

WORLD

Problems of

MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

November 1986 Vol. 29, No. 11
\$2.00 ISSN 0043-8642



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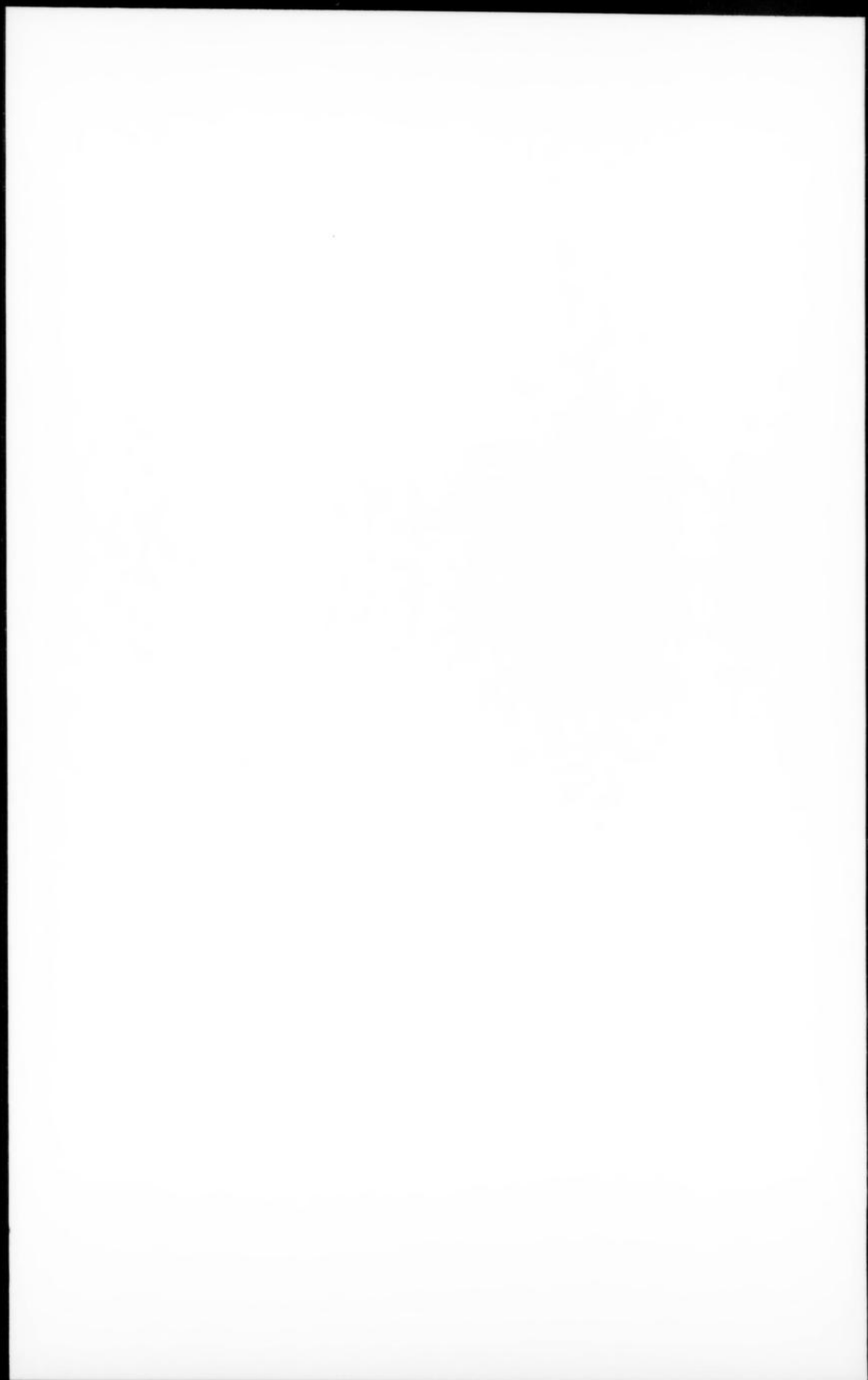
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world marxist review

VOLUME 29 NUMBER 11 NOVEMBER 1986

*Theoretical and Information Journal of Communist
& Workers Parties Throughout the World*

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PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

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Attractive Force of the October Revolution's Ideals and Cause

Julio Rojas – CC Acting First Secretary,
Paraguayan Communist Party

AS well as being our common international festival every anniversary of the socialist revolution in Russia is a further reiteration of that revolution's epochal significance, a further reminder of the Soviet people's hard-won, stirring advance from backwardness to progress within a relatively short space of time. Signalling the birth of the world's first proletarian state, of a society of social justice, the October Revolution ushered in the socialist era for humankind and laid the beginning for a fundamental reshaping of the planet's make-up. Socialism became a reality in one country, and then evolved into a world system, significantly limiting the sphere of imperialist domination.

A distinction of the present anniversary of the Great October Revolution is that it has been preceded by congresses of many fraternal parties. The documents adopted by them are a collective contribution to our common patrimony, to Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. Immense importance has been acquired by the congress of the Soviet Communists, with whom the like-minded people in different countries link decades of staunch fraternal relations and internationalist solidarity. Having gone through the flames of three revolutions, of battles with foreign invaders and the forces of reaction, and been tempered in struggle and labour the party of Lenin has at a crucial stage of the world's development marked out new milestones on the road to saving humanity and accelerating social progress.

Historic Documents

The delegation of the Paraguayan Communist Party to the 27th Congress of the CPSU noted two distinctive features: continuity and innovation. The CC Political Report and the other documents of this congress enrich our political expertise and theory and inspire us in our struggle for socialist ideals. This is not rhetoric. It is a statement of incontrovertible fact.

The new edition of the CPSU Programme gives a profound analysis of present-day realities. As well as generalising the rich experience of revolutionary struggle and spelling out objectives on the national level, it marks out the prospects for humanity's advance to superior forms of socio-economic organisation. It may be said without exaggeration that this is the Communist Manifesto of the twentieth century, a document helping to reinforce the unity and cohesion of the international communist

and working class movement, and to promote the world-wide struggle against the USA's drive for world supremacy and against the threat of nuclear catastrophe.

We were powerfully impressed by the plans for accelerating the Soviet Union's economic and social development for 1986-1990 and for the period up to the year 2000. These plans call upon the Soviet people to move to new achievements, mobilising their creative potential for a more effective utilisation of the socialist system's advantages, the employment of scientific and technological breakthroughs, and the attainment of a higher living standard and cultural level. This implies qualitative changes in society's development and an upgrading of the economy, of democracy, and of self-administration. The Soviet people have indeed entered a new phase of their glorious history.¹

In its plan for accelerating social processes the CPSU assigns the principal, decisive role to the human factor. Under socialism scientific and technological progress signifies rising efficiency in production, a rapid growth of the people's living standard, and the all-round development of the individual.

This is a vivid contrast to the situation in capitalist countries. Capitalism's apologists are unable to conceal the deepening contradictions and crisis in imperialism's main citadels and along its periphery, the exploiting system's degeneration, the unparalleled spread of corruption, crime, and drug abuse, and the calamitous condition of the working people.

As in most of the other Latin American states, in Paraguay, a nation dependent upon imperialism, the exploitation of the people by transnational corporations and the dictatorship obstructs the development of the productive forces. The cancerous foreign debt tumour is further aggravating the economic crisis. Up to 80 per cent of the export revenue is used to service the foreign debt. The foreign currency shortage spurs speculation and a steady rise of the cost of living. Suffice it to say that a working person's average monthly wage (50-60 dollars) does not cover vital needs: this sum is not enough to pay for half of the food required by a family. Landless peasants live in unendurable misery. Young people have no jobs, and education is inaccessible to them. There is no future for them under the dictatorship.

Against this background the example of the socialist countries—where the right to work and fair remuneration are guaranteed, where the population is provided with free medical services and free education, and rents are miniscule—is enormously attractive for the working class, progressive intellectuals, and other sections of the population in all parts of the world. The single fact that the means of production are in the hands of the people and revenue does not go into the pockets of a numerically small privileged class prompts a realistic way out of the crisis, for ending unemployment, social inequality, and poverty.

The documents of the 27th CPSU Congress provide our party with further potent arguments for exposing the anti-Soviet campaign, for which funds are not stinted by the mammoth propaganda machine of imperialism and its local henchmen. The story that the Soviet Union is a land of slaves ruled by a 'hierarchy of new tsars' flouting human dignity is now seen as ridiculous even by many conservatives. Neither slaves nor kings could have so rapidly taken a backward country to the highest summits of science, technology, and culture.

A growing number of people in the capitalist world are finding just as absurd the invention that there is 'state capitalism' in the USSR and the malignant legend of a 'Soviet threat'. Its direct enemies apart, the advantages of existing socialism are dismissed by only totally uninformed people and political myopics, who, as we in Paraguay say, have their eyes in the back of their heads.

Take, for instance, the preparations for and the proceedings of the CPSU Congress. The run-up saw a nation-wide discussion of the draft Programme, Rules, and other documents of the CPSU. Was this not a manifestation of genuine democ-

racy, of the mass participation of the people in deciding vital issues affecting their interests and destiny?

Moreover, the experience of the party of Lenin, reflected in the documents of its 27th Congress, shows us how to work in a new way, in an atmosphere of modern thinking, mutual confidence, cooperation and unity among the Communists, how to enhance the role and responsibility of party organisations.

Mikhail Gorbachov noted: "*There is no vanguard role of the Communists generally; it is expressed in practical deeds.*"² This is for us an exhortation to make a serious, self-critical analysis, and to draw practical conclusions that will help to surmount obstacles and bring shortcomings to light. We see as productive also the example of collegial leadership, which is the guarantee of successful activity by the party.

In other words, it is a question of consistently applying the Lenin style of work, reinforcing links to the people, and scientifically analysing objective reality. Further, it is a question of scrupulously training, selecting, and placing personnel, and constantly fostering criticism and self-criticism, which are tested ways of identifying and rectifying errors, omissions, and defects.

The Soviet Communists have shown how the instrument of constructive critical analysis should be used. They have unflinchingly identified negative phenomena and launched an uncompromising drive to remove them. Not resting content with what has been achieved, they are seeking to achieve more, and meticulousness is growing in proportion to the growth of the sense of responsibility. They stress the need to promote creative initiative, and are intolerant of passiveness and indiscipline.

The acceleration of socio-economic development under socialism is thereby assured. In the conditions prevailing in our country this example will help to build the new type of mass party heading the struggle of the working class, of the entire people to put an end to the fascist regime and develop the ways for proceeding with deep-going revolutionary-democratic transformations.

The CPSU's documents are the product of creative theory analysing the results of day-to-day practice, an expression of the party's tireless concern for the welfare of the people and its striving to save the whole of humanity from nuclear annihilation, an illustration of a profoundly democratic spirit, immutable commitment to peace, and genuine humanism. For that reason the congress itself and its documents are of unfading significance and evoke a continuing response throughout the world.

Two Worlds, Two Policies

Let us recall Lenin's observation that the October Revolution was the first victory in the struggle to abolish war.³ One of the revolution's first legislative acts was, as everybody knows, the Decree on Peace. Since then, the CPSU and, later, all the other ruling fraternal parties of the socialist community countries have been steadfastly pursuing a foreign policy aimed at averting the threat of war to humanity. Such has been and will continue to be the reality. For us socialism is the guarantor of peace, the guardian of the security of nations. We see it as a society whose rationale and actions are directed towards upholding the aspiration of peoples for independence and social progress and subordinated to the cardinal objective of preserving and consolidating peace. There is no loftier and more responsible mission than to curb the forces of aggression and militarism in the name of the life of present and future generations. Socialism's ideal is a world without wars, without armaments.

Given the accumulated destructive power of armaments any attempt to settle political disputes between states by war may prove to be suicidal for humanity. Motivated by their sense of responsibility for the advancement and security of their country, and for the destiny of the entire planet, and by their awareness, also, of the threat issuing from the policies of imperialism, of North American imperialism in the

first place, the Soviet Communists and, with them, the other fraternal parties and all people of goodwill are calling for the planet's release from the danger of nuclear annihilation. They are putting forward constructive initiatives aimed at banning nuclear tests and phasing out nuclear weapons and eliminating chemical and other weapons. One would think that it would be hard to take exception to this.

Yet US imperialism is bullheadedly seeking to shatter the military equilibrium, vainly endeavouring to achieve strategic superiority over the Soviet Union and the other socialist states, fuelling an already tense, dangerous situation, and pushing humanity into the chasm of nuclear extermination. Its response to the proposal for avoiding the militarisation of outer space was to launch the adventurist 'star wars' programme, drawing its NATO allies into this programme. To the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests it replied with continued nuclear explosions in Nevada and snubbed the calls to respect the right of peoples to self-determination with aggression against Libya, the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi, and escalation of the armed intervention against Nicaragua, and defiant support for the South African racists.

The contrast between the attitudes of socialism and imperialism to humanity's vital problems has most strikingly manifested itself during the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the UN. Underlying Soviet foreign policy is the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. In this policy are expressed the objective imperative for addressing constructive tasks and the acceptance that there will be no winners in either a nuclear war or in the arms race. The only reasonable alternative is an effective system of universal security and a just restructuring of international relations.

Accentuating the danger of a nuclear war, the Soviet Communists have at their congress brilliantly analysed the correlation of forces in the world and drawn the conclusion that never before has the threat to mankind been as serious as it is today. But neither has there been such a realistic possibility of preserving and consolidating peace. By concerted effort the peoples can and must bridle imperialism.

We Communists see this as our common duty. Marx's conclusion, drawn in the nineteenth century, that only an international alliance of the working class can ensure its definite victory⁴ has been borne out at every stage of history. The Great October Revolution was a triumph of internationalism and, at the same time, a new phase in its development. For the first time in history a state was proclaimed that adopted internationalist principles as the guide for its domestic and foreign policies.

The stand of the Soviet Communists on questions of internationalist solidarity has now acquired unexampled steadfastness and become a crucial factor of the growth of the anti-imperialist movement and of the struggle for disarmament and peace, national liberation, the right of peoples to self-determination, democracy, and social progress. This is corroborated by the more than half-century history of the relations between the Paraguayan Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. We Paraguayan patriots and internationalists are profoundly grateful to the party of Lenin and the entire Soviet people for their understanding for and massive campaign of solidarity with our struggle against the fascist dictatorship. Much has been said by Cuban, Vietnamese, and Afghan friends in appreciation of the fraternal disinterested and effective assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and I shall not repeat their words here.

While they have united internationally to protect their class interests, reactionary and militarist circles would deny to the forces of progress the right to internationalist solidarity. Imperialist propaganda uses every opportunity to misrepresent its essence and purpose. Take, for example, Soviet internationalist assistance to Afghanistan, requested by that country's government, to repulse foreign aggression. This assistance continues to be widely maligned in Latin America as well. Legitimate assistance

to the Afghan people is labelled by US propagandists as a 'punitive operation', 'interference', and 'suppression of freedom'.

However, the truth is gradually paving its way to the minds of peoples across mountains of preposterous lies. Imperialism and its puppets would like to throttle the revolution in Afghanistan and turn that country into a base for missiles targeted on the USSR, a bridgehead for provocations. But the gun has backfired.

The Afghan people's resistance and the support they get from the Soviet Union have scuttled sinister plans. The undeclared war of the Reagan administration against the Afghan people's democracy is a futile labour. The hundreds of millions of dollars spent by the CIA last year to overthrow the Afghan government have not brought Washington any nearer to its objective. The stand adopted by the CPSU and the Soviet government has become the guarantee of the Afghan people's independence and freedom.

In truth, the party of Lenin can be dependent upon. It not only does everything to ensure the ever fuller satisfaction of the Soviet people's requirements but is a dependable and strong friend prepared at all times to safeguard peace and the rights and interest of working people in any part of the world.

The March of History Cannot Be Stopped

The Great October Revolution has become a challenge to world imperialism, which, suffering irreparable and inexorably growing losses, continues to seek social revenge. Precisely imperialism is the source of war. It lays claim to world supremacy and proclaims entire continents as zones of its 'vital interests', forcing unequal relations upon other countries, backing repressive, anti-people regimes, and trying to export counter-revolution. We know this only too well from our own experience. One needs only mention that 90,000 persons have 'disappeared' over the recent period in Latin America. Countless patriots have perished at the hands of CIA agents, the hired thugs of the local oligarchies, and the fascist killers in Paraguay and Chile.

In Paraguay domination by the Stroessner clan over a period of more than 30 years is culminating in a sharp aggravation of the crisis in our society. The dictatorship is 'compensating' for its inability to resolve social and economic problems with harassment and repressions. There is no crime to which Stroessner and his confederate would not stoop in order to keep in power this decrepit regime, which is the most bloodthirsty, corrupt, and degenerate in Paraguay's history.

