimension: military tension has been aggravated; the Korean Peninsula lives under a constant threat of war, and any imprudent move could cause an explosion.

As an old soldier who served in the army till his hair went grey, I have a keen sense of the extreme gravity of the situation: if a war would break out because of the growing tensions between the North and the South, the geopolitical situation of our peninsula is bound to inflame the war into an international conflagration. Any conflict in this region, where vast masses of military hardware and weapons, including nuclear weapons, are stockpiled, is bound to embroil neighbouring states, indeed, the rest of the world.

I have long held that the way to save my homeland, to ensure peace in the Korean Peninsula, in Northeast Asia and throughout the world lies in the reunification of Korea, and that is why I regard the peaceful unification of my country as one of the most pressing international problems. For my nation it is a matter of life and death; for world public opinion it is a matter of deep concern. All progressive people in the world now support the Koreans' fervent hope for peace and an end to the division.

President Kim Il Sung's proposal sets forth the basic approaches and the direct way to solving the problems of reunification. In the concrete conditions in which different social systems have taken shape on Korean soil, recognition of the priority of the nation's interests over every other consideration—ideological, political, social, etc.—appears to be the most realistic approach to unification of any proposed up to now by either side.

This would involve the creation of a *confederal state* in which the two existing systems would be preserved on principles ruling out the forcible seizure of one by the other. In other words, the idea is to end the ideological confron-

tation within our people and to promote concord and cohesion for the national interest and as a basis for unifying the homeland.

There are more than 20 federal entities in the world today, and we find their prototype in the federation of the city-states of Ancient Greece. However, there is no historical precedent for a confederal state formed of parts with different political and social systems. But we shall never reunite our country if we confine ourselves to looking for precedents in the past.

In the South, great play is being made of the "German model", which I have never liked. Under Park Chung Hee, I was an adviser to the "Chamber for the Reunification of State Territory", which required, almost as a ritual, that each new chairman travel to West Germany to gain "experience". Every time one of my chiefs went to the FRG, I suggested that he make a study of united Austria instead of divided Germany. Firstly, because the historical circumstances which determined the German people's destiny differed from ours. Germany existed as a single state for just over 70 years: from 1871 until 1945; in contrast to Korea, Germany was the aggressor and the defeated side in a war against other countries. Besides, the existence of the two German states—the FRG and the GDR—is written into international treaties and is recognised by world public opinion. It is perfectly clear that the situation on the Korean peninsula is altogether different, and it makes no sense to follow the "German model".

When suggesting the study of Austria's experience, I proceeded from the history of Austria, which I visited when I was South Korea's ambassador to the FRG. The similarity between Austria and Korea in the actual state of things is quite obvious. First of all, the Austrians were deprived of their statehood as a result of Hitler's *Anschluss*. The Koreans suffered the same fate as a result of the Japanese aggression. After the war, there were zones in Austria in which foreign troops were stationed. In 1955 foreign troops were withdrawn, and the declaration of Austria's permanent neutrality was proclaimed.¹ Austria has become a united and independent state. The Korean nation can also consolidate its forces, rise above the ideological and political differences and the dissimilarities between the social systems in the North and in the South in order to reunite peacefully within a confederation.

This solution has the sympathy and support of public opinion in South Korea. The Reverend Moon Ik Hwan, an adviser to the South Korean Association of National Movements for Democracy (Chonminren), the centre of the opposition democratic forces in the South, recently visited Pyongyang, where he had a frank dialogue with the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland. In a joint declaration, we stated our identity of views and said that *confederation was the only realistic way towards reunification*. The same stand is also firmly taken by prominent leaders of some political parties, students and other strata of the population in the South. There is every indication that, while there are differences in the concrete

approach to realising a confederation, all Koreans find the idea itself attractive as a basis for solving the problem of reunification.

Since the reunification of the homeland through a confederation is now a pressing demand, it is natural to define the prerequisites for bringing it about. The chief one is to remove the danger of war and to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Without peace no positive measures can be taken in this direction under the present tense military confrontation between the North and the South. The situation is such that some problems in ensuring peace must be solved by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, and others by the North and the South.

The United States has more than 40,000 troops and over 1,000 nuclear weapons in South Korea, and its purpose is to perpetuate the partition of our country and to dominate the South. But there has been a marked change in the overall situation in South Korea, with events moving against the occupying forces: anti-US feeling is spreading and the people are demanding the removal of the Pentagon forces. In the United States itself, there are growing calls for a reduction in the US military contingent in South Korea, or for its complete withdrawal.

It stands to reason that the United States, which is engaged in negotiations with the Soviet Union on reducing nuclear potentials in Europe, must also ease tensions in Asia and release its grip on South Korea. US politicians should be reminded of their country's avowed commitment to the right of nations to self-determination, and in this context the withdrawal of US troops from South Korea would be a matter of honour and not a military defeat for them like Vietnam. All the more so since the consolidation of the independence of states and peoples rejecting any forms of foreign domination and oppression is now the dominant trend in world development.

The withdrawal of US troops and nuclear weapons from South Korea, and the conclusion of a peace agreement between the United States and People's Korea also has a basis in international law: the United States and the Korean People's Army were both signatories to the armistice agreement in Korea of July 1953. I was present at the signing of this document as a general of the South Korean "National Defence Army". It contains 16 articles clearly indicating a subsequent substitution of a state of peace for the armistice. Consequently, the United States has a responsibility for the conclusion of a Korean-US peace treaty.

Nevertheless, some prominent figures in the US still claim that there is a threat of attack from the North, and insist on the continued occupation of South Korea. This sort of anachronistic mentality was displayed, for instance, by commander of US troops in South Korea during the hearings of the US Senate Armed Forces Committee, when he kept talking about the North's military superiority and the "threat" from it.

I speak from experience when I say that the real threat of attack is from the South against the North. The facts are

obvious: US troops and nuclear weapons are deployed in South Korea, which also has a manpower potential double that of the North.

Equally worthy of consideration is the fact that a state's foreign and military policies are rooted in its internal development. I live in People's Korea and I have seen for myself the massive scale of civilian construction, which is not being carried out for any military purposes.

It is important to stress that the large quantities of nuclear weapons on South Korean soil are *targeted not only directly on North Korea*, for the range of these weapons covers other countries of Northeast Asia. This is an obvious and generally recognised fact. That is why, now that the United States has Japan for its ally and has been improving its relations with the USSR and China over the past several years, I believe that the *Korean Peninsula has lost its military-strategic value*. The Bush Administration, however, has not put forward any plan for withdrawing US troops. It is their presence that is the main obstacle to settling the Korea issue.