In line with its 'neoglobalist' doctrine, US imperialism wants to retain our country as a base for aggression and a bridgehead for provocations in the heartland of South America. It is for that reason seeking to save the dictatorial regime with the establishment of a regimented, fraudulent democracy under which power and most of the wealth would stay in the hands of the monopolies and their local agents, a handful of venal generals and self-seeking oligarchs. However, nothing can stop the march of history. Our people will overthrow the dictatorship and win democracy and independence because the conditions have objectively matured for a democratic, agrarian, and anti-imperialist revolution.

Broad unity is the key to victory. In the streets of towns and rural communities the people of Paraguay are attesting to the strength of the credo 'A united people can never be vanquished'. The Paraguayan Peasants' Movement, the Inter-Union Movement of Working People, the Democratic Students' Movement, the Broad Women's Front, the Paraguayan Liberation Movement, Democratic Paraguay, and other organisations are conducting unitary demonstrations to back up social, economic, and democratic demands. As the ground slips from under its feet, the dictatorship is finding itself in increasing isolation and can no longer contain the people with repressions. The growth of the people's political consciousness is seen in the slogans put forward by them at a rally in Asuncion: 'Down with the dictatorship!'

'Yankees, get out of Central America!', and 'Socialism is the way out!'.

Powerful mass actions are more and more frequently erupting into determined confrontations with the regime. In the township of Alfonso Loma there have been clashes between demonstrators and the police, who at some moments had to retreat. The dispersal of a rally organised by the Authentic Radicals in San Jose de los Arroyos provoked defiant protest demonstrations against the *piragues* (agents of the secret police) and the *macheteros* of the Stroessner death squad.

The huge demonstrations in Asuncion are testimony that the Paraguayan people are uniting, mobilising, and selflessly rising to fight to remove the dictatorship and establish a genuinely democratic government. The spirit of revolt and civil courage making it possible to vanquish fear and oppression is gaining strength. Despite the many years of tyranny there is renewed confidence that the attainment of democracy is possible and near at hand.

We of Paraguay want liberation from exploitation and privation. We do not want formal, lame democracy serving as a screen for the old anti-people and anti-national policy, which the people reject. It is not negotiations and dialogue with Stroessner and his clique, who are seeking to immobilise the people, but the unfolding of the broadest general struggle against the depraved dictatorship that will lead to a real democratisation of society, to social justice.

We are preparing for stern battles, reinforcing the alliance and organisational structure of all democrats and patriots. We will press for the satisfaction of our economic and political demands and keep striking at the dictatorship until it is deposed and crushed once and for all.

While continuing to support Stroessner, imperialist circles in the USA are talking to the possibility of a replacement for him. Why, having imposed a fascist administration upon Paraguay, are they now speaking of a 'peaceful transition to democracy'? The principal reason for this shift in US policy is that terrorist regimes headed by gorillas of the likes of Somoza, Duvalier, and Pinochet are no longer able to maintain and inviolate the power and profits of the North American monopolies. Murderous dictatorships are aggravating the conflict between the people and the ruling classes, stoking the political and economic crisis, which is compounded by corruption in official quarters, and bringing hunger and desperation to the people. This is making revolutionary explosions increasingly imminent.

In Paraguay the masses are visibly becoming the locomotive of developments. This is alarming US imperialism and its local servitors. Some leaders of the bourgeois opposition assert that to avoid a radicalisation of the popular struggle, which is moving out of the control of the ruling classes, it is vital to reappraise policy and bring new faces into the government. They are afraid that the development of the democratic and revolutionary process will result in a situation similar to what took shape in Nicaragua, where the people brought down the Somoza regime and replaced it with a genuinely democratic government. Bourgeois quarters in our country would like a different variant, one that has been approved by Washington such as, for example, in Haiti. There it has sacrificed its faithful puppet Duvalier in an effort to dilute the revolutionary will of the people and preserve the former power structure and its privileges—but to no avail.

In connection with the talk about the possible 'retirement' of Stroessner in Paraguay and of Pinochet in Chile reactionary propaganda is asserting that in Latin America there are two other 'totalitarian' countries—Cuba and Nicaragua—which have to be 'democratised'. It is hardly worth the effort to prove that in these casuistic assertions the facts are turned inside out. It was precisely in Cuba that more than a quarter of a century ago the people threw out the US-installed totalitarian Batista regime and set up a popular democratic government. And it was precisely in Nicaragua that a little over seven years ago the democratic forces crushed the Somoza

tyranny. The example of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions are exercising a growing influence on the peoples of Latin America and no propaganda can undermine this influence.

The struggle waged by the people in our country is bringing closer the downfall of the totalitarian regime and the fulfilment of their economic and political demands. We expect that when the pro-imperialist oligarchy is overthrown the new, democratic government will integrate all the forces now fighting the dictatorship. This must be a government of the people capable of asserting freedom in the true sense of the word, and inaugurate far-reaching agrarian and anti-imperialist reforms.

Of course, if the reins of state administration pass from Stroessner to right-wing sectors of the opposition, democracy will be limited despite the erosion of the dictatorship's foundation. In this case our people will do everything to enlarge the breach and clear the way for radical changes.

Today, while identifying ourselves with the political, social, and economic demands of the masses, we are stepping up the struggle in defence of the patriots held in prisons or listed as missing and pledging solidarity with heroic Nicaragua, the peoples of Chile and El Salvador, and all the other peoples standing up for their inalienable right to freedom. Appreciating that there is a close relationship between national and international tasks, the Paraguayan Communists regard the preservation of world peace and the inhibition of the imperialist nuclear threat as the prime condition for social progress. We are in no doubt that support for the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is opening up new possibilities for defusing international tension, promoting genuine independence, fostering friendship and cooperation among peoples, and liberating working people from exploitation and oppression.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU represents a vital development of the ideals and cause of the October Revolution in the conditions prevailing today. It demonstrated the staunch internationalism of the Soviet Communists and their solidarity with communist and revolutionary parties, the international working class movement, the national liberation struggle of peoples, and the general democratic movements. The confidence that we have the unfailing support of the great party of Lenin, other communist forces, and the whole of progressive world opinion is for us an inexhaustible source of inspiration and optimism.

¹ The task that has been charted, is, in our view, incredibly complex, but it is feasible: it envisages doubling the country's economic potential and raising labour productivity 2.3-2.5-fold within the next 15 years. The national income is to grow at an annual rate of 5 per cent, thereby making it possible to put into effect a wide-reaching programme for retooling the economy and allocating considerable funds for social needs.

² Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Moscow, 1986, p. 89.

³ See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 56.

⁴ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 16, Berlin, 1962, p. 322.

For a New Approach, For New Actions

Narciso Isa Conde – General Secretary,
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LAST May's general elections in the Dominican Republic took place against the background of the most severe socio-economic crisis in the nation's history. Rooted deeply in the structure of the economy, this crisis has been compounded by situation-

related problems predicated its intensity and dimension. Let us consider the present situation.

One of the cardinal factors of the crisis is the country's total dependence that has led to enormous material losses and atrophied the nation's productive forces. It is the outcome of unequal trade, outright pillaging of natural wealth, and of technological and financial dictation by the transnational corporations. The crisis has become general, for it affects all areas of the economy and a vast majority of the population. Its escalation is largely due to the drive launched by the imperialists and the local big bourgeoisie to use the nation's adversity for the purpose of maintaining and consolidating their predominance, concentrating capital, and boosting the profits of the most powerful groups.

Other factors of the disastrous state of the Dominican economy are: the nation's subordinate status in the capitalist world economy; the exorbitant, onerous growth of the foreign debt; and the accelerated concentration of economic power and national wealth in the hands of foreign banks and the local finance capital and monopoly groups. And out of all this comes the misery of the people, the fall of the living standard of the middle classes, the decline and ruin of small and medium industrial and commercial enterprises, and the bankruptcy of the weakest of these. This is a *prolonged* crisis. Its destructive effects continue to mount, while the groups in power have no alternative to offer that could ease the situation in the immediate or even foreseeable future.

The nature of this crisis shows distinctly that it has been precipitated not only by North American banks and corporations, that have subordinated the Dominican economy to their interests, but also by the various factions of the local big bourgeoisie aligned with these interests.

The political responsibility devolves squarely on the State Council, the Triumvirate, the Reformist Party, and the last two governments formed by the Dominican Revolutionary Party (DRP).¹ These implemented a policy that gave rise to the present situation, with the DRP being mostly to blame for the inexorable growth of the external debt and the nation's subordination to the International Monetary Fund.

In 1983 the IMF imposed an economic 'adjustment' programme on the Dominican Republic with the consent of the local ruling groups and the Jorge Blanco administration. 'Economic discipline', envisaged in the Agreement on Special Drawing Rights,² was introduced on the IMF's insistence. Under the impact of the popular rising of April 1984, this accord was replaced with an agreement on stand-by credits,³ which expired last April.

There are many arguments and facts testifying to the untenability of the stabilisation programme recommended by the IMF for ending or alleviating the crisis. Of these attention is attracted by the following:

—the IMF's main recommendations and terms are aimed at enabling the Dominican Republic to meet its international commitments. But the nation is obviously incapable of paying its foreign debt in the next few years. For this reason the IMF's policy is oriented towards curtailing local business activity at the cost of social sacrifices, of a reduction of the population's real incomes and consumption;

—in the current difficult international situation the IMF is seeking to restructure the Dominican economy by setting it on a course towards export-oriented manufactures and meeting the consumer demand with imports. This policy has prompted an accelerated concentration of capital benefiting mainly exporters, finance middlemen, and industrial monopolies.

All of this has not helped to provide a way out of the present impasse. On the contrary, the Dominican Republic is faced with the harassing problem of a growing foreign debt. The nation has found itself in a vicious circle of debts, while the

recommended escape valve, a renegotiation of debts, exacerbates the issue and makes a solution increasingly problematical.

In fact the effects of this policy were quick to surface: social tensions in the republic have risen steeply. In the interim between the 1982 and the 1986 elections there was a sharply defined aggravation and deepening of the crisis, and this was accompanied by a significant growth of popular protests and militant actions. At the same time, the DRP government's popularity fell drastically and there was an intensification of the contradictions among the groups of the ruling bloc. Then followed a period of social unrest and a growth of insurgent feeling among the people. A popular rising against the economic steps instituted by the government and the IMF⁴ erupted in April 1984. There was a national general strike in February 1985. However, the crisis affecting the country did not develop into a crisis of political power.

It is our experience that this course of events is usually protracted but does not always bring about a revolutionary situation or culminate in a victorious revolution. This was noted by Lenin: "Revolutions are never born ready-made; they do not spring out of Jupiter's head; they do not kindle at once. They are always preceded by a process of unrest, crises, movements, revolts, the *beginnings* of revolution, the latter *not always* developing to the very end (if, for instance, the revolutionary class is not strong enough)."⁵ In Russia this process lasted for about four years, from 1901 to January 9, 1905.

Further, it is important to bear in mind that in both pre-revolutionary and revolutionary years the people's struggle ebbs and flows, that it is neither constant nor always of the same strength and duration. Major actions and persevering class battles may be followed by short periods of retreat and abatement. This year's election campaign took place in precisely a time of a relative slackening of social tension.

Essentially, the elections exemplified how the people are manipulated politically in order to incline them towards more or less conservative options. Any other development could hardly have been expected. Our party assessed this entire political scenario as targeted on its platform and playing into the hands of the system's forces, which had in advance ensured a preponderance to themselves. Circumstances were against us, but we faced them dauntlessly.

In a document entitled 'The DCP in the Coming Elections', the Central Committee noted explicitly that "*in this situation our main efforts must be focused on creating the conditions for a transition from the present situation to a revolutionary situation. To this end it is vital to enhance the people's militant spirit, contribute to the development of popular protests, make every effort to turn the emergent revolutionary upsurge into a broad offensive and convert the struggle against the economic policy of the IMF, the government, and the big bourgeoisie into a struggle against the existing regime, into a struggle for a new political and social power.*"⁶

In the context of our guideline we were faced with the question of whether it would be expedient (or inexpedient) to take part in the elections in which, as could be anticipated, our political potential would be very limited. In weighing all the pros and cons we drew upon Lenin's theory in order to arrive at the best solution. Lenin initially urged revolutionary Marxists to use elections in periods of social calm. Later, generalising new experience, he took an even broader approach to this question, believing that even in a prerevolutionary situation it could be necessary or desirable to use elections organised by a regime in crisis: 'Even if only a fairly large *minority* . . . , and not "millions" and "legions", . . . follow the landowners and kulaks . . . —it *undoubtedly* signifies that parliamentarianism . . . has *not yet* politically outlived itself, that participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* on the part of the revolutionary proletariat . . .'⁷

In deciding to join in the election campaign the Dominican Communists were guided by this precept.

Recognition of the gravity of the country's crisis did not compel the Communist Party, as it did other organisations of the Left, to shun the option suggested by the imperatives of the day. We did not shrink from this important form of political struggle that embraced the entire nation and held the attention of all the media.

The fact that the parties seeking to consolidate the existing system or abstaining from speaking out for a new power were able to turn the elections into a struggle over which they held almost absolute command did not in any way signify that the Communists were isolated. In this manifestly unequal struggle we sowed the seeds of the immediate future, publicly proclaiming that there had to be an alternative to the policy of the IMF, the government, and the big bourgeoisie, that there had to be the appropriate programme for taking the nation out of crisis and delivering the people from poverty. We urged a campaign for a popular government that would annul the agreement with the IMF, halt the servicing of the external debt, and subscribe to the initiative calling for the formation of a continental movement for the cancellation of this debt. Other steps could be the nationalisation of banks, the institution of control over foreign trade, the expansion of foreign economic relations, the enforcement of an agrarian reform, a reduction of the prices of food, medicines, and services, an increase of the working people's real wages, the elimination of unemployment, the nationalisation of oil-refineries and a re-assessment of their contracts with foreign companies, the expulsion of North American military advisers from the Dominican Republic, a purge and restructuring of the armed forces and the police, the promotion of democracy, and the institution of an independent foreign policy.

In an article headed 'Let Us Extend Our Struggle to the Elections', we cautioned that if no effective response was found to the crisis the results of the voting would be immediately called in question and nullified on account of the deteriorating living conditions of the working people, although the replacement of the government at elections could awaken some hopes and lead to a temporary defusing of the political situation.

In accordance with the results of the elections a government headed by Joaquin Balaguer, representing the Reformist Social Christian Party (RSCP),⁸ was formed. Once again this was a choice in favour of the policy that had caused the grave economic and social crisis, the policy of the forces that were obstructing efforts to end that crisis.

What predetermined this outcome? In the first place, the operation of the anti-democratic election mechanism in high gear; the utilisation of the power of money, North American interference, and the large potential of bourgeois propaganda; the demarcation of 'spheres of influence' in the election campaign and shameless pressure on the electorate; and the multimillion spending on the election campaigns of the three political parties serving the ruling classes in one way or another. All of this ultimately reduced the manipulated 'people's will' to a contest between Balaguer, seeking to regain power, and the proponents of continued rule by the DRP. Still earlier, the Dominican Liberation Party had been used as a lever of indirect support for the RSCP and, in practice, this became yet another factor facilitating Balaguer's electoral victory.⁹

Lavish funds and the entire mechanism of the electoral system were placed at the disposal of these three parties. Despite the distinctions in their development and the political differences between them, they agreed to refrain from bringing the causes of the crisis into the open and from promising a programme that could help to surmount this crisis.

The Dominican Revolutionary Party planned to pursue its old, sharply criticised, course as the way to victory, relying chiefly on those who had rejected the so-called retreat before the forces of the Right, to which the possibility of the Balaguer's party

winning the elections was linked.

In turn, with memories of the last DRP administration still fresh, the latter counted on population support by virtue of the relative advantages of its policy, pursued when it was in power, on issues related to construction, employment, and checking inflation.

Unconnected with the policies of preceding administrations, the Dominican Liberation Party was seen by some people as offering an opportunity to vote neither for the DRP nor for the RSCP, and by others, as even presenting a progressive option despite the DLP leaders' clearly stated intention to drop the fight for the annulment of the agreement with the IMF and their public declarations in favour of forming a government that would pay the foreign debt and not hurt the interests of foreign corporations and big enterprises run by the local bourgeoisie.

A section of the electorate, including people with fairly progressive views, retained some illusions. With these three parties dominating the political scene our already limited potential was reduced still further. The presidential candidates of these parties, each of whom frenetically claimed his own triumph as inevitable, became a focus of attraction for the electorate seeking to vote 'correctly' and give their vote to those 'who could win'.

Throughout the run-up to the election the actually existing but somewhat weakened 'bipolar' electoral pattern was portrayed as 'tripolar' on account of the weight artificially attributed to the Dominican Liberation Party as the third pole. Actually, its top leadership steered clear of the only way for significantly undermining the positions of the RSCP and the DRP. It refused to form an alliance with the left forces and the popular movement, dissociate itself entirely from the two leading right-wing parties, clearly define its social boundaries, and make the maximum effort to rouse the people against the destructive policies of the governments of the past 20 years, policies that had generated the crisis. The Communists proposed joint actions, but this was categorically declined by the DLP.