Once it is united in a confederation, Korea will become a peaceable and neutral state without links to any of the military blocs, thus creating a favourable situation for ensuring peace in Northeast Asia and markedly improving the atmosphere throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

The time has come for the United States to make a radical review of its policy with respect to Korea. Such a move would not only further the cause of our nation's independent and peaceful reunification and promote peace, but would also denote an intelligent act worthy of a great power.

Dialogue between the masters of the Korean Peninsula is highly relevant to easing tensions in the area. There is a need, first of all, to resume the military-political negotiations between the North and the South, to adopt a joint declaration on nonaggression, and to solve the problem of a mutual and phased reduction of armed forces on both sides down to an agreed level. I want to take the opportunity in this article, written for an international journal, to say to the South Korean leaders: it is time to jettison obsolete thinking which cuts across the interests of the nation and the cause of reunification, and to rise above considerations of personal prosperity, political ambition and self-seeking schemes. There is a need for a sincere approach to negotiations on the basis of an honest dialogue in a spirit of good will and with a desire for national accord.

In this context, I cannot but condemn the harassment by the South Korean authorities of the Reverend Moon Ik Hwan. He came to Pyongyang as a sincere patriot who had taken the bold decision to devote himself to the noble cause of reunification. If there is a true commitment to reunification and a readiness to serve the nation amongst the leaders in Seoul, then this man, who took an important step towards genuine dialogue, must be immediately released.

I have lived through a lot and I know well the military and foreign policy machinations of the South. I am con-

vinced that looking to external forces will not yield the desired objective. It is not too late for the South Korean leaders to shed their toadying mentality, which is expressed in their policy of securing international "cross-bloc recognition" of the two parts of Korea. This policy seeks only to perpetuate partition.

I would like here to express my profound gratitude to the political and social leaders in various countries and to the generous and kind-hearted people who have worked tirelessly to assist the Koreans in their quest for peace and reunification.

We live in an age of peoples' independent development, of the assertion of their freedom and equality; an age of relaxed international tensions and bold negotiations on the

most acute problems. The modern era favours the realisation of the Korean nation's most cherished hopes of ultimately gaining reunification through dialogue. This is an essential factor in ensuring world peace and security, and that is why I am sure that peace-loving people will continue to show solidarity with the Korean people's struggle for their country's reunification through their own efforts.

¹ In May 1955, representatives of the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, France, and Austria signed in Vienna a State Treaty proclaiming an independent and democratic Austria, and in October, the parliament adopted a constitutional law on the country's permanent neutrality.—Ed.

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DRAGON'S FANGS

Mike L. DEKKER
South African journalist

Dramatic, indeed crucial processes are occurring in Southern Africa. The freedom and democratic forces there are gradually winning the battle against the power of oppression and reaction. On the one hand, Namibian independence and the ceasefire agreement and national reconciliation in Angola have opened the road to extending the peaceful process throughout the region. On the other, the racist South African regime has failed to contain the ANC-led popular resistance by unleashing terror, or to roll back the frontiers of change by attacking its neighbours. But does this mean that the power structures of South Africa have been severely impaired? Will the Pretoria rulers' forced statements on half-measures (if only this is not rhetoric and evasion once again) lead to a swift collapse of apartheid and its military pillar? In order to answer these questions, let us see how firm this base is and how strong the dragon's teeth are.

Above all, I shall list the main components of the South African machinery of repression and aggression.

Firstly, South African *military strategy* is intimately connected with its political strategy of perpetuating white minority rule and suppressing the liberation processes.

The strategy's propaganda arguments boil down to asserting that the apartheid regime, which regards itself as a bastion of "Western Christian civilization" in Africa, is under continuous, multi-faceted threat from "communism". The racists are also clinging to this strategy as they withdraw from Namibia. Here they are arming white settlers, recruiting mercenaries, intimidating civilians and provoking SWAPO—in short, destabilising the situation in every way, fearing the "contagion" of progressive perspectives.

Secondly, it is not state authorities, but a parallel, secret and military-dominated hierarchy of committees that rules the country under what is referred to as the "total strategy"

for "total war". Known as "joint management centres", they coordinate the activities of the police, army, government departments and local authorities and are responsible for day-to-day implementation of state strategy, monitoring resistance and countering popular organisations which have mushroomed around South Africa.

Thirdly, the *arms budget* of Pretoria. This now stands at close to \$2 billion, having grown twice as fast as inflation over the last few years. But real spending on the army, under the budget items of construction, research and even via diplomatic channels (the upkeep of armed forces in the four "independent bantustans"), is considerably higher: 7.8% of Gross Domestic Product, according to the Johannesburg newspaper *Weekly Mail*.

It is groundless to expect that a South African withdrawal from Angola and Namibia will slow the pace of militarisation. Allocations from the "combat actions" item will simply be pumped into "arms development and purchase". For example, air fleet renewal accounts for three-fourths of the amount given to the air forces.

Fourthly, the *human potential*. Virtually all white males between the ages of 18 and 55 are now eligible for conscription into the South African Defence Forces (SADF) for two years. This may involve fighting in Namibia, Angola (until recently) or inside South Africa. After the years and months he spends in the regular army, then in the reserve civil guard and, finally, in local Commandos, the *white South African finds that he has spent almost a sixth of his life defending apartheid*.

Demagogically styled a "defence force", the 500,000-strong army is disciplined, highly trained, well equipped and indoctrinated with racism and anticommunism. Suffice it to say that about 90% of the officers are Afrikaners (descendants of the Dutch settlers), extremely conservative as distinct from the English-speaking "liberals". Through recruiting drives in impoverished rural areas, the authorities have also managed to sign up several thousand black South Africans and separate African, Asian and Coloured military units have been established.

The apartheid regime has inculcated a war mentality in

white South Africans. In schools, 200,000 white boys are involved in cadet training which is directly controlled by the SADF. Shooting clubs and 'anti-terrorist' training courses have mushroomed.

Finally, the *military-industrial complex* which Pretoria has set up using open and covert channels and often with the secret backing of Western governments. By 1982 the authorities were claiming that they had established a domestic arms industry and were "self-sufficient" in arms.

In an address to businessmen in London, President Oliver Tambo of the ANC listed the ways in which companies collaborate with the apartheid military forces:

"All companies in South Africa, including multinationals and foreign concerns, are integrated into Pretoria's strategic planning and directly into the repressive machinery. This is done institutionally by their participation on Committees and Boards, by complying with legislation, and by financial and other support. In addition to taxes and the purchase of defence bonds, most companies top-up the salaries of their white employees while they are doing their national service in the South African Defence Force... [Companies] supply whatever is requested, be it vehicles, tents or oil for the SADF. Hundreds of installations and areas have been designated national keypoints under the National Keypoints Act. Owners of these factories or plants are required to train and equip their own militia."