This posture had grave consequences for us. Neither within the Dominican Left Front¹⁰ nor singly was the Communist Party able, prior to the election campaign, to line up a political force relying on the people and capable of competing with the Dominican Liberation Party. Differences within the DLF which concerned participation in the elections and which were caused by zigzags in the policies of some of our allies, left us with no option but to act singlehandedly against much greater odds. A so-called single ticket system was imposed upon electors, so that by voting for a presidential candidate they automatically voted for the nominating party and thereby influenced the composition of the National Congress.

We are aware that the drastic diminution of the DCP vote was due not only to external political factors such as the 'tripolar' election pattern. It was also due to the party's continued failure to resolve the problems that stand in the way of ending its organisational stagnation, hinder the growth of our membership and, as a sequel, the establishment of stronger links to the working class, the peasants, and the population at large.

The elections have strikingly accentuated the ailments of the present-day Dominican society, in which political alliances are formed at the dictation of the North American embassy, while the US Chamber of Commerce, that unites representatives of the US corporations operating in our republic, has become a place where presidential hopefuls conclude anti-national and anti-people deals. It can now be seen more clearly that the government, the National Congress, the leading bodies of the two largest parties, the judiciary, and the election mechanism are centres of corruption and influence trafficking. They are instruments of the politico-economic clans that transgress the Constitution, the country's laws, and their own 'rules of the game' with impunity; they are institutions where, on orders from potent local groups and their foreign backers, power is apportioned regardless of formal election results.

Of course, this fuels the people's distrust of the political system, a distrust expressed in the considerable growth of the number of persons who refrain from taking part in elections. As a result, some 30 per cent of the electorate did not turn up at the polls during the last elections.

Balaguer and his party won by a small edge. They were supported by peasants, marginal groups, a section of the middle classes, and most of the ruling class. The RSCP has lately reinforced its links to the main groups in power, definitively affiliating itself with the international Christian democratic movement, and shown its inclination to adapt its policy and organisational methods to this movement. This inclination harmonises with caudillism, while promises of reforms go hand in hand with conservatism. Its implicit leaning towards authoritarianism and repressions combines with attempts to abide by the Christian democratic doctrine in the face of a general growth of national democratic consciousness. This process can acquire new features as a consequence of the tensions arising from the socio-economic crisis.

As for the Dominican Revolutionary Party, which lost power, its influence in the capital and main workers' centres has shrunk and it now has fewer representatives in the National Congress and on municipal councils. The elections defeat and the mutual recriminations by the three rival groups in the party (two of these groups have stronger ties to the US embassy and conservative economic groups than to the international social democratic movement) are making a split more likely.

The reasons for the DRP's enfeeblement and crisis are to be found in the role played by it when it was in power. It even failed to square its policy to any extent either with the social democratic proclamations of some of its leaders or with its affiliation to the Socialist International. It fettered itself by yielding to North American dictation and complying with the will of those groups of dependent Dominican bourgeoisie, that took over its leading bodies.

At first, the DRP's drift to the right was brought about by its switch from nationalistic populism to politico-ideological attitudes reflecting the influence of European social democratic parties (this development was encouraged during the initial years of the Carter administration). Then, especially after the accession of the Reagan administration, this drift led to the renunciation of most of the social democratic postulates and the party's conversion (under the influence of IMF policy and subordination to Washington's overall strategy) into a political force increasingly indistinguishable from its main rival, the Reformist Social Christian Party.

The Dominican Liberation Party polled twice as many votes as in the previous elections, with the result that it doubled its representation in the Congress. However, despite its expectations, it found itself in third place: it got only 18 per cent of the votes. It scored its biggest success in towns with a preponderantly working class population, and also among the middle classes and young people. This outcome, considering the DRP's policy of concessions to the ruling classes, allows defining it rather as a distinctly moderate party integrated into the neosocial-democratic mainstream than a party of national liberation.

More than three years have passed since the International Monetary Fund began meddling in our country's affairs. And although there is now a new government, the most devastating socio-economic and political crisis in Dominican history persists.

The Dominican Republic does not have the resources for economic development and raising the people's living standard, but the government has pledged that this year it will pay international creditors over 700 million dollars to service the foreign debt, which amounts to more than 4,000 million dollars. And this is happening at a time when foreign companies are annually remitting some 200 million dollars annually to their base countries, while exports that had formerly risen to 1,200 million dollars fell to 700 million dollars last year. Let me add, that the gross domestic product has declined by 2.2 per cent. This year the spending on imports has

somewhat decreased, but the effects of the crisis in the sugar industry are still very visible. The sugar-cane crop was only 405,000 tons or half its usual size.¹¹

The purpose of the devaluation imposed on the country was to raise the price and reduce the volume of imports, depress business activity, and bring down the national consumption level by cutting wages and the peso's purchasing power. This criminal policy produced the funds for servicing the foreign debt, which cannot conceivably be repaid.

The economic decline and the inflation are accompanied by rising total and partial unemployment. The concentration of capital, chiefly by financial speculation, is strangling small and medium business enterprises and paring down production. The banks that have opened branches in the USA to intercept dollars from Dominican immigrants are thriving and expanding, while in the Dominican Republic itself poverty is growing relentlessly.

It may be expected that in this crisis situation the new government will have maximum recourse to equivocation. President Balaguer supplements cautious statements about the IMF-prescribed 'discipline' and his party's class commitments with statements to the effect that economic policy cannot be radically modified. This and the geographical fatalism dominating Balaguer's political thinking on account of the proximity to the USA disclose the sum and substance of what the government is planning.

However, in the changed historical situation and in view of the people's higher consciousness level it would be wrong to believe that the Balaguer government will repeat past experience. Our party, which is in opposition to the regime, will detailise its attitude to the new government after a careful analysis of its composition, orientation and distinctive features of its actions.

The magnitude of the crisis, the government's precarious political base, and the coincidence of the attitudes of two leading parties on basic issues have brought the ruling circles and their masters in Washington round to the idea of setting up a government of 'national unity'. The Balaguer government may be able to ensure unity among businessmen and between bourgeois and reformist parties, or between their individual groups (or their leaders), but it can under no circumstances be a government of true national unity. What we are witnessing is not new to the prevailing political system: the ruling groups representing a minority of the population are using the voice of the majority to promote anti-national interests.

The Communists are urging the establishment of a popular government and the implementation of an alternative programme to the policy of the IMF and the big bourgeoisie. Always remaining valid, this proposal, suitably enriched with the tactics dictated by the situation, serves as the pivot of our opposition line.

The Dominican crisis is part of the crisis now encompassing the entire continent. In political terms it is most acute in Central America, Haiti, Chile, and Paraguay.

Promoting US finance capital's economic strategy is an intensification of the methods of dictation and domination geared to the acuteness of the crisis and the possibility of revolutionary changes in any given country. This is precisely what explains the Reagan administration's special attention and aggressiveness relative to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Haiti and Chile. It also explains the indirect North American political interference in our country and the programme for modernising, enlarging, and professionalising its repressive forces, a programme drawn up in collaboration with military advisers from the Pentagon.

The Nicaraguan revolution has provided further evidence that Cuba's liberation was not a 'miraculous' exception. That is why Reagan is blindly and perversely trying to put into effect his illusory project for turning back the liberation process. At considerable political cost to the Reagan administration Honduras has been reduced

to the status of a country under occupation. The Salvadoran insurgent movement, which imperialism tried to kill in its cradle, has been a priority problem for the White House. Within a relatively short space of time this movement has evolved into a major military factor and an alternative force endangering costly imperial plans of Washington engaged in a brutal war.

There has been a serious deterioration of Panama's relations with the USA over the disclosure of CIA complicity in the murder of Omar Torrijos and also on account of the Reagan administration's obstructions to invoking the treaties permitting Panama to exercise sovereignty over the canal zone.

To the north of a rumbling volcano in Central America is the crisis situation in Mexico, another preoccupation of the USA. The mechanism of North American domination has been shattered in Haiti. In the face of the mounting instability of the government that replaced the Duvalier regime and the growing people's movement for change, the local bourgeoisie—mainstay of dictatorship and foreign domination—is apprehensive that developments may jeopardise its interests.

Chile has long been a bleeding wound of South America. The US State Department is not hiding its disquiet as, after many years of terror in that country, it sees the grapes of the peoples's wrath ripening, the people led by progressive forces openly rising against the regime.

All of this is taking place against the background of a huge external debt and of the damaging effects of the economic and social policy of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.¹² The spreading resistance to dictation from them is becoming the pivot of the struggles of the continent's peoples, while the action taken by Peru in deciding to limit servicing its foreign debt and thereby coming into collision with the IMF¹³ is inspiring them to fight for real independence.

The Dominican process is inseparable from this reality, while the successes and setbacks of the battles fought by the peoples of the continent on all fronts are linked to the conditions and potentialities of the struggle in our country. Hence the need to strengthen the spirit of Latin American brotherhood and solidarity, and the imperative that the Communists undertake more far-reaching and effective internationalist commitments.

Everything that I have said about the Dominican Republic speaks for itself: the crisis before the general elections; the election of a new government that intends to continue the old policy and has no programme for radical solutions of difficult social problems; the national crisis against the background of the acute crisis throughout the continent.

In this situation it is immensely important that in their actions the Communists should take concrete circumstances into account. It is vital that the party should be strong, that there should be a bloc of left forces and a popular movement capable of countering the crisis and, in the process of struggle, becoming the alternative power and opening the road to surmounting difficulties. Any slowdown on these issues must be closely analysed by the party, the other forces of the Left, and the organised popular movement as a whole.

We have a heavy burden of many weaknesses, shortcomings in our style of work, stagnation and sectarianism, reformist deviations, impermissible radicalism, and a lowering of the standard of requirements in the struggle for our cause. The party has failed to involve all its members in an active work. The party has been unable to bring the social crisis to a head. For that reason we see our task in reinforcing the spirit of constructive criticism and open self-criticism, reassessing our own work, charting a correct line, assuming a bigger responsibility, approaching the elaboration of theoretical questions creatively, and staunchly carrying out our revolutionary duty.

We have begun to tackle this laborious task in our own home—beginning with the party's central leadership. The Communists are devoting all their energy to building

up, as soon as possible, a strong party, an alliance of the forces of the Left, and an organised popular movement capable of responding to the challenge of the day.

The new times require a new approach and new actions.

¹ Following the assassination of the dictator Rafael Trujillo the country was ruled by the State Council (1961-1963), the Triumvirate (1963-1965), the Reformist Party (1966-1978), and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (1979-1986).—Ed.

² See Narciso Isa Conde, 'At the Threshold of Decisive Development', *WMR*, No. 12, 1984.—Ed.

³ Stand-by credits—a form of the IMF's operations—are extended to countries facing serious difficulties in regulating their balance of payments.—Ed.

⁴ For details, see Narciso Isa Conde, *op.cit.*—Ed.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 451.

⁶ Bulletin *Hablan los comunistas*, No. 3, July-September 1985.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 58-59.

⁸ Formed as a result of a merger of the Reformist Party with the Revolutionary Social Christian Party.—Ed.

⁹ During the election campaign the Dominican Liberation Party concentrated its criticism against the Dominican Revolutionary Party, thereby winning a considerable portion of the latter's vote.—Ed.

¹⁰ See Narciso Isa Conde, *op.cit.*—Ed.

¹¹ *Hablan los comunistas*, June 19-26, 1986.

¹² Meaning the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.—Ed.

¹³ Last August the IMF listed Peru among debtor-nations to be denied, on its recommendation, further credits and loans.—Ed.

Main Obstacle to Peace in the Middle East

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CONCLUSIONS based solely on an analysis of regional factors will not give an understanding of the situation in the Middle East, where peace has been out of sight for several decades, or of the reasons for the unceasing wars. Imperialist powers, particularly the USA, have turned the region into a rumbling volcano that erupts periodically. The Reagan administration's Middle East policy is part and parcel of its strategy of confrontation with the national liberation movements, independent anti-imperialist states, the Soviet Union, and the socialist community as a whole. Basic to this strategy is the objective of attaining military superiority and destroying socialism by force.

Unlike that of imperialism, which holds out the threat of exterminating humanity, Soviet policy is, in its entirety, aimed at safeguarding peace, preventing a nuclear-missile collision on the Earth and in outer space, negotiating a disarmament agreement, and moving from confrontation to detente. The Soviet Union's Middle East policy is an element of its overall policy of peace with the extirpation of regional flashpoints of war as one of its goals. This course is expressive of the Soviet state's socialist essence and flows from its Marxist-Leninist ideology.

A cardinal factor fuelling international tension and heightening the threat of a nuclear catastrophe is the aggressive foreign policy pursued by Israel's rulers. By blocking all channels for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, refusing to discontinue the occupation of Arab lands seized in 1967, and making preparations for further aggressions, they are turning this volatile area into a root cause of continued international tension.

Concurrently, over the past few years there has been a steep rise of Israel's role in

imperialism's global strategy. With the signing of the 'strategic alliance' agreement with the USA, the Israeli government has moved into deeper subservience to Washington's policies. Israel is now a US henchman not only in the Middle East but in other regions as well—Central America and Africa—where reactionary dictatorships are tottering and the popular liberation struggle is spreading. Last May Israel was the third country after Britain and the FRG to join officially in the Reagan SDI and declare its readiness to help blueprint this project, which confronts humankind with a deadly peril.

Zionist ideology underpins the policies of Israel's ruling circles. Hatred of communism, of existing socialism, of the Soviet Union forms its bedrock. These circles voice the class interests of big capital while acting against those of all the working people, including the middle strata. Their foreign policy is patterned on traditional Zionist precepts calling for expansion into and the annexation of Arab territory, while their domestic policy serves Israeli and foreign monopolies. The burden of the cost of wars of aggression and of the occupation is placed squarely on the shoulders of the working class and the mass of the people of other walks of life.

Of late there has been a sharp growth of the threat of Israeli aggression against Syria, which the Reagan administration regards as the main impediment to its plans in the Middle East. The USA has already made aborted attempts to use Syrian reaction against that country's government, which is pursuing an anti-imperialist course. One of the many objectives of the US-Israeli aggression in Lebanon has been to debilitate Syria in military and political terms.

The Zionist rulers are increasingly insisting on attacking Syria before it achieves military parity with Israel. Israel's Defence Minister Itzhak Rabin has declared publicly that war with Syria is inevitable, that its outbreak is only a question of time. All the indications are that the preeminent purpose of Prime Minister Shimon Peres' April visit to the USA was to lay the ground and coordinate plans for joint actions against Syria. This is the light in which we see the visit to Israel of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who actively supports US strategy in the Middle East.

The Israeli militarists declared their readiness to participate in the 'star wars' programme in the calculation of obtaining access to the latest technological breakthroughs and new weaponry that, in their view, could be decisive in a future war with Syria, a war entailing operations from attempts to extend occupied territories¹ to strikes at military and industrial targets in Syria. At present the paramount aim of the Reagan administration and Israel's rulers is to provoke a crisis in Syria and ensure a turnabout in its foreign policy. Plans are being laid for ultimately bringing Syria into the Camp David conspiracy.

In other regions of the world Israel performs the most villainous and sensitive assignments, in many of which the administration in Washington does not wish to be seen as being directly involved: supplying military hardware to fascist dictatorships, sending military instructors to help them, and organising and sustaining subversive activity against progressive regimes.

It is indicative that none of the Zionist parties tolerates so much as the thought of a total withdrawal from the Arab lands occupied in 1967 or the creation of an independent Palestinian state on that territory. Not a single one of them voted in the Knesset against the 'strategic alliance' with the USA or against participation in the 'star wars' programme.² Last spring when the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality³ moved for a vote of no confidence in the government, which had signed the relevant agreement with the Reagan administration, not a single Knesset member representing these parties signalled support. Deputies representing two small opposition Zionist parties were the only ones to abstain from voting.

There has been a further shift to the right in Israeli politics. This is seen in the formation, in the summer of 1984, of a broad government coalition based on two of

the largest political blocs—Likud and Maarah. The former openly champions the interests of big capital. The latter is headed by the Labour Party (which is sometimes called a workers' party). Rather than serving the class it allegedly represents, it is harnessed to the class enemy—in and outside Israel. The fact that despite some differences on tactics, these two blocs have been able to unite on a common platform hostile to the working class and the peace forces best exemplifies that there are no essential distinctions between Likud and Maarah.

The Zionist ruling circles have taken Israel into deep-rooted dependence on the USA. Without political support and military and financial aid from Washington (estimated at from 3,000 to 5,000 million dollars annually), these circles would have been unable to persevere in their policy of aggression, maintain their hold on the occupied lands, and act provocatively towards Arab states. Given its present political course, Israel cannot do without US handouts. Its external debt has exceeded 30 billion dollars (the largest in the world in per capita terms). Repaying and servicing this debt devour 40 per cent of the state budget.