The South African parastatal Armscor is one of the largest industrial concerns in the country and employs over 20,000 staff. Hundreds of companies are subcontracted to Armscor to provide components for the arms industry. The arms and combat equipment it has developed include a high precision self-propelled artillery system, an air-to-air missile with an infrared self-homing warhead, a light tank with a speed of up to 120 km/h, an armoured personnel carrier and a pilotless reconnaissance plane.

Despite formal sanctions, Pretoria's arms industry has not only expanded, but has appeared on the international market. The London news bulletin *Southscan* reported that it now has about 23 buyer countries and a volume of deliveries of nearly \$ 1 billion. South African arms have been sold, for example, to Morocco, Sri Lanka, Paraguay, Central America, Chile and Taiwan. These last two maintain particularly close military relationships with the racist regime. Armscor has recently assisted Chile in establishing a naval repair facility, and now the racists want in exchange to lease an island in the Beagle Channel, which is at the southern tip of the Latin American continent. However, Pretoria's export drive has been weakened by UN Security Council Resolution 558 of 1984 which requested all states "to refrain from importing arms, ammunition of all types and military vehicles produced in South Africa".

So who helped raise the beast of militarism in Southern Africa? Pretoria relied on *collaboration with imperialist powers* for its continued military buildup. They have avoided any formal breaches of the embargo on arms

supplies to the racists by adroitly switching to the sale of licences and technology. Multinational companies are used to circumvent national legislation, and dual-purpose technology flows into the country disguised as civilian equipment.¹ The apartheid regime also uses scientific exchanges for its military purposes and lures skilled personnel from the EEC and Israel, for instance.

West European and multinational companies like Shell, Siemens and Phillips became involved in this process in the 1960s. On the basis of licensing arrangements South Africa assembled Mirage and Impala (Aermacchi) aircraft, Panhard armoured cars and Belgian FN rifles. Purchases of naval craft, aircraft and army weapons continued, especially from France and Italy. In NATO's interests a sophisticated electronic surveillance centre was opened at Simonstown, linked to the British Royal Navy and US Navy facilities.

In 1977 the UN Security Council imposed a *mandatory* arms embargo following the Soweto massacres and the South African invasion of Angola. However, efforts by many states and public bodies to extend this decision to cover mandatory economic sanctions have been repeatedly frustrated by the USA, Britain and France. The racist regime has been able to gain vital supplies of components, ammunition, spare parts and even new weapons systems from its supporters in the imperialist countries despite the embargo.

There is much evidence of this. During 1988, for example, the South African authorities recruited several dozen technicians from Israel's abandoned Lavi jet fighter project to upgrade its existing Mirage squadrons, renaming the remodelled aircraft "Cheetah". (Incidentally, this highlights the relatively new phenomenon of *mutual support between "little imperialisms"*: they are expanding their military collaboration while the West, which gave them the original impetus, is wary of openly violating the UN resolutions.) A dozen Israeli companies are engaged in the production of arms in South Africa, and in its armed forces there are more than 2,500 advisers and experts from Israel.

One of the most tragic results of this kind of collaboration has been to allow the racist regime a nuclear potential. Under the guise of civil nuclear collaboration, the USA, France, Great Britain and the FRG have provided the regime with nuclear technology, enriched uranium, nuclear reactors and fuel rods, and trained South African nuclear scientists. Secret collaboration with Israel put the finishing touches to the regime's nuclear weapons programme. Despite the conclusion by the CIA that the apartheid regime exploded an atomic device in 1979, the NATO powers have refused to admit that this regime has acquired nuclear weapons, and collaboration in this field has continued.² Pretoria has refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or to open its uranium enrichment facilities to international inspection.

Militarisation has been spurred by the presence in the army of South Africans with dual citizenship: a third (!) of

its soldiers have EEC country passports. This influx of mercenaries is an obvious violation of the pledge not to collaborate with the racists in the military field.

South Africa's process of militarisation has met with some resistance, both externally and at home. As the most striking evidence I would cite the refusal by thousands of young whites to fight for apartheid, and there is a growing stream of emigrants and refugees seeking political asylum in West European countries.³ The Committee on South African War Resistance, which is based in Britain and the Netherlands, helps many of them. There are also many who remain in South Africa but fail to turn up for military service. *In all, one-quarter of those called up for service do not respond.*⁴ Finally, young conscripts have publicly declared their refusal to participate in aggressions, tortures of civilians and punitive raids; many of them face long prison sentences.

The motives behind the unwillingness to serve vary, including at times vague antiracist and antiwar feelings, a worry about one's career or family, fear of battle, abhorrence of officers' cruelty and a number of personal factors. But as a consequence the generals face an acute problem of manning and even the spectre of demoralisation in the army caused by the nonacceptance among many whites and black soldiers of the cruelty towards peaceful Africans and of punitive missions in towns and villages.

Is the sinister dragon losing its armoured teeth? Many factors are involved here: the forces of freedom and antiracism in South Africa are growing stronger, despite the vicious repression under the state of emergency; the ranks of the ANC and combatants of its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, have increased over the past four years; an independent Namibia will provide a further massive boost to the fight against apartheid; worldwide support for the freedom struggle has grown immeasurably in the UN, among governments and in world public opinion—the

pressure from these has forced Pretoria at least to admit the possibility of certain changes.

Nevertheless, it is also true to say that the regime's highly dangerous war machine still poses an immense threat. Whilst the possibility of a nonaggressive and non-militaristic capitalism is debatable, in our case there can be no equivocation: this regime, which preaches discrimination and apartheid and which practises genocide and state terrorism, is integrally linked with militarism, lives by it and reproduces it at all costs.

Drawing the fangs and claws of the beast must be accompanied by the erosion of the regime's very structures and the decay of the whole organism. Although the apartheid war machine constitutes the pillar of authority, it is vulnerable in many regards. Hence the increased importance of the political and propaganda work conducted by Africa's democratic and revolutionary forces. Strengthening the foundations for peace and sovereign development in South Africa also deepens the crisis of the Pretoria regime and weakens the dragon's poisonous breath. The day of its death will be a birthday of peace, freedom and genuine security for all South Africans and for the peoples of this region.

1 For details see: S. Landgren, *Embargo Disimplemented: South Africa's Military Industry*, SIPRI, Oxford, 1989; Gawin Cawthra, *Brutal Force: The Apartheid War Machine*, London, 1986.

2 Moreover, it has been supplemented with the joint development of a nuclear delivery vehicle—a version of the 1,500-km-range Israeli Jericho ballistic missile.

3 UN General Assembly Resolution No. 33/165 of 1978 calls on all states to grant asylum or safe transit to South Africans forced to leave their country in order to avoid conscription into the racist forces.

4 *The African Communist*, No. 116, 1989, p. 29.





SURVEYS, LETTERS, DIARY

50 YEARS SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR II

THE WAY IT WAS

Veteran Communists Remember

We continue with our series of reminiscences by veteran Communists who met World War II in different countries and under different circumstances. We have received them from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

Jaromír MACHAČ
member of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak League of Fighters Against Fascism, a former soldier of the 1st Czechoslovak Corps and ČSSR Deputy Minister of National Defence

The Munich deal of 1938 convinced me that the destiny of our country's peoples should not have been entrusted to the bourgeoisie then tagging behind the antipeople and anti-Soviet policy of Western imperialist states. Czechoslovak patriots were angered by the West's sellout and by the humiliating capitulation of the bourgeois government and president of Czechoslovakia. Together with everyone else I grieved over the tragedy of the Munich deal and the subsequent occupation of my country, but I was proud of being a Communist. There were clear signs of what great prestige with the people the CPCz then held, a small party of 70,000, but the only one to have come out resolutely in defence of the country from Hitler's aggression.

The start of hostilities caught me in Poland where I had emigrated by the decision of the CPCz after Czechoslovakia's occupation. This was my first and extremely grim encounter with the war as I found myself, among

other people, attacked almost head on by a German tank column. Within 17 days, under continuous bombing raids, we crossed the whole of Poland from west to east. We saw the Poles lose all their illusions about their Western allies, who had abandoned them to be torn apart by the Nazis. On the war roads I often heard people say bitterly that our army, although well-trained and well-equipped, had not fought either.

Perhaps one of the happiest days for me was October 17, 1939, when I, completely exhausted, met the Red Army which had entered the territory of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia to prevent their occupation by the forces of Hitler Germany.

At the moment of the Nazis' treacherous attack on the Soviet Union I lived near Moscow, in the Political Emigre House. I immediately joined the Red Army as a volunteer and, after completing a paratroopers' training course, was ready to fight in the enemy's rear. But fate arranged it differently: a Czechoslovak army unit had begun to be formed in the cis-Uralian town of Buzuluk, and the party recommended that I enroll in it. The battalion operated under the ministry of national defence of the Czechoslovak government in London. Along with other Czechoslovak units abroad, they wanted to make it an instrument for renewing bourgeois power when the country was freed.

Before my departure for Buzuluk I

was received by Jan Šverma, a CPCz leader then working in Moscow, who informed me about the situation in the battalion and about the tasks facing its Communists. Upon arriving there, I joined its party organisation. The Communists and other antifascists wanted the battalion to become a cell of a new Czechoslovak army—a people's and consistently antifascist army—and dreamt of early action on the Soviet-German front.

Soon an event took place which greatly influenced the future of our unit. In May 1942 Buzuluk was visited by Klement Gottwald, leader of the external centre of the CPCz.

I recall that first meeting with Comrade Gottwald. We complained to him that the situation in the battalion was far removed from our idea of a people's army. He listened, nodded and, when we had "unburdened our hearts", said that the most important thing was for us to be the best soldiers in training and the most courageous in battle. He regarded this as essential to the winning by CPCz members of positions which would help them to effectively influence the morale of personnel and its ability to accomplish combat missions successfully.

Throughout the war, we Communists invariably followed this instruction. And despite the fact that only 6% to 7% of our officers and men were in the party, they gradually began to play a leading political role.

The last period of the war is linked in my memory with the brutal battles we fought in the Carpathians to overcome a serious obstacle in the drive of the Red Army units and the Czechoslovak army corps under Ludvík Svoboda to liberate my country. Having crossed the Carpathians, the corps, in addition to participating in combat operations, began to fulfill political tasks as well. It became part of the army of the people's

democratic revolution. The scope of assignments of the corps' party organisation widened. They mainly concerned the establishment and consolidation of people's power on liberated territory.

The purposeful work of the CPCz produced its results. In the 1946 elections to the National Assembly it received over 2,695,000 votes, winning 114 parliamentary seats. Our party became the leading political force in the country, the initiator of a peaceful socialist revolution, and subsequently and to this day, the vanguard of the builders of the new society.

Mihailo SVABIC

Board Presidium member, League of National Liberation Fighters of Yugoslavia; chairman, Commission for the Study of the History of the Working-Class and Communist Movement in Belgrade; former member of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and chairman of the Executive Council of Serbia; finished the war as the chief of the political department of a brigade

On the war's eve, under a profascist regime which sought a rapprochement with the authorities in Rome and Berlin, the Yugoslav bourgeois parties refused, because of disagreements of a political character, to cooperate with the Communists, who were then in the underground. Therefore the Communist Party and the Communist Youth Union focused mainly on work among the popular masses. We explained the reactionary nature of fascism, came out in defence of the Spanish Republic, campaigned for a joint antiwar effort by all democratic forces, and staged actions of solidarity with other nations.

I recall that in 1938 there was to be an antiwar youth meeting in Prague. I heard that Soviet Komsomol delegates would also participate in it. Having

received permission from the party, I went to Czechoslovakia. From an atmosphere of clandestine struggle and constant persecution by the police I suddenly arrived in a country where the communist party worked legally, openly publishing and selling its newspaper *Rudé právo*, and where red flags and the slogan of "We Won't Surrender" were displayed in the streets. The people's preparedness to repulse the impending Nazi invasion was obvious. And although I came alone and knew nobody, everywhere I met with an exceptionally friendly and attentive attitude. The ten days I spent in Prague were for me a wonderful dream.

Upon returning from Czechoslovakia I plunged into party work. The situation was complex. One of the difficulties we encountered was the outcome of Soviet-German talks. It was unexpected for us. Ten days before the outbreak of the war we held the 5th CYU Conference, which directed our youth towards a struggle against fascism and war, for the independence of Yugoslavia and an alliance with the USSR. However, the situation changed before we had time to distribute the conference's documents, and it seriously influenced my destiny as well.

To explain the political aspects of the new situation, a regional CYU committee decided to organise a meeting. I was asked to explain the party's stand, which was that the USSR had signed the agreement with Germany as a tactical concession to gain time. After the meeting police arrested me, and I spent the first year of the war in prison.

Of all those events I was particularly impressed by the overthrow, on March 27, 1941, of the traitorous government of Yugoslavia, which had sought to have our country join the "Triple Pact of 1940". That was a day of popular rejoicing, even though we knew that the consequences would be grave. And they were quick to come.