With aggressive foreign policy as the motivating factor, Israeli state-monopoly capitalism has built a powerful military-industrial complex, which now dominates the economy. It employs nearly 25 per cent of the industrial workforce. Private and public sector industries, as well as enterprises run by the Histadrut—a trade union federation—have been drawn into armaments production. In other words, the foreign policy pursued by the Zionist rulers now has a large economic base. Naturally, their actions on the world scene mirror the requirements of the military-industrial complex, as is seen most strikingly in the Middle East: were peace to be established there, all the armaments monopolies would be pushed into crisis.

Moreover, Israel's military-industrial complex sees a direct threat to its economic interests in the national liberation processes, in the popular struggles against dictatorial regimes because much of its output is export-oriented. Arms sales are now bringing Israel over one billion dollars annually (50 million dollars in 1972). This hardware goes chiefly to the regimes in South Africa, Zaire, El Salvador, Honduras, and Chile. The Israeli government is thus impelled to support ultra-right and fascist dictatorships, not just by the general world-view of the Zionist ruling elite but by the interests of its military-industrial complex as well.

Apart from all else, there is an economic motivation for the refusal to pull out of the Arab lands held since 1967. For the big bourgeoisie these lands are a profitable market for Israeli goods and a source of cheap labour. Control of the Jordan West Bank alone brings an annual revenue of over a billion dollars. Nobody has estimated the profits from the exploitation of the 100,000 Palestinian Arabs from the occupied lands working in the Israeli economy and denied all social rights.

In addition to harbouring the threat of further aggressions in the Middle East the policies pursued by the country's leaders on the international scene are totally at variance with the Israeli people's true interests. Although Israel has been in existence for almost 40 years it has not become an integral part of its region. The nation's leaders make believe that it is part of the 'West', of the 'free world'. This single fact erodes national security.

A very grave threat is posed by the nuclear policy of the Israeli hawks. It comes under the 'top secret' category: it is not mentioned in the state budget debates in the Knesset or even at sittings of the government. But from time to time the newspapers carry reports attributed to foreign sources, saying that Israel is in possession of nuclear weapons (the given figures vary from 30 to 100 bombs and warheads). Also, there have been reports of secret collaboration in this area with South Africa and of joint tests of nuclear warheads.

Possession of this weapon is seen by the ruling circles as the guarantee that Israel can act with impunity. They are going to all lengths to retain a regional nuclear

monopoly. However, the loss of this monopoly is only a question of time. If the Middle East does not become a nuclear-free zone, for which Israel will have, as our party is demanding, to destroy its nuclear potential, it is not to be excluded that a situation will arise in which Arab countries will feel they have to develop or obtain nuclear weapons. And Israel, it will be borne in mind, is a small country. But it seems that blinded by militarist ideology, the ruling elite is unable to face up to realities.

The almost 20-year-long occupation of Arab lands, where an 'iron fist' policy is pursued relative to the population and even the most elementary human rights are flouted, is affecting Israeli society and spurring racism and fascist tendencies. There is now a generation of Israelis brought up in spirit of extreme brutality towards the Palestinian people. Many of them see the occupation, the shooting of demonstrators in the West Bank, and the torture and assassination of Arabs as quite commonplace and normal.

This thought-pattern is given every encouragement by Zionist reaction. When Menachem Begin was Prime Minister he once said: 'Arabs are two-legged animals.' Another well-known official, Rafael Eitan, who was chief of the Israeli General Staff during the war in Lebanon and is currently a Knesset deputy representing the ultra-right Tehiya Party, declared: 'We ought to keep the Arabs like cockroaches—in a bottle.' Following this statement he ordered the release from prison of officers and soldiers who had perpetrated atrocities in occupied lands, despite the fact that an Israeli military tribunal, provided with irrefutable evidence, had sentenced them to imprisonment.

The government thereby gives the green light to the various terrorist organisations. One of the most active of these is the Kah racist group headed by the rabbi Meir Kahane. Aping the Nazi ideologues, who held that short shrift had to be made of entire peoples, Meir Kahane urges undisguised terror against Palestinian Arabs in order to expel or force them to leave their homeland. The Kahane gang is only the tip of the iceberg. For all intents and purposes this is also the stand of the Likud hawks, the Tehiya fascists, the extremist Gush Emunim organisations of Israeli settlers on occupied lands, and some fundamentalist religious parties. Meir Kahane only puts into words what for tactical consideration others leave unsaid.

These elements want the Palestinians to be driven out of not only the lands seized in 1967 but also out of Israel itself. Back in 1980 retired General Aharon Yariv admitted the existence of such plans. The present government encourages the racists, who use diverse pretexts to dispossess Arabs of their land. Altogether, since the proclamation of Israel Arabs have been deprived of most of the land owned by them.

The racists stir chauvinist, anti-Arab feeling, taking advantage of the effects of the economic crisis, particularly the high unemployment rate: some 150,000 persons (or ten per cent of the total workforce) are jobless. They set unemployed Jews, including demobilised servicemen, against Arab working people, contending that the latter are responsible for the dearth of jobs for Israeli workers. Arabs are subjected to job-discrimination and discriminative treatment in the allocation of government funds for education, medical care, town and rural community development, and so on.

Since the beginning of the present decade there has been a marked growth of the influence of semi-fascist parties. At the Knesset elections in 1984 Tehiya won five seats. Meir Kahane was elected to the Knesset for the first time, getting 25,000 votes (five times as many as in 1981). A total of 12 seats were won by ultra-right and extremist religious organisations. Fundamentalist religious groups have stepped up their activities to impose arch-conservative laws on society.

In many areas the coalition government acts hand in glove with these groups, often seeking their support. It uses chauvinistic, racist campaigns to enforce anti-labour socio-economic programmes, enact reactionary laws, and restrict democratic

freedoms.

The CC report to the CPI's 20th Congress in 1985 noted that the situation in Israel bears out Engel's words that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations.

What, then, are the mainsprings of the opposition to the brutal doctrine of Israel's rulers?

On the international level these are, in the first place, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries aimed at settling the Middle East crisis, the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people and all the Arab anti-imperialist forces, and the solidarity shown for this struggle by world progressive opinion.

There are sources of opposition in Israel itself. These are, above all, the CPI and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality supported by considerable sections of the people. The Communist Party has the backing of blue and white collar workers, intellectuals, and students. We hold very strong positions among the Arab population. At the last Knesset elections 40 per cent of the Arab vote went to candidates of the Democratic Front. We get the votes of thousands of Jews as well, which in the situation prevailing in Israel is a major achievement.

The party is acting consistently against the policy of aggression and continued occupation of Arab lands, for a comprehensive peaceful settlement in the Middle East and a just solution of the Palestinian problem. The Communists and their allies were the first to expose the aims of the aggression in Lebanon and called upon the Knesset to pass a vote of no confidence in the government. Thereby, in a single move they placed the question of the war (which was not raised by any other party) in the focus of the nation's political life and exercised considerable influence on public opinion.⁴

The first-ever anti-war movement in Israel is now in full swing with the Communists playing a major role in it. During the demonstrations in Tel Aviv and other towns, as well as in rural communities, condemnation of the aggression against Lebanon was articulated by hundreds of thousands of Israeli—Jews and Arabs, including thousands of officers and men who had refused to serve in that country. Of these 150 were arraigned before military tribunals.

People are getting a clearer understanding that the Lebanese gamble, as the entire aggressive policy of the country's rulers, conflicts with their true national interests and serves chiefly the strategic objectives of the USA. It is not accidental that the Yesh Gvul ('There Is a Limit') anti-war organisation advanced the slogan: 'We shall not kill and do not wish to die for US interests!' Our party considers that the movement against the aggression was one of the factors that compelled the government to pull Israel troops out of most of Lebanese territory. However, the aggression continues. The CPI and the Democratic Front are calling for its termination, a withdrawal from the frontier zone siezed in the south of Lebanon, and the disbandment of the gangs of mercenaries calling themselves the 'South Lebanese Army'.

We are acting with determination to put an end to racism and the discrimination against the Arab population. We are demanding full equality for the Arabs and heading the actions of Arab working people against the land take-overs. In recent years we have been joined by other sections of the public worried about the growth of racism, fascism, and anti-Arab terrorism. In Israel it is now widely recognised that the escalation of ultra-right tendencies and religious extremism is a threat not only to the Arab population but to the society as a whole. Many people fear that there may be a 'strongman' authoritarian regime undisguisedly hostile to the working people and the democratic forces.

There have already been some notable anti-racist actions. During one of them democratic circles (Jewish and Arab) kept Meir Kahane out of the town of Um el-Fahm, where he had planned to make one of his hate speeches. In another case, several thousand Jewish anti-fascists of the town of Givatayim with the mayor at their

head prevented Meir Kahane and his gang from conducting one of their demonstrations.

A significant indication of the Jewish population's mood is the tendency towards a growth of emigration from Israel. As many as 17,500 persons left the country in 1985. The reasons are obvious: the unceasing border tensions with their threat of further wars and further bloodshed, the sick economy, and the sharp decline of the living standard. People are not eager to die for such 'ideals' (in Lebanon Israel's losses have been over 5,000 officers and men killed or wounded) or to suffer on account of unemployment and the austerity regime introduced by the government.

Our party and the Democratic Front advocate unity among all who are prepared to drop ideological differences in order to work for an end to the occupation of lands siezed in 1967, to racism and discrimination against the Arab population, and to fascist tendencies, for the attainment of social progress, peace, and a just settlement in the region.

We believe that many of the people now under Zionist influence can become our allies because their views on many issues conflict with the policies of the ruling circles. Among these people are, for instance, that section of the Jewish population (particularly youth) for whom adherence to Zionism means no more than to stand by the continued existence of the State of Israel. We see potential allies among the people fearing that the continued occupation of Arab lands and the constant tension in the region will end poorly for Israel. These views are being increasingly articulated in the press and even in the Knesset.

In 1984, on account of the changes in the sentiments of Jewish working people and disagreements among the Zionists on some specific issues, the United Workers' Party (MAPAM) walked out of the Maarah electoral bloc led by the Labour Party and dissociated itself from the bloc's present, openly right-wing policy. The Ratz group, which has four deputies in the Knesset, likewise broke with the Labour Party.

Lenin often made the point that the existence of various groups in the bourgeois camp and the differences between them have to be taken into account. This is the guideline of our attitude to the Zionist parties. The CPI regards MAPAM, Ratz, and the doves in the Labour Party as partners in the struggle against the fascist danger, the terror directed at the Arab population, the activities of extremist organisations of Israeli settlers in the occupied lands, and sometimes in defence of the working people's social gains. In the recently formed Initiative Committee for the Improvement of the Relations with the Soviet Union the Communists are making common cause with some leading personalities of MAPAM and the Labour Party. Take another example. At the elections to the leadership of the students' union of the Tel Aviv University in 1983 and 1986 adherents of the parties opposed to racists and fascists put forward a joint list. On both occasions this list garnered a majority of votes, with 80 per cent of the students voting for it in 1986 despite the efforts of right-wingers to use the presence of CPI members in that list to intimidate them.

At the same time, we Marxists repudiate the existence of a 'progressive Zionism'. In Israel some elements are seeking to persuade people that there is a 'reactionary' and a 'progressive' Zionism. But the Marxist-Leninist postulate, explicitly stated in the CC report to the CPI's 20th Congress, that a progressive Zionism is non-existent is supported by facts from Israeli political life over recent years. We do not close our eyes to the distinctions in the attitudes of the Zionist parties, especially on issues such as the functioning of a bourgeois 'democracy' and the threat of fascism. There are Zionists who act from progressive positions on individual particular problems. Proceeding from the need to organise the struggle for common objectives, the Communists do not apply one and the same standard to all Zionists.

However, all of them have a common compulsion, which is to counterpose Jews to Arabs. This is a nationalistic urge. Our Marxist-Leninist point of departure is that

workers, both Jews and Arabs, are opposed to exploiters, that peace fighters, both Jews and Arabs, are opposed to invaders, that the proponents of Israel's independence and the independence of the Palestinian people are opposed to those who have turned our country into an American strategic base used against the forces of peace, socialism, and national liberation in the Middle East and other regions.

Despite some distinctions between them, their stand on the Palestinian question and their attitude to the strategic alliance with US imperialism are creating an unquestionable threat to Israel's security. The struggle against the ideology and practice of Zionism is consistent with the interests of the Israeli people. The Communists see no contradiction between this struggle and the aspiration for unity of action on particular issues in the battle for peace, democracy, and social progress.

Our party's efforts are focused chiefly on bringing a just and comprehensive peace to the Middle East. Using the Knesset lectern, the media, civic organisations, and addresses to the working people, the Communists are saying that nothing less than a withdrawal from the Arab lands held since 1967 and a just settlement of the Palestinian problem, through the creation of an independent Palestinian state to exist in the region side by side with Israel can ensure the security of our people. Lately, the party has been concentrating on showing the substance and possible consequences to Israel of its strategic alliance with the USA, notably of the insane 'star wars' project.

We are making it clear to the working population that there is a close link between the aggressive, pro-imperialist policy of the ruling circles, the enormous military spending (75 per cent of the budget, including the repayment and servicing of loans used mainly for the purchase of armaments), and the deteriorating socio-economic situation in the country—the diminishing real wages, the layoffs and plant closures, and the cuts in the state's allocations for medical care and education.

The most militant contingents of the Israeli working people are strongly resisting the socio-economic programmes of the government and big capital. Every year hundreds of thousands of people take part in strikes. But the mass of workers still supports the ruling Zionist parties (with many even voting for the right-wing Likud bloc), failing to see the link between their common ideological and political platform and the assaults on the rights of the working people.

While exposing and criticising the government's actions, the Communists are offering a clear alternative to its policy. We are arguing that the nation's economy will only benefit if there is peace in the Middle East and military expenditures are cut substantially. There would be trade with neighbouring countries. For instance, it would be much cheaper to buy oil from Iraq than from Mexico, where it is currently purchased. Relations with the USSR and other socialist states would give Israel larger possibilities in the world market. Of course, these are only some of the points of our programme of fundamentally new prospects for the country's economic development.

The Communists are giving much of their attention to counteracting anti-Sovietism, which underlies the policy of Israel's rulers and the propaganda campaigns run by Zionist organisations. The anti-Sovietism of the Zionist establishment of Israel is expressive chiefly of the class interests of the bourgeoisie, of its fear of the proliferation of socialist ideas. A contributing factor is that the Soviet Union is consistent in its efforts to bring peace to the Middle East, demands Israel's withdrawal from occupied lands, and supports the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and the creation of an independent state. In recent years anti-Soviet propaganda has grown more virulent than ever on account of the shift to the right on the Israeli political scene.

The Communist Party is confronting the anti-Soviet campaigns. We are showing that the USSR is opposed not to Israel but to the aggressive policies of its Zionist rulers, that the Soviet Union's stand on the Middle East and its proposals for

convening an international conference on a negotiated settlement in the region and its other peace initiatives are consonant with the interests of both the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples. The Communists are doing much to enlarge the movement for friendship with the Soviet Union. They are holding discussions with representatives of the public forces cooperating with the CPI. The latter have moved away from traditional Zionism and espoused a correct stand on the Palestinian question, on the problem of a peaceful settlement, and are denouncing US imperialism. However, they are hostile to existing socialism. Acting from anti-Soviet positions, these quarters are trying to erect an ideological barrier between the Israeli peace fighters and our party, and in this respect they are at one with the Zionist establishment.

Our 20th Congress called upon the party to conduct a more vigorous ideological campaign against anti-Sovietism, to make that campaign more assertive, and increase the flow of truthful information about the USSR and its policies.

Further, we are exposing the Zionist propaganda myth about the USA being the 'friend' and 'champion' of Israel. The financial and military 'aid' from Washington is in fact payment for the policy of aggression and for the services that the Israeli ruling circles are extending to the USA in the Middle East and other parts of the world. US nuclear-armed warships use Haifa as their station. The USA is influencing practically all aspects of the nation's life. For that reason the Communists are calling for the restoration of Israel's independence. It is not easy to explain the meaning of this call to the Jewish population among whom there is strong pro-American sentiment. Still, there are now many more people in Israel than 10 or 15 years ago who take a sober view of US policy.

There are various aspects to Israel's political development at the present stage. The country is more closely integrated into imperialism's global strategy, the ultra-right has grown more bellicose, and the danger of fascism is very real. At the same time there is broad opposition to major facets of the line pursued by the Zionist ruling circles.

The CC report to the 20th CPI Congress states in part: 'Numerous forces arise, that want a change. Quite a number of our Communist Party's positions are now acceptable to additional circles. . . The sacrifices and sufferings heaped upon the masses, the bitter experience, have led many—though they are not yet the majority—to understand that the rulers' policy constitutes a great danger for the working class and the popular masses and might endanger Israel's future.'