Several days later Belgrade was cruelly bombed. Nevertheless, Communist-led demonstrations of thousands marched through the capital under the slogans of "Better War Than the Pact" and "Better a Coffin Than a Slave". It was a kind of parade of fighters before

decisive events, before the direct transition to revolution. It showed that the party had grown in numbers, consolidated its structure and gained prestige among the masses.

Whereas Communists in other countries formed popular fronts of struggle against fascism and war based on coalitions of political parties, in Yugoslavia it took the form of a bloc of progressive forces united around the CPY. It was precisely our party that called for a popular uprising, organised a liberation movement and became a focal point for all antifascists.

Representatives of all of Yugoslavia's nations, and patriots of different political and religious convictions took part in the people's war of liberation. Throughout the war the Communist Party did not put forward any "special" slogans of its own or set any tasks of a socialist or communist nature.

The uprising we started having 12,000 Communists and 35,000 CYU members, grew into an all-people's war. By its victorious conclusion, there were already 800,000 armed men in our ranks who constituted four armies—the connecting link between the Red Army which had entered Hungary and the Allied troops in Italy. This movement was far wider than merely resistance-oriented. It was a genuine war of liberation and a genuine revolution led by the Communist Party.

Those years' experience has shown that only a party with close links to the people, the working class and youth is capable of achieving the best results. Selflessness, firmness of purpose and integrity in a struggle for common interests bring the Communists success even in the most difficult situations. Those who, having forgotten the lessons of the war, have got "bureaucratized", fenced themselves off from the people with chancellery barriers, and begun to use illegal, unmerited privileges, deserve condemnation and punishment not only in Yugoslavia, but also in other countries.

¹ WMR, Nos. 8 and 9, 1989.

THE CAPITALIST ECONOMY: WHAT'S GOING ON?

(Analytical Survey)

Cyclical boom could be a description of the economic situation in the developed capitalist countries. From the autumn of 1987 to the spring of 1989, economic growth proceeded under the strong influence of a simultaneous growth in consumer and investment demand. Output increased even in industries that had stagnated in earlier years. There was evidence of such specific features of an industrial boom as a marked increase in investments in the expansion of producer capacities, soaring demand and a rise in the prices of some raw material goods. There was some improvement on the labour market for the first time in two decades.

But the economic growth in the leading capitalist countries was not echoed on the fringes of the world capitalist economy: the less developed world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at only 2.9% as compared with 2.8% in 1987. There was, therefore, an economic spurt only within the OECD area, where it reached 4.0%.

An important feature of the industrial growth was its simultaneous acceleration in all the three main centres of capitalism, and also in the "four dragons" of Asia.¹ Industrial output in the leading capitalist countries last year came close to the 1961-1973 averages, something that had appeared to be simply inconceivable a short time ago, while in Britain it was even higher. One should also note the sharp increase in international trade: from 5.7% to 9.0%, according to OECD estimates. Commodity exports from this group went up by 9.5%, as fast as they did in the 1960s and early 1970s.

In 1988, world economic relations were very stable, and the fluctuations in exchange rates and stockmarket quotations, and in world prices of the key commodities were markedly more moderate as compared with previous years. This also promoted economic growth and enabled industrial and commercial companies to conclude long-term contracts and take decisions on investments and credits with less risk.

The credit and financial system recovered fairly rapidly from the stockmarket crash of October 19, 1987; as the immediate effects of the panic were overcome and the financial agencies of the Group of Seven (G-7) further concerted their operations, exchange rates were stabilised. No wonder the volume of borrowing by OECD countries on international markets, especially long-term borrowing, expanded by one-quarter.

The boom of the past several years is, in a sense, a return of the developed capitalist countries' economic growth to the highroad it travelled in the early postwar decades. The period of grave structural upheavals and price shocks basically came to an end. The economy as a whole and, most importantly, the participants in economic activities (the population, firms, banks, etc.) have on the whole adapted to the new conditions: to the structure of social demand, the system of relative prices, the high cost of borrowing, etc. A marked step was taken in the early 1980s towards evening out development levels in the leading capitalist countries, and while such estimates are always not more than approximate, it is believed that by 1987 the five leading countries of the West had reached a level equal to roughly 70% of the per head GDP of the United States.

The economic boom since the 1980-1982 crisis has turned out to be long: it is now in its seventh year. This has induced analysts both in the West and in the East to expect a new cyclical downturn. This came under the impact of the psychological pressure of the entire history of the capitalist economy: "Expect a crisis every five or ten years."

These analysts were making a dual mistake, although it could evidently have been avoided. First, the drop in oil prices produced optimistic forecasts for 1986, while some of the leading capitalist countries actually moved into stagnation. Their mistake was to regard the drop in oil prices as an absolute benefit for the economy, without taking

account of the losses of the oil business, the narrowing of OPEC markets, etc. Second, the decline in stockmarket prices for individual investors after the 1987 stockmarket crash, the analysts predicted, would result in a reduction in the total value of their property, and lesser potentialities in borrowing with direct (or indirect) collateral, something that should lead to a decline in consumer demand. Indeed, there was a sharp slowdown in the growth of spending by the US population in the fourth quarter of 1987 to about \$20 billion in current prices, as compared with almost \$70 billion in the preceding quarters. However, *with the overall growth of exports and investments*, this hiatus was not enough to create any serious impediments to continued economic growth.

There were specific reasons for the soaring of stockmarket prices in 1986 and 1987: the decline in interest rates (until the spring of 1987), the buying up of stocks and shares in a wave of mergers and takeovers, bullish speculation, underpricing of securities and other factors. By the autumn of 1987, when real reproduction began to pick up, these factors were almost entirely worked out. The decline in yields (dividend divided by stockmarket price) testified, in particular, to the unhealthy state of the stockmarket. Subsequent studies showed that on the eve of October 19, only 36% of individual investors, and 22% of institutional investors (insurance companies, pension funds, bank trust department, etc.) expected a further rise in stockmarket quotations. A poll then taken in the United States showed that 72% of individual and 84% of institutional investors believed that stocks were overpriced.

When the speculative bubble burst, there was panic on the world's stockmarkets. Investments banks, brokers and other financial agents found themselves overloaded with stocks and shares purchased at high prices. These could be sold off only at much loss. However, a serious blow at the financial

system was averted because of the stability of institutional investors and banks, easier credit and action by central financial agencies. The close similarity of the movement of stock prices with that in 1928 and 1929 remained on paper. Corporate cash flows were large enough and there was no cutback in investments.

Stockmarket prices subsequently stabilised, and by early 1989 had either exceeded their historical maximum—in Japan and France—or had moved close to it—in the United States and the FRG. As a result, the stockmarket panic took the tension out of the financial sphere, led to a decline in interest rates, reduced inflationary fears, and so paved the way for a boom. Actual production turned out to be largely independent of the speculative phenomena on the money markets.

OECD experts underestimated the growth of real GDP in the leading countries of the West from mid-1986 to mid-1988 by 2% or 3%. Labour productivity indicators were 1.6% higher than expected in the United States, and 2.3% higher in other G-7 countries. Individual consumption additionally went up by more than 1.0%, while inflation and unemployment were lower than forecast (within 0.5 to 1.0 percentage points). But the main thing is that producer investments increased: by 12.4% in the United States, by 17.1% in Japan and by 3% to 6% in the West European countries. The nature of these forecasting errors shows that the analysts did not expect a full-fledged cyclical upturn and underestimated its scale.

The United States. Economic development in the United States over the past two years rested on stable consumer demand, which in real annual terms grew in 1987 and 1988 by an average of 2.8%. The US economic system has displayed a remarkable flexibility and capacity to adapt to the new conditions of reproduction and competition: to a decline in the exchange-rate of the dollar and the oil prices, and to the upswing in the West European countries. Following the stagnation in production in 1986, an export, investment and, to a lesser degree, industrial boom got under way. Over the past two years, the export of goods and services in real terms leapt up by 33.5% (as compared with only 8.7% over the

previous three years, and even a decline in 1985). Investment in producer plant rose by 19.1%, and industrial output by 9.7%, as compared with 3.1% in 1985 and 1986. A sizable part of demand on the internal market is also covered with imports, and this is certainly a stabilising factor for world trade.

The changing character of accumulation has become a key characteristic of cyclical boom in the United States. There is a prevalent renewal of producer facilities, and the saturation of the economy (especially of its new industries) with microcomputer facilities. For the first time in almost 15 years, one could say that there is a shortage of capacities in the chemical, pulp-and-paper and certain other industries. The loading of capacities in manufacturing is markedly above the average. Bottlenecks have appeared in the economy, and this has revived inflationary processes. The general price index for industrial goods in January 1987 was only 0.4% above the 1982 level, but in the following two years it soared by 9.0%. The growth of prices has led to a higher cost of credit. The threat of inflation tends to toughen up credit and monetary policy and to raise interest rates for borrowing on the market.

Japan. In 1988, economic development was dominated by internal factors. There was a growth of individual consumption, producer investments and state expenditures. In these conditions, the further expansion of goods and services (following a decline and stagnation in 1986 and 1987) was far from the main factor in the growth of the GDP (5.7%) and industrial output (9.2%). The Japanese economy once again demonstrated its capacity to grow at a fast rate with orientation towards the internal market, something that very few people in the world had believed to be possible only two or three years ago.

For a long time, the Japanese government promised to alter its development model and gradually to reduce the country's trade surplus, but until 1986 the expansion of export continued, and imports were hampered. On this score, there were frequent references to the Japanese national character, which allegedly prevents people from buying foreign goods. Let us note that customs tariffs in Japan are on the same level as they are in the United

States and in the EEC, or are even lower, with the exception of import duties on farm produce and foodstuffs, which are protected with a certain "reserve" so as not to undermine national production: 18.4% and 25.4%, respectively, compared with 1.8% and 4.7% in the United States, and 4.9% and 10.1% in the EEC. However, efforts to open up the other markets remained futile, even after the then prime minister urged every Japanese to buy some imported product worth 10,000 yen (then about \$50).

What the prime minister had been unable to do was easily done by a "heavy" yen: in 1987 and 1988, the real volume of imported goods and services went up by roughly one-third. That did not help to solve the problem of the foreign trade imbalance: the vast trade surplus was still there, favoured by the lower price of oil on the world markets which made imports cheaper.

The new model of Japanese economic growth does not rule out an export drive even when the exchange rate of the yen is high, but the formation of a free trade area in North America (the United States and Canada) and the expected creation of "Fortress Europe" in 1992 have forced Japanese companies to establish themselves on these two vast markets. There has been a rapid growth in the number of mixed companies (with the participation of Japanese capital) and purely Japanese enterprises in both regions.

Japan's dynamic economic development was regarded in the 1960s and 1970s as a local quirk, but in the 1980s the countries of the Pacific area on the whole began noticeably to outstrip not only Western Europe but also North America in GDP growth rates. The proximity of natural resources in Australia and Southeast Asia, which had not been used up at earlier stages of industrialisation, the masses of labour with adequate skills and work ethic, and the influx of capital (initially from the United States, and then from Japan and other countries) were all factors promoting the formation in the area of one of the major new economic complexes of the modern world. Close intra-regional ties and an economic rhythm of its own have been taking shape in the Pacific region. The Australian economy, like Japan's, for instance, has sur-

mounted the forces of slowdown and has been in a state of intensive upturn in the past few years.

Western Europe. The economic upswing there is based on a tangible increase in consumer spending and gross accumulation. The obvious lag behind their basic rivals in the pace of adaptation to the new demands on the world market is being ultimately compensated by the West European companies' great experience. Financial stability has been gradually re-established, and profit margins are larger than they have been since the early 1970s, mainly due to the noticeable growth of labour productivity in the past few years, notably through modernisation and development of new industries. For the first time, industrial investment in the EEC was above that of 1973. The "1992 Factor", i.e., the expected benefits from the creation of a single internal market with a vast purchasing power, has been having an ever greater effect. There has been an influx of foreign capital into Western Europe, and the wave of mergers between West European companies and companies from other regions has reached unprecedented proportions.

Against production in Japan and the United States, output in the EEC has not been impressive (with the exception of Spain, Portugal and Ireland) but even it has led to a noticeable increase in the loading of capacities, which has risen above the average. There is, accordingly, a revival of inflationary processes, with double-digit inflation in Portugal, Iceland and Greece, and a 75% increase in consumer prices in Turkey in 1988.

The growth of prices in the FRG, Belgium and Holland has remained at a

minimum: roughly 4.0% last year. Britain alone among the leading countries in the area has shown signs of a possible "overheating" and a sharp slowdown in economic growth. It entered upon a period of recovery before the other countries, stepping up production more intensely, and attaining, in historical terms, a high loading of capacities, together with high interest rates (14.0%) and annual rates of inflation (about 7.5%).

in the state of the labour market. In 1988, unemployment in the OECD countries officially stood at 6.7% (7.7% in 1986). In the EEC, unemployment is still over 10%, with a large part of the unwanted hands consisting of long-term unemployed with very poor prospects of employment.

In the United States, the labour force grew almost twice as fast (1.9% in 1983-1987) as income per employed person because of the wide spread of

part-time employment and casual labour in the services, where average wages are relatively low. In the other countries, incomes per employed person grew somewhat faster than the workforce. But on the whole, the tax reforms of the mid-1980s, together with the sharp cuts in social benefits, did not prevent a fall of incomes in the West. In these hard conditions, there was a general and marked reduction in the rate of savings and a growth of consumer debt.