The Communists and their allies in the Democratic Front are now stepping up their efforts to win the cooperation of those prepared to act against the anti-national policy of the government and monopoly capital, for unity of action by Jewish and Arab proponents of democracy and peace.

¹ In 1967 Israel seized the Golan Heights, which belong to Syria, while in 1981 it formally annexed this territory.—*Ed.*

² The Reagan administration attached crucial significance to Israel's formal agreement to participate in this programme, counting that this would win greater support for the SDI in the USA from influential Zionist circles in the Congress and in the business and academic communities.

³ Formed in 1977 on the initiative of the CPI. It consists of the Communist Party, the progressive Sephardic Black Panther organisation, progressives among the Arab population, mayors, and individual progressive civic figures. It has four deputies in the Knesset.—*Ed.*

⁴ For details, see Ali Ashour, 'When People Have Grown Weary of War', *WMR*, No. 1, 1986.

Democracy and Discipline: A Dialectical Unity

Bugyn Dezhid – CC Political Bureau member, CC Secretary, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP)

THE Mongolian Communists' experience shows that whenever the country has faced new problems, our party has found the right way to solving them, and has striven to improve the style and methods of its activity, and to bring them into accord with the requirements of the day in undeviating observance of Lenin's principle of democratic centralism. The close blend of its two organic aspects—democracy and centralism—helps to strengthen the party's unity and make it more combat capable, enabling it more effectively to play its role as the leading and guiding force of the Mongolian society.

This year's 19th Congress of the MPRP¹ reaffirmed that our party is a truly democratic organisation, which regards democracy and collective leadership as a firm law of its activity. 'Day-to-day efforts to improve the selection, appointment and education of cadres, to organise party control in the best possible way, to develop the Communists' inner-party democracy and activity, and to advance principled criticism and self-criticism—the well-tested method of bringing out and removing mistakes and shortcomings, and correctly educating cadres—are matters of the party's tireless concern and a key principle of its organisational work,' says the MPRP Programme. Nor has it merely proclaimed democracy; it has guaranteed democracy in practice. The party Rules put the duty on the Communists to settle all matters of its inner life collectively. Sitzings of the bureaus of primary organisations, general party meetings, conferences, plenary meetings and congresses are recognised and authoritative organs embodying the party's collective wisdom and experience. Consistent application of the principle of collective leadership helps to establish a healthy climate in all the organisations, to avoid voluntarism, and to take objectively-grounded decisions.

That does not mean, however, that we believe it necessary to thrash out every matter at meetings or sittings, so substituting for actual concrete work endless debates or the establishment of numerous commissions intruding into matters assigned to designated performers. On the contrary, the party is against such an ineffective line. The following example was cited at the Congress: at the end of last year, there were 22 commissions and other bodies in the Sukhe Bator District, which distracted more than 320 persons from their work. The highest party forum resolutely condemned such practices and said that the activity of any party and state organisation must be judged only by the end results and actual advances, and not by the number of decisions and measures.

The MPRP Central Committee has taken and is steadily putting through concrete measures aimed to assert the principle of collegiality. But there is here also a 'reverse side of the coin'. In some cases, functionaries have used this principle as a cover for shunning personal responsibility for assignments. We are also combating such trends in an effort to have a correct combination of collective leadership and personal responsibility of the Communists. For these purposes, more accounts are being heard from leaders at meetings, bureau sittings and plenary meetings of party committees.

The party and its Central Committee constantly consult with the Communists and all the other working people on the key issues of domestic and foreign policy. The latest pertinent example comes from the broad discussion in the party organisations and work collectives of the draft Guidelines for Mongolia's economic and social

development from 1986 to 1990. The thousands of proposals expressed in the discussion were reflected in the Congress decisions.

The principle of openness in party work is being ever more fully practised. Lenin says: 'Our strength lies in stating the truth.'² The party cannot—and does not—have anything to conceal from the people. The working people are being given more information on the key problems of social development, and on the activity and decisions of leading organs, including those on matters considered by the MPRP CC Political Bureau. The record shows that the fuller the information provided to the masses on the political tasks, difficulties and problems we face, the more active is their support for the party's line, and the more conscious their participation in elaborating and realising administrative decisions.

Conversations held between leaders and rank-and-file Communists to exchange opinions on pressing problems are an important form for invigorating the activity of the party masses. Such conversations were held, for instance, in the run-up to the 19th Congress of the MPRP, before the reporting meetings in the primary organisations, and the regular district and city party conferences. Valuable proposals bearing on the undeviating observance of the party Rules, greater responsibility, tighter discipline and order at every level were put forward.

At the same time, some party workers have yet to comprehend the full value of addressing the people directly; they prefer to take decisions without reckoning with their views and experience. The 19th Congress urged leading cadres tirelessly to develop their sense of what is new, to learn to speak to the masses, and to heed their voice. This is a key factor in enhancing control from below and for creating an atmosphere of intolerance with regard to any breaches of social justice.

The spirit in which the reporting and election campaign was carried on in the run-up to the Congress is a good indication of how inner-party democracy has been developing: 79.3 per cent of the delegates to the highest party forum and to the district and city party conferences—industrial and office workers and farmers—were elected for the first time. That figure alone shows just how broadly MPRP members are involved in party leadership.

Criticism and self-criticism are a well-tried means for asserting genuine democracy in party life. It is not only a right, but a statutory duty of every Communist. It is the best way to bring out and resolve contradictions which tend to arise in the course of the society's development, and to eliminate shortcomings. By contrast, hushing up pressing problems and unwillingness to make a critical analysis of the situation result in irresponsibility and stagnation. Lenin says: 'If . . . we are not afraid to speak the sad and bitter truth straight out, we shall learn, we shall unfailingly and certainly learn to overcome all our difficulties.'³

Unfortunately, some people get on a high horse, cease reckoning with the opinion of others or objectively to assess what they are doing, and display immodesty. That is what happened, for instance, with the first secretary of a district party committee, who took it into his head that his past services gave him a special status, and so lost the spirit of self-criticism. That produced an atmosphere of complacency, permissiveness and impunity in the organisation. The sternest measures had to be taken against him, since such people lose the right to head a party collective.

Some leading workers lack the patience and capacity to lend an attentive ear to criticism and to draw the right conclusions from it. The Party Control Committee under the MPRP CC recently examined the suppression of criticism in Mongolia's Association of Garment Enterprises of the Ministry of the Light and Food Industry. There, those who voiced well-justified criticism were harassed and paid lower wages, and some were even dismissed from their jobs. The guilty leaders were called to strict party account, and some of them were removed from their posts.

It is the duty of party organisations, it was said in the CC Report to the 19th

Congress of the MPRP, to create normal conditions for the free development of criticism and self-criticism, especially from below. We believe that the capacity to draw lessons from criticism is an important indicator of our cadres' principled attitude and political consciousness. At the same time, the party also resolutely opposes those who try to smear the dignity and authority of honest people under the pretext of engaging in criticism.

Criticism is not an end in itself. It helps to eradicate obsolete methods of work and phenomena alien to socialism, such as departmentalism and red tape, fraudulent and bureaucratic practices, lack of initiative, and substitution of paper make-work for actual effort. In their cadre policy, our party committees seek to create everywhere an intolerance of self-complacency, toadyism, and careerism, and insist on the further development and strengthening in each party organisation and work collective of the workmanlike, self-critical and principled atmosphere which reigned at the 19th Congress of the MPRP.

As democracy is deepened in party and social life, the Communists display greater initiative, and all the other working people are civically more active. The number of letters to central and local party organs has increased. While giving a high assessment to our policy and the country's achievements, they also subject to sharp criticism the omissions and shortcomings in our work and make proposals on the ways to overcome these. They express an irreconcilable attitude to the embezzlement of socialist property, abuses of official position, breaches of legality and law and order, avoidance of socially useful labour, mismanagement and laxity, drunkenness and alcoholism, that is, everything that harms the interests of the society and slows down its advance.

Our party knows not only from theory, but also from its own long experience and from that of the international communist movement that genuine democracy is impossible without socialism, just as socialism is impossible without a steady development of democracy. Hence our tireless efforts to ensure the working people's widest participation in running the affairs of the society so as to amplify the democratic principles of our statehood, and create the conditions for the individual's all-round development.

The Mongolian Communists and all the other working people took a great interest in and are closely studying the historic materials of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, which are based on the conception of the USSR's accelerated economic and social development, and a full-scale programme for the struggle for peace and social progress. The workmanlike character of the proceedings at the Soviet Communists' highest forum and the frank and truly Bolshevik atmosphere at it provide us with a vivid example of the bold and innovative Leninist approach to tackling the pressing problems of domestic and international life.

The MPRP's party organisations are remodelling their activity in the light of that experience, seeking to improve the style and methods, to work to higher standards, in a spirit of self-criticism and with an imaginative approach, so as to make it more efficient and to give greater scope for successfully implementing the new and large-scale tasks set by our 19th Congress.

Inner-party democracy cannot be developed, and the Communists' activity invigorated without a tightening up of discipline. As we advance along the way of socialist construction, ever greater responsibility falls on the Communists in every sphere of social life, and this requires a higher level of organisation. Otherwise, one can hardly expect that the adopted decisions will be translated into reality, and the goals set by the party achieved.

The MPRP's historical record and current practices show very well that conscious discipline and proper organisation constitute the most important condition for developing party democracy, a pledge of the party's combat capacity, and a reliable

guarantee of successful fulfilment of its mission as the vanguard social force. Here we proceed from Lenin's idea that sense of responsibility and strict order are among the main conditions for building socialism, which 'rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves'.⁴

In formulating the new tasks in the development of the society, the MPRP gives pride of place in its activity to the tightening up of order and organisation. The party believes that the Communists, wherever they may work, have the duty to conduct this line and to set models of the workmanlike approach, sound performance and high discipline to every unit of the political system and to all the working people.

Almost 70 per cent of the Mongolian Communists work in material production, and they are the ones who lead the drive to tighten up labour, production, technological and planning discipline. While convincing and impassioned calls for speeches are certainly important in educating the masses, especially young people, an active stand in life, high moral qualities, a sound work ethic and personal example set by the Communists are indispensable. Mongolia's population has become markedly younger in recent years, and this naturally adds importance to such an example, because it helps young people to acquire labour and social skills, to assimilate the experience of the older generations, and to acquire the urge for discipline and sound organisation.

Here, the tutorial movement has a big part to play: more than 30,000 front-ranking workers, labour veterans and Communists act as tutors to the young men and women doing their first job in production.

The tightening up of order and success in implementing the party's whole policy ultimately depend on the work collectives. Two years ago, we had our first party-wide examination of the efficiency of primary organisations, which involved not only the Communists but also non-party people. It helped to sum up positive experience, to bring out shortcomings in the fulfilment of their statutory duties by party members, and to reveal reserves in strengthening socialist discipline. It showed, among other things, that irresponsible persons taking a dishonest attitude to their assignments, bureaucrats and others who violate the norms of socialist community living are not some kind of abstractions—they still live and work in our midst. That is why in pursuing the line of that examination, we devote special attention to identifying the reasons for the breaches of discipline, to eliminating shortcomings in due time, and to making the educational influence of the work collective and its core, the primary party organisation, more effective.

Social and individual interests are more easily harmonised in an atmosphere in which there is adherence to principle and the imaginative and workmanlike approach, something that is achieved through relations of comradely cooperation, mutual assistance and a higher standard of demands in the collective, and efforts to tighten up state and labour discipline. This naturally requires that concern for better organisation and order are closely tied in with the settlement of problems bearing on working and living conditions.

Work collectives at enterprises and institutions are vested with broad rights in every sphere of inner life. Production conferences, posts manned by members of the Young Revolutionary League, and other public inspection groups; labour norm-setting and economic analysis groups; and public courts are the genuinely democratic organs which have the task of tightening up discipline for the people's benefit. Members of the working class, the cooperative peasantry and the creative intelligentsia—both Communists and non-party people—are elected to these and other voluntary associations. They do not use administrative coercion, but bend their efforts to educate conscious discipline in a climate of imaginative and truly respectful attitude to their fellow citizens, an approach in accord with the humanistic nature of the socialist society.

We believe that there is good ground to connect the country's economic and social successes with the work of the party's primary organisations in tightening up discipline and order in every collective, and with the Communists' growing vanguard role. Practice shows that it alone, without any additional inputs, helps in some cases to attain substantial growth in labour productivity, output, and higher quality of goods and services. In that way, for instance, the long-lasting lag in fulfilling plans for the centralised supply of milk—which is of much importance to the country—was overcome. Another example shows how tighter control over the use of working time has helped to reduce losses from year to year: over the past year, they declined by 12 per cent in material production.

The party's efforts to tighten up discipline, order and organisation have developed into a nation-wide movement, has manifestly yielded concrete results and has exerted a marked influence on the society's development. But even here very much remains to be done. The means of political, educational and organisational work, and financial, economic and juridical instruments of influence are not always used in a comprehensive or effective manner. In some work collectives, the drive for discipline is seen as a temporary campaign. We seek to overcome these shortcomings in the light of the objective character of the party's demands. Not everyone has yet learned to give to the society in accordance to one's abilities. That is why it is so important to take a differentiated approach to individuals, skilfully combining administrative and educational measures, with emphasis on inducement. Here the party's point of departure is that the tightening up of labour discipline, organisation and order is of tremendous importance not only for economic development, but also for the improvement of social relations and the assertion of the socialist way of life.

All of this puts new and high demands on the party control system. We bring to the fore the education of Communists in a spirit of undeviating observance of party norms, socialist legality and morality. And we do so for a good reason: the Communists are always in the limelight, whether at work or in everyday life, so that people tend to regard their behaviour as a yardstick. That means that a Communist's breach of party, state or labour discipline harms not only his personal prestige, but—most importantly—the party's authority, and has a negative impact on the education of the masses. That is why we consistently abide by the principle of the Communists' dual responsibility: to the party, and to the state. The Communist has no other privilege than to feel profound concern for everything that happens in the country.

The highest demands are made on Communists in leading posts, since any sign of lack of principle, fraudulent practice, or careerism on their part, while being in crying breach of the socialist principle of democracy, seriously weakens discipline and organisation in the work collective and does great harm to the society. Nor does that apply solely to what, in a manner of speaking, appears on the surface. Whenever some such person in office fails to draw the right conclusions from the fact that there is no advance in the section in his charge, or, if there is lax discipline and poor order, and if resolute measures are not taken to eliminate these shortcomings, the party calls him to strict account as someone who has failed to live up to its trust and has fallen short of present-day requirements.

Party control, therefore, needs to keep in view any acts that harm the interests of the party, the country and the people, and to give such acts a stern and impartial assessment. Here is another example. It was discovered that some party members holding high office in the judiciary had reduced, without good reason, the penalties meted out to criminal elements, having tried their cases in the light of personal ties and sympathies. The sternest party penalties have been imposed on the guilty persons, including the former President of the Supreme Court; they have been removed from their posts, and some have even had criminal proceedings instituted

against them.

A liberal attitude to those who commit breaches while in high office would be tantamount to connivance and would have a negative effect on the social atmosphere. Here, as nowhere else, it is important to be more exacting, and that is what our party has been doing. Thus, the Party Control Committee recently issued a reprimand to the deputy Minister of Building and Construction Engineering, who had cheated the state for narrowly departmental purposes. A similar penalty was imposed on the first deputy chairman of the State Committee for Building, Architecture and Technical Control for frustrating the drawing up of designs and estimates, falsifying reports and granting unwarranted bonuses.

Almost 40 per cent of party penalties last year were applied to those who had neglected fulfilment of party decisions, directives and state plans, and abused their official position. We believe that such a principled and even stern approach, which is informed by concern for the high reputation of leading cadres, is warranted by the status the ruling party has in the socialist society.

Control and verification of performance, which are carried on systematically and on a planned basis, naturally serve not only to bring out the negative aspects, failures and omissions. Their main purpose is to promote an objective assessment of our potentialities and the processes underway in the society, sum up and disseminate advanced experience, make fuller use of reserves, renew obsolete methods of work, and carry what has been started to successful completion. We believe that a key principle of party control in this context is to combine exactingness with respect to cadres, and concern for them, help in their creative growth, and prevention of possible mistakes and blunders.