How can the capitalist economy be expected to develop from here on? Its immediate prospects

are likely to depend in many ways on the character and intensity of inflationary processes.

The record shows that with the passage of time an investment boom tends to produce internal disproportions in reproduction, and to detach capacities from demand, especially consumer demand. The self-sustained cyclical upturn is internally linked to a gradual unwinding of the inflationary spiral and rising interest rates. The example of 1988 showed that a sharp acceleration of this type of economic growth, however natural, has proved to be largely unexpected. The fast change in prices is the key factor affecting credit and monetary policy in the leading capitalist

GDP, LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY AND EXPORTS OF THE LEADING CAPITALIST COUNTRIES FROM 1870 TO 1987 (per cent)

Year	USA	Japan	FRG*	France	Britain	Italy
Gross Domestic Product						
1871-1913	4.1	2.5	2.8	1.7	1.9	1.5
1914-1950	2.8	1.8	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.4
1951-1987	3.2	7.5	4.4	4.0	2.5	4.3
GDP per Worked Man-Hour						
1871-1913	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.2	1.2
1914-1950	2.6	1.3	1.1	2.0	1.6	1.8
1951-1987	2.0	6.2	4.7	4.1	2.7	4.4
Real Volume of Exports						
1871-1913	4.9	8.5	4.1	2.8	2.8	2.2
1914-1950	2.2	2.0	-2.8	1.1	0.0	0.6
1951-1987	5.2	12.4	9.3	6.5	3.8	9.0

* Corrected data before World War II.

Source: *Economic Report of the President*, Washington, 1989, p. 150.

There was a highly uneven cyclical recovery in employment. The United States, Japan and Britain led in the number of new jobs, whereas in the FRG and France they were fewer. On the whole, in 1987 and 1988 employment in the OECD countries grew at roughly 2.0%, slightly less in Western Europe and slightly more in North America and Australia. Over the past year or two, there has been a growth of jobs in manufacturing, and this halted the reduction in the number of jobs in this key sector of the economy, which was evident in the early 1980s. Along with the growth of employment in the services (an average of 59% for the OECD), that led to some improvement

countries. Yet, inflation is just gathering momentum. The growth of raw material prices on the world markets in 1988 came to about 10%, although this is a relatively low figure when compared with other cyclical upturns.

The fast growth of prices in Britain and partly also in the United States has already made credit more costly and has toughened up government policy. The most challenging problem is how to "cool" the economy of the OECD countries, without causing a substantial

recession. Preliminary estimates suggest a drop in growth rates in 1989 down to 3.3% for the GDP, and to 4.0% for industrial output. Considerable imbalances continue to exist in the international flows of goods and capital, unemployment is expected to reach 7.0-7.5%, and the expansion of world trade to slow down to 7.0% to 8.0%, especially as the investment boom wanes after playing such an important role in 1988. Its duration and intensity, together with the scope of credit restrictions, will deter-

mine the world economic outlook in 1990 as well.

Survey prepared at the request of the WMR Commission on Information and Documentation by Leonid GRIGORIEV, sector head, Institute of World Economics and International Relations, USSR Academy of Sciences

¹ Hongkong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea.—Ed.

FROM OUR MAILBAG * * * * *

RESPONDING TO READERS' LETTERS

The following represents a brief survey of the variety of letters we receive daily from readers who want to comment on articles, offer criticisms and make suggestions.

Maximo PUENTE, a regular *WMR* subscriber in Spain, notes: "The journal has changed appreciably. It is good to see that readers have become much more cooperative. This is very important for the consideration of all opinions. I have also observed that articles by Chinese and Yugoslavian comrades have begun to appear, which greatly widens the spectrum of views."

This view is shared by *Pablo AROSEMENA VAZQUEZ* (Panama), *Teshome WONDIMU* (Ethiopia), *Eric MUELLER* (Hong Kong) and others.

Responding to the article "The Anatomy of Dogmatism" (*WMR*, No. 12, 1988), *Rudolf STOLTE* from the FRG writes: "It is worth considering the proposal that we draw into the critical analysis of our theory works by scholars hitherto considered 'revisionist' (M. Horkheimer, T. Adorno, H. Marcuse), as well as their present-day followers. This would help raise the discussion of epistemological and other theoretical problems to a contemporary international level."

However, we also receive letters of criticism. *Eva BRUSTAD* from Norway thinks that, as before, many articles are ponderously written and therefore difficult to read. Often, long-minded articles with a veneer of scientific inquiry merely serve to disguise banal truths which could be expressed in just a few sentences. Each issue should carry one or two discussion articles of general interest.

Many readers have been attracted by the journal's publications on historical themes. Thus, *J. SCOTT* from Britain, welcoming the publication of new material from the Comintern archives, notes that this "will be an immense aid in the study of the history of our movement, a history which includes tragic defeats and terrible shortcomings but above all great achievements, transformations unprecedented in world history for

their scale and humanity. I thoroughly agree ... that if *WMR* is to fulfil its duty to provide critical analysis of the past and present of the communist movement in order to prepare it for the future it must throw away uncritical platitudes and self-congratulation."

Professor *J. UESUGI* from Japan pursues the same theme in his letter: "The article on the roots of the conflict between the communist parties of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union ("The Background to a Split", *WMR*, No. 2, 1989) made painful reading. It is, however, an important theme and very instructive for us because the conflict had a negative effect on the workers' movement in Japan. I would like the journal to continue the discussion of this question."

Candidate of Science *Libor PATY* from Czechoslovakia mentions the same article in a different context: "It opens with a letter from Prague resident Marie Kocvarova which contains the following: 'I understand those who demand that that history [of the international communist movement] should be written never to be rewritten.' As we see, the author does not want historical truth to be suppressed or distorted. But at the same time she believes that, having elaborated an approach to historical events, it is possible to dot the 'i's' and cross the 't's'... However, the aim of historical science is not so much to record facts, as to interpret them in the context of social development by comparing the past with the present. I think it is necessary to continually reappraise history, the history of the Communist movement for example, on the basis of newly-discovered sources and in accordance with new views on the meaning, circumstances and relationship of past events. The continuous quest for truth is the most important scientific and cultural principle."

A letter from *M. N. RUTKEVICH*, a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, takes issue with Academician Tatiana Zaslavskaya's appraisal of his scientific work in the article "A Female Olympian" (*WMR*, No. 3, 1989). He writes that the development of sociology in the USSR was impeded during the period of stagnation by "the general atmosphere that had developed in the party and the country".

The editorial board thanks all those who have written to the journal. We will continue to publish letters reflecting the diversity of readers' opinions.

IN MEMORY OF OUR COMRADE

The International team of World Marxist Review has suffered a grave loss. Sergel Tsukasov, Editorial Board member and managing editor, has died.

He was born in Moscow in December 1922. During the Great Patriotic War he was a cadet, armaments mechanic, Komsomol organiser in an air force regiment and journalist of a division newsletter. He fought in the battles to liberate Novorossiysk, the Crimea, Tallinn and Klaipeda, to capture Königsberg and to rout the Nazi forces' Kurland group. The year Nazi Germany was defeated he joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. His valour as a soldier won him a Red Star medal, a Patriotic War medal Second Class and other combat decorations. Later, his fruitful peacetime work was marked by a Red Banner of Labour medal, a Friendship Among Nations medal and other government awards.

After the war he held executive jobs in the Soviet press and studied while he worked, graduating from Moscow's Lomonosov State University in 1953.

In 1967 Sergel Tsukasov became an Editorial Board member and managing editor of Pravda, the newspaper of the CPSU Central Committee.

He joined the World Marxist Review team in 1979, at first as chief of the socialist construction department and, from March 1980 to his death, as the journal's managing editor.

He was a really experienced and highly professional creative worker and an able and knowledgeable organiser. He made a tangible personal contribution to the creation of a truly internationalist atmosphere at World Marxist Review. A scholar (holding a doctorate in history), he worked actively to study the communist press and the contemporary working-class movement. His articles and research papers, with their distinctly innovative theoretical approach, appeared in our and other periodicals and in books. In one of them, *First Day, Last Day*, a book of war memories, he wrote: "The older you get, the more clearly you realise that the years you have lived are always with you. The things time moves away from you and mills do not fade away without a trace like dewy morning mist warmed by the sun. Each day leaves its mark on the hub of your life (whether the mark is big or small is another matter), and that is the way your destiny is shaped."

We will always remember Sergel Tsukasov, a Soviet Communist, with deep and abiding affection. He has left us those who learned from him, he has left us his works, and he has bequeathed to us his experience as a talented editor and organiser of journalism.

* * *

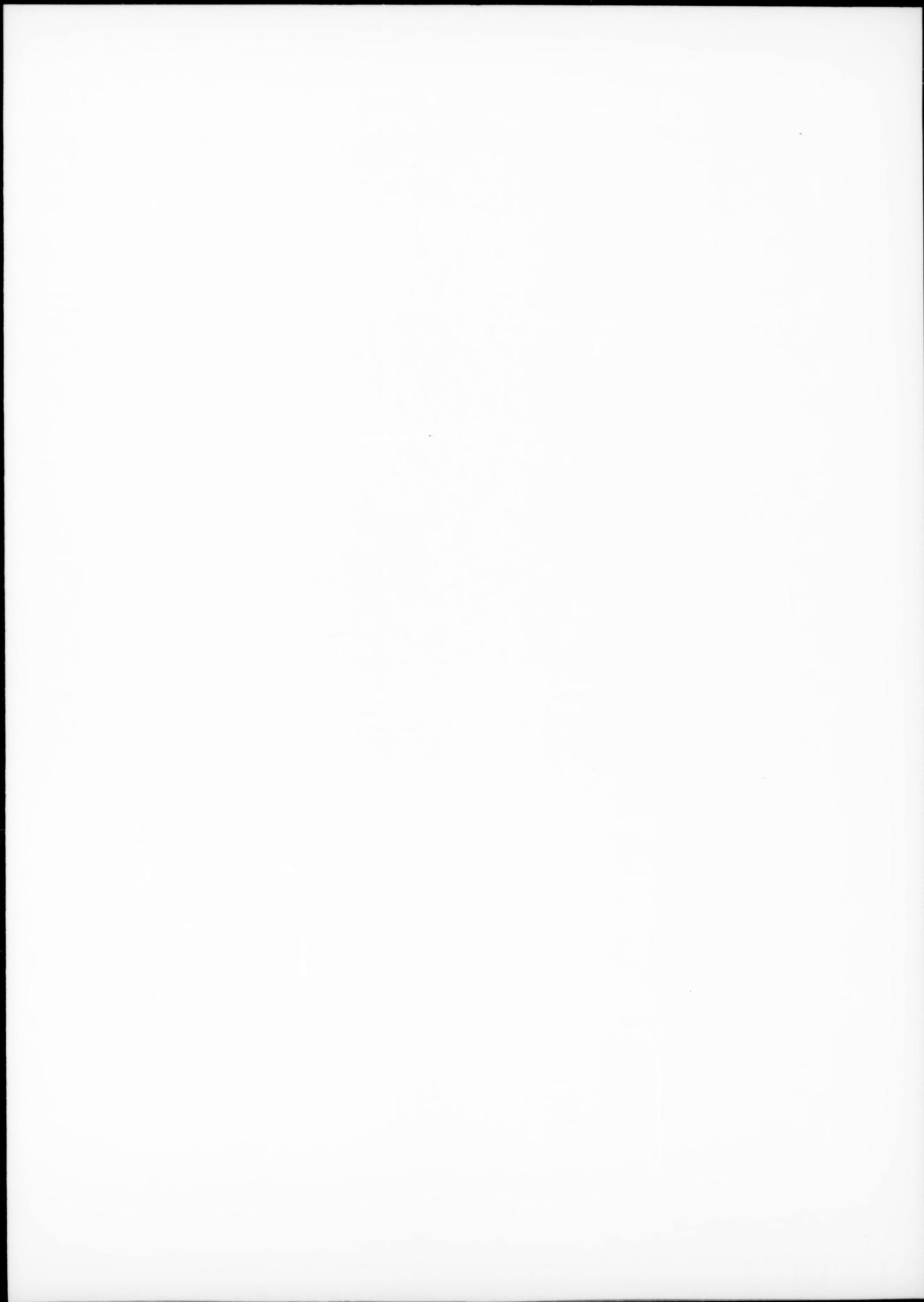
The Editorial Board and the Editorial Council have received condolences from sister parties, editorial boards of WMR's national editions, international organisations and party and civic activists on the death of Sergel Tsukasov.

WMR TIES

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- On an invitation from the Polish United Workers' Party, a representative of the WMR Editorial Council has attended the *Trybuna Ludu* newspaper festival in Warsaw.
- Najmuddin Akhgar Kawiani, Political Bureau Member and Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, visited the WMR offices.

He told an enlarged meeting of the Commission on the National Liberation Movement in Asia and Africa about the struggle of the PDPA, the government and the people of Afghanistan in defence of the republic's independence, and about the prospects of national reconciliation.





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