Our party consistently applies the rule of judging the effectiveness of control not by verification figures, but by its actual impact on the state of affairs, the progress achieved in tightening up discipline, enhancing responsibility, and raising the Communists' initiative. This applies to all party units, including primary organisations, in which the MPRP Rules vest the right of control over the activity of management and the work of the apparatus. The 19th Congress of the MPRP said: 'Party organisations have the duty to exercise control over the fulfilment of their decisions and measures, and to assess their own performance in accordance with the concrete results and advances.'⁵

Discipline and democracy are in dialectical unity. Democracy without discipline tends to create anarchy, which is alien to the life of the socialist society, while discipline which denies democracy tends to curb the creative initiative and activity of the masses and to infringe their rights and interests. The gist of the organic connection between these two concepts, both in inner-party relations, and in the political system as a whole, is a correct understanding and consistent implementation of Lenin's principles of democratic centralism, the basis on which the party is now remodelling its work in guiding the society and directing the national economy. The main thing here is to abandon stereotyped, bureaucratic methods, to enhance the responsibility and self-standing of state, social and economic organisations and work collectives, with utmost support and encouragement for the working people's activity and initiative, and their actual participation in exercising operational and effective control over the fulfilment of our plans and decisions.

The tighter the discipline and organisation, the more solid is the socialist society's moral and political unity, and the more effective the operation of its democratic system. The party's line of utmost development of democracy, tighter discipline, higher responsibility, greater order and better organisation springs from the objective requirements of social development and fully meets the Mongolian people's aspirations.

It is not surprising, therefore, that our ideological opponents trying to undermine

the Communists' authority keep fiercely attacking democratic centralism, the solid basis of the organisation and entire activity of the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class. They try to distort the substance of the leading role of the ruling communist and workers' parties, and claim that under them, the self-standing of the people is 'suppressed' by the centralised leadership, while democracy is no more than formal.

Our experience, some aspects of which have been dealt with on these pages, makes nonsense of such arguments. The MPRP's organisation of its inner life on the basis of the broadest democracy helps to inspire the Communists and the working masses to creative accomplishments and the earliest attainment of new frontiers in socialist construction.

¹ See *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.

² V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 295.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, p. 98.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 420.

⁵ Jambyn Batmunkh, *MPRP CC Report to the 19th Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the Tasks Ahead*, Ulan Bator, 1986, p. 57 (in Mongolian).

the party

A Readiness to Fight

Aziz Mohammed – First Secretary,
Central Committee, Iraqi Communist Party
(ICP)

IT is a major success and a great accomplishment of our party that, despite formidable difficulties and the serious problems it had to solve, it has convened its Fourth Congress, held clandestinely on Iraqi territory from November 10 to 15, 1985, that is more than nine years after the Third Congress (Baghdad, MAY 1976).

The decision to convene the party forum was taken at the November 1981 plenary meeting of the Central Committee and confirmed at 1982 and 1984 plenary meetings. The Central Committee and its Political Bureau drew up the necessary rules and norms which guided preparations for the congress. Relevant issues were covered in *Munadil al-Hizb*, the party's internal bulletin.

I refer above all to the broad and thorough preparation of the main documents of the congress — the political report, the new edition of the ICP Programme and the evaluation of the party's struggle between 1968 to 1979.¹ The discussion of these documents was conducted very vigorously in all party organisations, displaying a responsible, objective and critical approach and an attentive attitude to the experience gained, to the current developments and to the prospects of the struggle. Many valuable remarks, proposals and additions were submitted to the Central Committee and other party bodies. Much was taken into account in the final drafting of the documents presented, on behalf of the Central Committee, to the congress delegates

Editor's note: The delay in the coverage of the Fourth Congress of the ICP is due to the fact that the Iraqi Communists have to operate in the difficult conditions of the underground.

for consideration. Significantly, despite the harsh conditions of the underground, party organisations used the pre-congress period to discuss these documents actively, to offer contributions based on their knowledge and experience, and to upgrade their own activities, specifically, to launch voluntary labour drives (outside Iraq) and to raise funds for the congress.

The numerous delegates who arrived to attend the congress represented all party organisations within the country, abroad and in the guerilla movement. This broad representation was not easy to ensure given the difficult situation in which our party had — and still has — to operate. By itself, this fact reflects, first, the considerable increase in the number of party organisations and in their membership. Second, it reflects the desire of the ICP leadership to enable the broadest possible spectrum of party activists to take part in the work of the congress and to contribute to the shaping of the party's policy, positions, prospects and the nature of its ties with other forces. Besides, we wanted different views to be expressed at our congress, so that it would really be a forum at which ideas would be examined and compared responsibly, specifically and purposefully.

The six days of the congress set a vivid example of intense and creative work in the ideological, political and organisational fields, highlighting the party's unity and the concerted efforts of ICP organisations, cadre, members and sympathisers to implement its immediate and long-term tasks. Among the delegates, the revolutionary enthusiasm typical of all party members was combined with a heightened sense of responsibility and with concern for the party's present and future, for the destiny of the working class and of all Iraqi people. The discussions conducted at the congress were really a school for Communists: the experience the ICP had accumulated over its history of more than 50 years and the party's revolutionary traditions were combined profoundly and organically with the scientific revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism, our lodestar, and with the principles of proletarian internationalism. Those who worked to prepare the congress, those who attended it, who took care of the delegates' security and helped make their work a success will never forget this party forum.

Displaying thoroughness, commitment and readiness for the struggle ahead, the congress analysed and discussed the entire range of the problems related to the situation within the country, in the Arab world, on the international scene and in the international communist movement and to the maintenance of universal peace and security. It provided answers to the questions that aroused the concern of the Communists, of our party's allies, of those who support it and assist it in its struggle, and of the Iraqi people as a whole. The congress conducted a detailed examination of the situation within the party and of the experience gained in the party's reorganisation, in strengthening the ICP guerilla units, enhancing their combat efficiency and recruiting new fighters. The congress also accorded close attention to the task of broadening the party's ties with the masses everywhere and upholding the interests of the working people.

The question of the war between Iraq and Iran featured prominently on the agenda of the forum. Launched by the Iraqi reactionary dictatorship on September 22, 1980, it is still raging. Our party firmly condemns this destructive war, as well as those who started it and keep it up. The congress urged an immediate cessation of the hostilities and a peaceful settlement of outstanding disputes. The patriotic and internationalist position of the Communists was stressed in no uncertain terms: the party condemned the war and the occupation of Iranian territory by Iraqi troops, called for their earliest withdrawal and, at the same time, categorically rejected Iran's attempts to invade Iraq, occupy Iraqi territory and expand the scope of the hostilities. True to our principles, we reject Iran's intention to export, by way of the war, the "Islamic revolution" to Iraq and to impose the "Iranian model" on our people.

This unjust war has brought untold sufferings and privations to the two friendly

peoples. The more informed sources estimate the number of casualties on both sides at almost one million people and the damage to property, at over 600 billion dollars. Aside from the large-scale devastation, there are the extremely pernicious psychological, socio-political, population and environmental effects of the war that society will suffer from for decades to come.

The war continues to pose a great threat to peace and security in the region and enables imperialism, above all US imperialism, to build up its military presence here, to interfere in the internal affairs and encroach upon the sovereignty of independent countries under the pretext of safeguarding their "interests". The slogan of an immediate end to the war and a peaceful settlement of outstanding problems is consonant not only with the interests of the two nations but also with the maintenance of international peace and security and with popular aspirations in the Arab countries and throughout the world.

The congress noted that the party and all its members must discharge their duty by launching broad campaigns of protest against the continuing hostilities, by urging world public opinion and all peace forces to work persistently for the soonest possible termination of the armed conflict, and by encouraging the masses to take broad action against the war.

The forum of the Iraqi Communists displayed a full measure of responsibility in its approach to the character of the ruling regime. As the congress stressed, the regime is essentially a dictatorship pursuing a repressive policy that runs counter to the interests of the people and of social progress. This policy has impoverished and devastated the country and cost hundreds of thousands of Iraqis their lives. The congress called on all patriotic forces and parties to rally together and pool their efforts so as to accomplish the tasks facing the people — those of ending the war, overthrowing the dictatorship and implementing a democratic alternative that would ensure democracy for Iraq and genuine autonomy for Iraqi Kurdistan.

It was reiterated that the Democratic Patriotic Front remained an effective instrument in the struggle for our people's aspirations. The congress advocated expansion of this organisation and the creation of a broad patriotic national front which would unite all those opposing the war and the dictatorship and striving for peace and democracy.

The delegates of the party forum expressed great appreciation of the efforts undertaken by the peace forces, primarily by the countries of the socialist community, to ensure an immediate termination of the Iran-Iraq conflict and to strengthen their solidarity with our people and their patriotic forces fighting for a prosperous, independent and democratic Iraq.

Discussing the issues of the Arab national liberation movement, the congress exposed the essence of the strategy pursued in our region by imperialism, above all US imperialism. An integral part of the global imperialist strategy, this course poses a grave threat to the liberation movement, to the Arab countries conducting an independent patriotic policy, and to universal peace. The congress highlighted the danger inherent in the US-Israeli strategic alliance, aimed against the interests, security, independence and freedom of the Arab peoples.

The participants in the congress voiced their unswerving support for the struggle of the fraternal Palestinian people led by the Palestine Liberation Organisation as their sole legitimate representative, denounced the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary intrigues and conspiracies aimed at weakening and eliminating the PLO, called for PLO unity on the basis of the documents adopted at the 16th session of the Palestine National Council, and resolutely rejected the Amman Agreement². The delegates noted the need to promote solidarity with the struggle of the Syrian people and hailed Syria's steadfastness in the face of intimidation and incessant military forays on the part of US imperialism and Israel. The escalation of threats directed at the Libyan Jamahiriya and its fraternal people was also condemned.

The congress paid special attention to the questions of war and peace as the central problem currently facing all mankind. It was shown clearly that Washington's policy, particularly under the Reagan administration, was becoming increasingly dangerous to peace among nations and giving rise to the sinister prospect of life on Earth extinguished and human civilisation destroyed. The Communist Party called on the Iraqi people, on the world's peace forces and on all those dedicated to human survival and progress to take the cause of peace in their own hands and to discharge the mission of safeguarding it. It is important to firmly rebuff the feverish attempts of US imperialism at aggravating international tensions, spurring on the nuclear arms race, transferring it into outer space and producing new generations of weapons of mass destruction, thus pushing the world closer to the brink of deadly nuclear war. Our party supports the peace initiative tirelessly advanced by the Soviet Union because they conform fully to the desire of the world's nations to live without wars, without fearing for their survival.

The ICP has proven that it is a reliable and militant unit of the world-wide army of the Communists, an organic part of the international communist movement. It has a stake in this movement's greater unity and in the solution of its problems on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles and theoretical precepts. We hold that it would be useful to study the possibility of convening an international communist conference so as to promote the movement's unity and international solidarity in the name of new victories in the struggle against the imperialist threat of aggression and war.

A vigorous and constructively critical discussion was held, focusing in the situation within the party, on the problems and difficulties it had encountered and overcome in the period under review and on the mistakes that had occurred. Delegates noted the accomplishments made in the efforts to build up and strengthen party organisations, promote the guerilla movement, make ICP work more vigorous and its ties with the working masses stronger, and defend the interests of the masses while linking closely the immediate demands with key national issues.

The documents adopted to sum up this thorough and responsible discussion emphasise that the building of party organisations throughout the country, among industrial and other urban workers, peasants, youth, students, and women, in the armed forces and in communities remains the key task of the party's organisational work. It is important to continue strengthening the ICP's ties with the popular masses and to enhance the activity of trade unions and other democratic organisations. Efforts along these lines are an essential and reliable means of mobilising the popular masses and involving them in the revolutionary struggle for their vital interests and aspirations. Accomplishment of this urgent task demands that we profoundly master the experience of the past years and adopt an innovative and vigorous approach to the search for and use of new forms, methods and means of struggle. It calls for unswerving observance and creative application of the Leninist organisational norms and principles that govern the party's internal affairs — democratic centralism, criticism, self-criticism, collective leadership and compliance with the rules of security. It is also imperative to maintain keen class-based discernment and conscious revolutionary vigilance with regard to the forays and schemes of the party's enemies so that they would be unable to deal it a severe blow.

The congress performed a scrupulous analysis of certain negative phenomena that had occurred in the party's internal affairs and in the multifaceted activities of the Communists. Boldly and critically, it examined the errors and mistakes committed by the party's leadership, its various bodies and individual functionaries. At the same time, care and concern were displayed towards party organisations and cadre. It was confirmed that the party was capable of eliminating the shortcomings and promoting the consolidation of healthy, Leninist norms in its life and work. The congress declared that the new ICP leadership was to draw profound conclusions from past experience and to use it correctly and creatively in the current and future struggle. Great emphasis

was laid in this connection on the raising and education of young Communists. Their activity and involvement in the work of various party bodies, particularly those at the higher level, should be enhanced. It was also stressed that more attention should be paid to the members of the cadre recruited among the working class and other strata of the working people in order to reinforce the class character of the party.

The delegates unanimously endorsed the disciplinary action taken by the Central Committee since 1981 against persons who committed mistakes, violated party rules and Leninist norms of work, did damage to the party and undermined its unity. The new leadership of the ICP was instructed to deal with future problems of this kind with principled firmness, with revolutionary forthrightness and without delay.

The congress paid homage to the heroic communists who has lost their lives, conveyed condolences to their relatives and friends who suffered great sacrifices and pain, and hailed all militant Communists who selflessly and vigorously opposed war and reprisals.

The Fourth Congress of the ICP highlighted the utter commitment of the Iraqi Communists to the scientific theory which they applied consistently and creatively, and their total dedication to the Leninist principles of party work. There is no doubt that this helps us to overcome difficulties, avoid mistakes and advance confidently along the right path.

The highest forum of our party actually coincided with last year's anniversary of the October Revolution and was warmed by the rays of its radiance. The work of Marx, Engels and Lenin, the great teachers of humanity, rallied the delegates around their glorious party and its just cause and was a guiding light in their noble and formidable efforts. They, the heirs and successors to the mission of Fahed and Salem Adil, our comrades whom we shall never forget, were inspired by the banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and the remarkable success of the congress was the best expression of this. The creative efforts of all members and friends of the party to accomplish the tasks that have been outlined will bring us closer to victory, to the deliverance from the war and the dictatorship and to the implementation of a democratic alternative in our beloved country.

¹ From the time the Baath Party took power to the severance of cooperation between the Baath Party and the Communists. — *Ed*

² Concluded by King Hussein of Jordan and Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, on February 11, 1985. — *Ed*.

new experience

Our Interviews

Fidelity to Slogans of a Popular Rising

Tijani Tayeb Babear – CC Secretariat
member, Communist Party of the Sudan (CPS)

The Nimeiri military regime in the Sudan was deposed in April 1985. How has the political situation in your country developed since then?

After the dictator's expulsion the conditions appeared for efforts to democratise our society and resolve national problems in the interests of the entire population. The repressive apparatus was dissolved, and some of the regime's highest ranking officials, including the former Vice-President, have been tried and sentenced to imprisonment for their crimes against the people.

Our party believes that the Sudan is now at a turning point of its development. On the one hand, the situation has improved. The Communist Party and democratic public organisations now function legally. There is freedom of speech and assembly. The Communists have regained the right of unhindered travel and are publishing a daily newspaper. On the other hand, the bitter heritage left by the desposed regime is making itself felt. The Sudan remains in a deep economic and financial crisis. Its external debt has reached ten billion dollars. A civil war has been raging in the south for three years. The problem of hunger remains unresolved. The sharia continues to operate as the nation's code of laws. Reactionary quarters are very active.

In order to coordinate their actions, the political parties, trade unions, and other mass organisations that took part in the rising, set up a Union of National Forces of Salvation in the spring of 1985 and adopted a charter defining this Union's general aims and tasks. In accordance with the Charter, the transition period was to take one year and be consummated with general elections to the Constituent Assembly. These elections were held in April 1986, i.e., within the time limit specified in the Charter.

The run-up to the elections witnessed a fierce struggle. During the transition period authority was exercised by the Military Council. Reactionary quarters — members of the Moslem Brothers, adherents of the overthrown regime, and pro-US military circles — wanted a military-civilian dictatorship and demanded an extension of the transition period, the investment of the Military Council's Chairman with unlimited powers, and the disbandment of the UNFS. This scenario was strongly opposed by the people, who were determined to achieve the aims proclaimed in the Charter.

Political parties, regional tribal alliances, and individual public figures took part in the election campaign, which was marked by considerable grassroots activity. The outcome of the voting was powerfully influenced by the fact that the Sudan's most acute problems have not been solved. Another factor was that many officials of the Nimeiri regime still have not been weeded out from the state apparatus, and they were the people who monitored the elections, especially in the localities. Further, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement and its armed wing, Sudanese People's Liberation Army,¹ refused to participate in the elections with damaging consequences to the people at large. John Garang, commander of the military wing, insisted on continuing the civil war which this organisation is fighting in the south, on nullifying

all the laws left by the Nimeiri regime and also the military treaties with Egypt and Libya.

How did your party prepare for the elections? What was its election programme?

In March 1986 the CPS leadership adopted an election programme under the heading "The Way of the Communists, the Country's Salvation, and the Consolidation of Democracy". The party's immediate objectives are formulated in this programme: the passage of a democratic constitution and the eradication of the political legacy left by the former regime. The programme contains a short-term plan for the country's development: the restoration of the national economy, an upgrading of the health service, the development of the water and power supply systems, and the promotion of cultural revolution. Moreover, the programme shows why there was a need for a progressive foreign policy.

The Communist Party launched a drive to win popular support for its platform. For this purpose we held open political discussions and circulated posters, leaflets, and tape-recorded cassettes explaining our slogans.

Our aim at the elections was to win the broadest possible representation in the Constituent Assembly, unite the forces that joined in the uprising, mobilise them for a struggle to ensure the implementation of the uprising's aims and slogans, and defeat adherents of the old regime and the reactionary quarters.

The party nominated candidates in 44 of the country's 273 districts. In ten districts it supported candidates of other democratic organisations, and in four it withdrew its candidates in order to unite the progressive forces against the Moslem Brothers. In this way we prevented the election of their chieftain and the leader of the right-wing religious party National Islamic Front.

How did the voting go and what are the CPS's present objectives.

A total of 264 deputies (instead of the 301 stipulated by law: in the south there were no elections in 37 districts due to the continuing hostilities) were elected to the Constituent Assembly. Most of these belong to two parties of the local bourgeoisie — Al-Umma and the Democratic Unionist Party, which formed the government. The reactionary forces are represented by the National Islamic Front, which has 51 seats; 35 seats are held by partisans of the former regime. Deputies from the Communist Party, the regional tribal alliances, and recently-formed small parties, representing the working population, have united in a left parliamentary opposition bloc, the Democratic Alliance. It is indicative that the two Baath parties active in the country suffered a defeat.

In the Constituent Assembly the CPS has five seats. We were close to victory in four districts. In the capital itself more than 45,000 votes were cast for the Communist candidates². The General Secretary of the CPS CC Muhammed Ibrahim Nugud polled nearly 6,000 votes, or almost 1,000 more than his closest rival. This is not at all little if one considers that in some districts a majority of 100-120 votes was enough to win a seat.

Active Communist participation in the election battles led to the creation of the foundation for a broad alliance with other democratic and patriotic forces. For the first time ever, the CPS was joined by political forces in the country's west and south, and also by Copts³. We were able to establish contacts with people in distant parts of the country where we formerly had no base, and set up primary organisations in these areas. A considerable segment of the people who resigned when the Nimeri dictatorship was in power rejoined the party. It would be safe to say that the CPS was able to use its election campaign to extend and consolidate the influence it enjoys among the people. This is, we feel, the most significant outcome of these elections.

As regards the tasks confronting the party, we chart them on the basis of our analysis of the current situation, which reflects the fact that the transitional period was not consummated. Since the Constituent Assembly was elected, not more than 20 per cent of the state apparatus officials have been changed. Decrees restricting the functions of political parties and trade unions are still valid. Some generals, who were members of the Military Council, have resumed their posts in the armed forces, while one of them, Abdalla Fadl, is the new commander-in-chief. Those who continue to be opposed to democratic reforms may group around these military men.

A key aim of our party is therefore to work for unity among the progressive, patriotic forces, and mobilise the people to defend and consolidate the democratic freedoms that have been won. Holding strong positions in the leadership of some trade unions, we have now established productive contacts with the trade union movement. Concurrently we are continuing our work among the population — at factories, in rural communities, and among other sections of the working people. Their support is crucial to bringing pressure to bear upon the government to induce it to put democratic reforms and other urgent programmes into effect; eradicating all vestiges of the Nimeiri legacy in the economy and the nation's political life, dismantling the Nimeiri regime's judicial foundation, halting the civil war in the south, and resolving the question of the form of government democratically.

A major thrust of our struggle is to counter the forces of Islamic reaction. The Communists are against turning the Sudan into an Islamic republic and the adoption of an Islamic constitution. They are demanding equality for all Sudanese regardless of their religious persuasions (30 per cent of the population profess other religions) and the repeal of the sharia as the nation's code of laws. But this does not mean that we want the banning of religion as such (a common accusation hurled at the Communist Party by Islamic fundamentalists).

Some aspects of the CPS stand coincide with the policy of the present government. In particular, the Communists welcome the talks between the Prime Minister and the commander of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army on ending the hostilities in the south of the country, and also the government's foreign policy, notably its principled assessment of the situation in the Arab world and its course towards expanding relations with many, including socialist, nations. We will support its other positive steps that meet the demands of the people.

¹ The Sudanese People's Liberation Army sprang up in 1981 in response to the policy of "pacifying the south" pursued by the Nimeiri regime. By 1984 the insurgent army was operating in all three provinces of southern Sudan (for details, see M.I. Nugud, "At the Beginning of a Difficult Stage", *WMR*, No. 9, 1985). *Ed.*

² Khartoum, Sudan's capital, has a population of 1,200,000 — *Ed.*

³ A group of population of Egyptian descent who profess to Christianity. *Ed.*

Recruiting the Finest People

Antonio Jacinto do Amaral — CC
Political Bureau alternate member, MPLA-Party
of Labour (MPLA-PT)

At its Second Congress in 1985 the MPLA-PT adopted a resolution "On Enhancing the Party's Leading Role". What has been the progress in carrying it out?

In its work the MPLA-PT is guided by the Leninist principles governing a party's leadership of society and creatively applying these principles under the conditions prevailing in Angola. The Second Congress did indicate the need for reinforcing the

party's leading role, and this means, above all, that members of our party should understand this role and that it should be acknowledged by all elements of the political system.

To ensure the fulfilment of the resolution we have mapped out a series of specific measures, including measures to reinforce party control of the government's performance in managing the state sector of the economy, and of the work of mass public organisations that have voluntarily undertaken the role of a link between the party and the people. We are focusing mainly on industries and individual production facilities that are the most important for the country's economic development. That is where party organisations are being set up in the first place, and through them the MPLA-PT provides society with political leadership.

The strengthening of the party's role is linked to the quantitative and qualitative growth of its membership. How is this problem being addressed?

Our party was formed on the basis of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), a broad front numbering more than 200,000 members. From these we had to select individuals whose personal qualities measured up to the requirements made of members of a vanguard political party. At the first stage the party had about 30,000 members. Shortly before the party's Extraordinary Congress in 1980, roughly 10,000 persons were expelled on account of their passivity and lack of the needed political attributes and competence.

Somewhat later, the party announced an enrolment campaign, and specially selected party organisations were authorised to supervise the admission of new members. But because these organisations functioned mainly in the services industry we did not get the results we had expected. A new enrolment, conducted just before the Second Congress was held, was more purposeful. As a result, the party now has over 35,000 members, mainly workers. We continue to accentuate not so much the quantitative as the qualitative aspect of the party's growth.

You said that the party is admitting chiefly workers to its ranks. But peasants comprise the majority of Angola's population. How are you working with other sections of the population?

Indeed, peasants comprise the bulk of Angolan society. Some provinces still have no industry at all and, consequently, no working class.

However, for some time after independence was proclaimed the peasants, who made a large contribution to the national liberation struggle, remained outside our field of vision. Our internal enemies — servitors of the South African racists — were quick to take advantage of this omission. To rectify the situation we have significantly stepped our work in rural communities. Due to the work of party schools and study circles the political awareness of peasant party members has grown and the public activity of the rural population has increased.

This year the MPLA-PT Central Committee has set up an agrarian policy department and we hope that it will help us to coordinate the efforts of the peasants to become self-sufficient with regard to food and encourage them to grow larger quantities of traditional export crops — coffee beans, corn, legumes, oil-bearing plants, and others.

The party is winning growing influence in the armed forces and in the security agencies. At present ten per cent of their personnel are members of the MPLA-PT. A further impetus was recently given to the party's leadership of youth organisations. The post of CC Secretary for Youth affairs was established this year in the Central Committee. We are seeking to invigorate all mass organisations, to turn them into a reserve of the party, into creative participants in drawing up and carrying out the party's policies.

Your Questions Answered

More Than an Electoral Alliance

Parliamentary and local elections were held in Portugal in 1985. As in earlier elections, the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) acted as a member of a left-wing bloc called the Popular Unity Alliance. Readers have written for information about this electoral bloc and about the importance attached to it in the Communist policy of alliances. In turn *WMR* wrote to *Luis Sa*, CC alternate member of the Portuguese Communist Party and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Poder local*. We publish his reply.

THE Popular Unity Alliance was formed in 1978 by the PCP and the Portuguese Democratic Movement-Democratic Electoral Commissions (PDM-DEC). Previously, since 1976, there was the Popular Unity Electoral Front, in which the Communists and the forces cooperating with them put forward joint lists for elections to local administrative bodies¹. But experience showed that understanding between political parties was not enough for addressing specific problems in the various localities. The parties concerned have an aggregate membership of nearly half a million (of whom over 200,000 are members of the PCP). Most of the adult population does not take part in their activities. Moreover, quite a few people belong to other parties despite their objective class interests. But they and uncommitted people esteem the Communists and their closest allies as honest and knowledgeable, devoted to their cause, and capable of making an inestimable contribution to the solution of vital problems. Hence the possibilities for cooperation in organs of local authority by Communists with other deputies regardless of their party affiliation.

Thus, the Popular Unity Alliance was conceived as a judicial foundation for broad unity among circles acting to safeguard democratic gains, and as a body drawing up electoral lists. Persons prepared to cooperate with the Communists and other left-wing forces but disinclined to be included in the lists proposed by the PCP can take part in elections as candidates of the Popular Unity Alliance. As a rule, nearly half of them are independents or supporters of the Socialist or other party.

The agreement on the formation of the Popular Unity Alliance records its main objectives: support at the national level and in the localities for policies consistent with the letter and spirit of the Constitution;² efforts to resolve problems crucial to the population; nomination of joint candidates at elections provided the relevant decision is passed by the parties in the Alliance.

While it is neither the sole nor decisive form of cohesion, the Popular Unity Alliance contributes to the attainment of unity among the democratic forces. The Communist Party has never suggested an alternative policy or the formation of a government based exclusively on itself and the Portuguese Democratic Movement. Consequently, it is not a popular front or bloc laying claim to political power. It is no more than a mechanism for cooperation to ensure effective administration by bodies of local authority in which it enjoys a majority (in 47 municipal councils and 335 parish juntas) or, where it is in the minority, to protect the interests of the people. In itself, this is of no little significance.

Most of the Alliance's votes come from workers and peasants. It is supported also by people belonging to other population groups interested in the attainment of the aims of the national and democratic revolution. We believe that the Alliance can broaden our party's influence among non-proletarian masses, especially as in the Alliance we are the most influential and organised force, playing a uniting role in it. There is close interaction between the Communists and representatives of the other parties in the Alliance. In local authority bodies there are permanent forms of cooperation among the deputies (for instance, in coordinating commissions).

The Alliance has significantly widened its activities since 1979: it began putting

forward its own lists of candidates in the elections to the Assembly of the Republic. While it is not formally an Alliance member, the Portuguese Ecological Movement — Green Party has been securing the election of its parliamentary candidate through the Alliance's lists since 1983. True, the Alliance's functions end upon the completion of parliamentary elections, because after these elections the Communists and the PDM-DEC form independent parliamentary factions. Needless to say, they maintain contact in the Assembly, but these contacts are not as stable and as broad as in the localities.

In the local authority bodies joint studies and discussions of the most pressing issues are conducted within the Alliance. Here the purpose is to bring points of view together and ensure unity by open and frank discussion. The Communist Party seeks cooperation with all deputies, regardless of their ideology, including those who are not affiliated to the Alliance but are prepared to fight for the solution of vital problems, for progressive development.

It should be remembered that the party system took shape in Portugal not long ago. With the exception of the PCP (founded in 1921) and the Socialist Party (founded in the FRG in 1973), all other parties were formed after April 25, 1974, with even the most reactionary of these demagogically styling themselves as Social Democrats or centrists. The situation in these parties is still a long way from having been stabilised. The policy of their leaders is obviously to restore a state-monopoly capitalism dependent on imperialism. Meanwhile, in these parties there is constant ferment and collisions of personal ambitions, concepts, and political trends. This is helping the Communists in their quest for understanding with the rank-and-file of these parties despite the displeasure of their leadership. People are finding that the Communists were right in noting that in Portugal the boundaries of political parties do not entirely coincide with the boundaries of the classes and social groups they champion. This is one more factor that we take into account in our policy of alliances.

As regards the possibilities for enlarging the bloc, we can note with gratification the support that was given to the Popular Unity Alliance lists at the local elections in December 1985 by organisations such as the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Revolutionary Left. For their part, deputies of the Popular Unity Alliance are developing cooperation with trade unions, various people's commissions (for instance, residential neighbourhood commissions), associations for the protection of historical and cultural monuments, and religious groups. However, the Alliance is not eager to extend its membership through a formal affiliation to it of public organisations because, we are all agreed on this point, this may expose its objectives and essence to misinterpretation.

The political situation in Portugal remains uncertain and mobile. Just before the 1985 local elections the Socialist and some reactionary parties formed a broad coalition to remove the Popular Unity Alliance from the leadership of many local authorities. But this coalition fell short of its main goal, which was to wrest from the Alliance the administration of a number of densely populated districts.

Moreover, new possibilities for cooperation and dialogue among the democratic forces opened up after the presidential elections of January 1986. The battle for the presidency resulted in the defeat of the right-wing puppet and the election of Mario Soares, former leader of the Socialist Party, to the post of head of state. His victory was predetermined by the votes of the Communists and other democratic forces. It is our duty to make the maximum use of such opportunities.

The Communist Party is working vigorously to strengthen the Popular Unity Alliance on the basis of respect for the programme guidelines and identity of the organisations in it and reinforce the unity of the working people. In addition, it uses every opportunity to ensure understanding with progressive quarters and also individual democratic personalities outside the Alliance. The experience of the struggle against fascism, for progressive changes, and in defence of the gains of the April Revolution tells us that patient unitary work closely linked to and promoting the

widening struggles of the people ultimately yields results.

¹ In keeping with the Constitution there are following local self-governing divisions in Portugal: parishes, areas, and districts. These are administered by parish and municipal bodies (parish and regional juntas and municipal chambers), and consultative bodies (municipal and regional councils). Parties and groups of individuals have the right to nominate candidates to parish bodies of authority. — *Ed.*

² The Portuguese Constitution is not confined to defining the institutions of state power and the basic rights and freedoms of citizens. It institutionalises social and economic gains of the 1974 April Revolution such as nationalisation, agrarian reform, people's control of production, democratic local authorities, and the rights and role of mass organisations.

Newspaper Festivals

★ Thousands of residents of Vienna and other Austrian cities and regions took part in the two-day festival of *Volksstimme*, newspaper of the Austrian Communists. Its keynote slogans called for efforts to safeguard the social and democratic gains of the working people and ensure the right to work, the equality of women, international solidarity, and the preservation of peace.

★ *L'Unità*, newspaper of the Italian Communists, held its national festival in Milan's beautiful Sempione Park. The festival camp, occupying several tens of hectares, was built by workers during their annual leaves and off-days. The programme included discussions of major current problems, the international situation, and the political situation in Italy itself. There also were cultural events. This festival was preceded by hundreds of festivals of the communist press sponsored by the ICP throughout Italy — from small rural communities to large cities.

★ The annual festival of the *Canadian Tribune*, newspaper of the Canadian working people, was held in the town of Palermo, Ontario, under the slogan: "For Peace, Jobs, Real Independence! Ban Nuclear Weapons Tests!" There were some 3,000 participants, including activists and veterans of the Communist Party of Canada, representatives of democratic organisations from across the country, and press delegations from fraternal parties.

★ The three-day festival of *Avante!*, central newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party, took place in Lisbon's suburb of Alto da Ajuda and demonstrated the prestige and influence enjoyed by the Communists. It attracted hundreds of thousands of people, and was attended by envoys from 44 communist and workers' parties and by a *WMR* delegation.

★ The festival of the French Communist Party's newspaper *l'Humanité*, held in La Courneuve a proletarian suburb of Paris, reiterated its reputation as one of the most massively-attended political festivals in France. As always, it played a major part in the party's drive to raise funds for its press and circulate its newspaper. This year the festival evolved into a broad action of the French working people against the crisis, the government's policies, the offensive of the Right, and for peace and disarmament.

★ *Rudé právo*, the newspaper of the CPCz Central Committee, has staged its festival in Prague's Julius Fucik Recreation Park. Thousands of people from Prague and from the rest of Czechoslovakia thronged the festival grounds for two days. The visitors met with journalists, attended concerts of local and foreign performers and took part in a rally.

★ The fifth festival of *El Pueblo*, central newspaper of the Communist Party of Ecuador, was held in one of Ecuador's major industrial centres, the city of Guayaquil. It marked the weekly's 40th anniversary. As was noted at the festival, ever since its foundation this newspaper has been a militant champion of the working class, peasants, progressive intellectuals, of all working people, and of the principles of

proletariat internationalism. It has unfailingly expressed solidarity with peoples fighting for freedom and independence.

Documents

Brazil

OBJECTIVE: A MASS PARTY

The leadership of the Brazilian Communist Party (BCP) held a meeting in Sao Paulo to consider the Communists' priority tasks with regard to the political development in the nation. The documents adopted at the meeting stress that of great importance for the promotion of the democratic process in Brazil is the transformation of the Communist Party into a mass organisation with a high degree of mobility, a firm support base in the working class, primarily at large industrial enterprises, and an ability to respond promptly to the exigencies of political struggle.

The final documents note that since the overthrow of the dictatorship, the BCP has already scored considerable successes: it has secured a legal status and created a nation-wide organisational structure. But the Communists are still facing many difficulties. The party's structure, a legacy of the clandestine period, falls short of the opportunities opened by the newly promulgated laws. The Communists are to gear the methods and forms of their work to the conditions of legitimacy, to a struggle "in the open", waged with due regard for public opinion. It is important to overcome the shortcomings in the study of the theory of scientific socialism and in the examination of Brazil's realities. This will make it possible to rule out differences in the interpretation of the party's guidelines and deviations from its political course pursued to implement its strategy.

While certain bourgeois quarters are ready to accept the existence of a legally operating communist party in Brazil as long as its influence does not threaten their domination, the party's transformation into a mass organisation will inevitably produce an acute class confrontation. The resolution notes that vigorous political activity of the grassroots organisations is essential for progress along this path. It is the grassroots organisations which are to establish contracts with the working masses, support their day-to-day struggle and act together with the democratic forces.

In the Mirror of the Press

Komunist

ALTHOUGH THE DISCUSSION HAS BEEN ON FOR SEVERAL YEARS. . .

The Yugoslav communist weekly has published an editorial on the party's links with the working people. The article points to serious drawbacks in the work of the League of Communists among the masses. The LCY leadership has been trying to enhance the efficiency of this work, but no tangible results have materialised as yet. *Komunist* says that the party is not satisfied with the ties existing between it and mass organisations, particularly the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia,¹ and consequently, with the way the working people are mobilised to implement its socio-economic programme.

The weekly holds that this situation is rooted above all in the tendency to concentrate all political activity within the League of Communists itself, in the duplication of the functions performed by socio-political organisations and in the fact that the level to which democracy within the party has developed lags behind the demands of the times. All this produces obvious adverse effects: unable to solve pressing problems on a democratic basis and acting via the Socialist Alliance of the Working People, some people in Yugoslavia resort to anti-government political activities, and the elements opposing socialism are doing their utmost to encourage this.

The discussion of the work among the masses has been going on in the LCY for several years now. The article notes that the party's leading bodies are obviously striving to change the situation for the better, but that for a long time, resolve and the desire to find effective forms of work were lacking. *Komunist* says that a restructuring is in order so as to forge really close and firm ties with socio-political organisations and with broad sections of the working people.

¹ A socio-political mass organisation known as the People's Front of Yugoslavia up to 1953 (originally People's Liberation Front). Established in the course of the liberation struggle against the Nazi invaders, the Alliance currently numbers more than 14 million members. The LCY, the Confederation of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia and the Socialist Youth League of Yugoslavia have joined the alliance in a body.

In Brief

EEC

The Communist, Socialist and environmentalist members of the European Parliament's Political Commission have voted against the proposal on the participation of the 12 EEC countries in the US "star wars" programme. The commission thus rejected the proposal by 26 votes against 24.

BOLIVIA

The Communist Party of Bolivia has completed a campaign to exchange membership cards. Special attention was paid to explaining the rights and duties of Communists and to questions of admission to the party.

PRC

A conference on adjusting party work in rural areas has been held in Beijing, attended by more than 4,000 representatives of the CPC's district organisations. The party is working to perfect the forms and methods of economic management and to increase the output of agricultural produce.

COLOMBIA

The Colombian Communists have addressed an open letter to Pope John Paul II in connection with his visit to Colombia. The letter calls on the Catholics to join the common struggle for a just, free, pluralistic and peaceful future of the nation.

PDRY

At its Central Committee meeting held in September 1986 the Yemen Socialist Party decided to convene a party conference in June 1987.

LEBANON

The draft political report of the LCP Central Committee has been published as a

separate pamphlet in preparation for the Fifth Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party, to be held late this year. The draft report is being circulated among the party's friends and allies so that they could read it and comment on it before the congress opens.

FRG.

Preparing for the parliamentary elections slated for early 1987, the GCP leadership has adopted a document entitled "Policy Demands", announcing that the party will not nominate its own candidates to be elected to the Bundestag but will support the "Peace Ticket", nominees active in the struggle for international security and disarmament.

A collection of previously unknown works written by Marx and Engels between 1840 and 1874 has been prepared and published by the staff of the Karl Marx Memorial House in Trier. The collection features 53 annotated items, including Engels' newspaper articles and Marx's letters.

exchange of views, discussion

Inter - Imperialist Contradictions and the Working Class

In the documents adopted by some communist and working class parties over the recent period it is emphasised that the present phase of capitalism's general crisis is characterised by a further exacerbation of the economic and socio-political contradictions in the capitalist system. In particular, the past few decades have witnessed further eruptions of inter-imperialist rivalries. At the same time, there is a tendency to coordinate imperialist policy. The related range of problems and conclusions for the working class were considered by a study group of the *WMR* Commission on General Theoretical Problems. The members of this group were *John Pittman*, CC Political Bureau member of the Communist Party of the USA, *Georg Kwiatowski*, representative of the German Communist Party on the journal, and Professor *Stanislav Menshikov* (USSR). The following is a summation of the exchange of views.

Ever since the rise of imperialism the interaction of its two tendencies — centripetal and centrifugal — has been a cardinal factor determining the international situation.

The centripetal tendency is brought into the open by the striving of monopolies and of the various imperialist powers for unity, alliances, and compromises on the basis of common class interests, by their urge to reinforce their supremacy over other countries

and peoples in order jointly to reduce them to bondage, to exploit them, and reap surplus value. This is countered by the centrifugal tendency, in other words, the unceasing rivalry between these selfsame monopolies and imperialist states, the struggle among them to partition and repartition spheres of influence and profit.

Today, when the threat of a nuclear catastrophe comes from world imperialism, the forces of progress are by no means indifferent to how the correlation between these tendencies shapes out. Inter-imperialist contradictions hold an important place in the modern world's general spectrum of contradictions, on whose development the destiny of peace and, consequently, of society's progress depends to a large extent. As Karl Marx wrote, the experience of history has taught "the working classes the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics; . . . to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations. The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes."¹

Dialectics of the Two Tendencies

The working class approaches the struggle for its interests not only in the context of the conditions for social emancipation in its own country. In addition, it takes into account its country's actual position in the world community and the general balance of strength on the international scene. The exploiting classes, as a rule, look for support outside their own country, seeking to consolidate their political power with the backing of a "holy alliance" with the forces of international reaction. For that reason the struggle of the working people against the exploiting class of their own country invariably has an international dimension.

History and, in particular, the experience of the first victorious socialist revolution, which took place in Russia, show that the outcome of the liberation battles of the working class depends to no little extent on the internationalist solidarity of the revolutionary forces and on the level of unity or relative disunity in the camp of the class adversary, on the contradictions in that camp. In our day the revolutionary and liberation struggles are facilitated by the very fact that existing socialism has come upon the scene, that there is a fundamentally new balance of class forces in the world. But the contradictions in the imperialist camp remain a relevant factor.

Rivalry between imperialist powers grows out of the operation of the objective laws governing the capitalist system, above all the law of the uneven economic and political development of individual countries and regions. This is something that is not contingent upon the will or desire of any class or political force. The working class and its party cannot afford to ignore this when they define strategy and tactics.

Lenin set a brilliant example of a dialectic approach to assessing the character and consequences of inter-imperialist contradictions. During the First World War, whose nature was imperialist, he advanced a slogan calling for the defeat of the country's government and turning the war from an imperialist into a civil war, and showed how the general political crisis precipitated by the war could be used to further the revolutionary movement.

In the present situation Lenin's formula signifies that the central task of the working class is to defeat the imperialist confrontational and arms race policies that threaten civilisation with extinction. The preservation of peace has become a vital overall condition for the very possibility of social emancipation and progress. In the struggle for peace the working class finds natural allies among people belonging to other classes and social groups, and among the forces of national liberation. In terms of its objective content the peace movement stands in opposition to the most reactionary forces of our time, forces that to safeguard their wealth and power are willing to put humanity's destiny at stake. Conditions making it possible to dislodge monopoly capital from the positions held by it and facilitate the people's advance to socialism can be created in the course of this struggle.

The period of the First World War saw the rise and fall of Karl Kautsky's concept of "ultra-imperialism", which claimed that a union of monopolies and imperialist powers in one giant alliance or supertrust would eliminate imperialist contradictions and create the conditions for enduring peace in the world. Lenin rejected this concept, showing that Kautsky had deliberately exaggerated the significance of the centripetal tendency and underrated the growth of capitalism's inner contradictions. The decades that have passed since then have made it clear that there has never been a "peaceful imperialism". The pursuit of monopoly control of markets, raw materials sources, and spheres of investment is the mainspring of imperialist expansion and aggression, of militarism and neocolonialism.

Lenin pointed out that the union of national imperialisms in coalitions and alliances and the pursuance by them of a coordinated policy do not in any way remove the inner contradictions between imperialist powers. But where such alliances are formed they invariably become the instrument of the imperialists of different countries for a concerted assault on the forces of social emancipation and national liberation.

The slogan of a "United States of Europe" was advanced in Lenin's day. This was, essentially, a call for an alliance of West European imperialisms against their own working class, for stifling socialism by concerted effort, jointly exploiting colonies, and reinforcing their common positions in the competition with US and Japanese imperialism. After the First World War the imperialist forces grew increasingly inclined to unite against socialism, which was acquiring strength, but this inclination was overshadowed by inter-imperialist contradictions that led to World War II. The trend towards coordinating the actions of all the main imperialist powers under the leadership of US imperialism emerged after World War II and gathered particularly great momentum in recent years.

Why? The answer lies in the dialectics of present-day development, which on the one hand, leads to a deepening of capitalism's general crisis, to an aggravation of its inner contradictions and, on the other, compels it to manoeuvre and adjust to the new situation. The motivation for coordinating the policies of the imperialist forces is to try and undermine socialism's positions, to get up a common front against the revolutionary, liberation movements, and put back the clock globally.

The latest summit of the seven leading capitalist states in Tokyo (May 1986) reaffirmed that their coordinated policy is spearheaded at existing socialism, the Third World nations, their own working people, and the national sovereignty not only of developing countries but also of the USA's partners in the imperialist coalition.

But where there is agreement on the general orientation and even on the principal means for turning back the clock there inevitably surfaces a perceptible divergence of the basic interests of the capitalist states. When US policy and hegemonism are imposed under the guise of coordinating global strategy, the centripetal tendency turns into its opposite because it breeds (albeit to varying degrees) resistance from the USA's partners, in other words, it becomes an additional factor straining inter-imperialist contradictions.

"Tricentrism" and the Zigzags of Imperial Strategy

The centripetal tide has its ebbs and flows — on both a **global** and a regional scale. After World War II imperialist policy has been coordinated under US aegis within the framework of NATO and other military blocs, the International Monetary Fund, and various interstate-monopoly institutions. The US imperialism used the Marshall Plan to resuscitate West European imperialism and, concurrently, dominate that part of the world. But with the revitalisation of the strength of other imperialist countries, shaken by the war, there are now three centres of rivalry in confrontation with each other — the USA, Western Europe, and Japan. By the mid-1970s some crucial circumstances compelled Washington to reassess its strategy.

First, the defeat suffered by US imperialism in Vietnam violently rocked its positions

in the world, and weakened it economically and politically relative to Western Europe and Japan. The competition from the latter two centres began to put the vital interests of the US monopolies under pressure. The USA's share of the capitalist world's total exports declined sharply (21 per cent in 1957, 16 per cent in 1974, and 12.5 per cent in 1985). West European and then a steadily growing number of Japanese corporations began to establish themselves in the American domestic market. The dollar's position as the predominant currency was undermined.

Second, the sustained deterioration of the economic situation in the 1970s and the fusion of cynical and structural crises led to a sharp intensification of protectionism and the use of other methods of trade warfare. Each of the rivals sought, and still seeks, to ease its crisis at the expense of the others.

Third, with the initiation of detente in those years the economic and political relations between industrial capitalist and socialist states began to expand rapidly. Indications of greater independence appeared in the policies of West European nations and Japan.

Lastly, the colonial system's disintegration reinvigorated the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. There was a common urge for closer unity against imperialism and the warmongers. In the mid-1970s the coalition of newly independent nations collectively demanded the eradication of the neocolonialist system and, with the support of socialist countries, got the United Nations Organisation to pass a resolution on establishing a new international economic order. The non-aligned movement won steadily growing influence on the international scene.

The response to all this was the appearance of the "tricentrism" strategy, a strategy of collaboration among the three imperialist centres. Since 1975 the heads of state and government of the seven leading capitalist countries have been holding conferences regularly. A system of unofficial consultations between representatives of big business, political parties, and ideological institutions has been in operation through the Trilateral Commission² since 1973. Many leading statesmen of the latter half of the 1970s participated in the work of this commission, giving its recommendations considerable weight³.

The new strategy was based on recognition of the formal equality of the imperialist powers and the need for systematically coordinating their policies.

However, with Reagan's accession to power the US administration jettisoned the principles of "tricentrism". It sought to re-establish US supremacy in the capitalist world, to restore the discipline of military alliances, unquestioning compliance with the guidelines handed down by Washington, and unequivocal participation in the anti-communist crusade. This attitude was mirrored by the predominant influence exercised in the Reagan administration by henchmen of the military-industrial complex and the most hegemonistically inclined representatives of US transnational corporations. The tactic of persuading allies within the "tricentrism" framework was superseded by undisguised dictation, blackmail, threats or, as the *Wall Street Journal* put it, bullying.

This bullying diplomacy seemingly gave results. At conferences of the Seven, Reagan was able to get priority for the military-political issues from which he could expect returns. As a start, he compelled his allies to agree to the deployment of US missiles in Western Europe without the USA ratifying SALT II (although this had been stipulated by NATO in 1979). Some West European states and then Japan were arm-twisted into consenting to participate in the "star wars" programme. Here they had the backing of the most reactionary quarters, for instance, in the FRG where the latter linked their own revanchist ambitions to the arms race.

But in the autumn of 1985 and, particularly, in 1986 the word "coordination" reappeared in the vocabulary used by Reagan and his aides. To quote *The Christian Science Monitor*, the USA began turning towards a more "collective leadership". The language used by senior members of the US administration in dealing with allies

seemed to have become softer, less arrogant.

The outward atmosphere of "collectivism" screens an effort to redefine tactics in a situation in which the old methods do not always bring the desired results. Differences and contradictions among NATO member-states have become more acute. The Theses of the Eighth Congress of the German Communist Party point out that while being US imperialism's principal ally against socialist and other progressive forces, West German imperialism pursues its own objectives, which in many cases clash with the interests of its overseas ally. Among the ruling circles in Bonn there are serious disagreements between the "Atlantic" school, which supports Washington unconditionally in its stand on military-political issues, and the "European faction" opposing insensitivity to important interests of the FRG and the whole of Western Europe⁴.

A potent factor inhibiting US aggressive policy is counteraction by the people. In pursuing its course towards escalating the arms race, US imperialism encountered some obstacles raised not so much by governments as by public movements in capitalist and newly independent nations. Resistance to this course is growing, particularly in Western Europe and in non-aligned countries. This is seen in the broad support of the most diverse political forces for the new Soviet peace initiatives, the insistence articulated in practically all parts of the world that the USA halt its nuclear tests, and the protests against its abandonment of SALT II. The USA has to reckon with the reality that in some West European countries governments will be formed that while abiding by the membership of their respective countries in NATO will, in questions related to disarmament and detente, be closer to the line pursued by socialist and non-aligned states than to that of the USA.

To muffle or, still better, break such opposition in other countries, the USA needs not only the support of their present governments but also coordinated actions on the political, propaganda, and other fronts.

The present turn towards "collectivism" is to no little extent due to the deteriorating economic situation. For a long time the USA ignored the appeals that it back down from the over-valued dollar and the high bank rates. The mass influx of capital from Western Europe created difficulties for its economy and checked investments into research and development, but it helped to finance a boom in the USA and sustain the arms race.

With the passage of time this policy began to hurt US big business. Maintained at an artificially high level for several years, the inflated dollar seriously undercut the competition of US goods and took the US trade and payments balance deficit into a catastrophic growth. Imports flooded the US market, undermining industry and fostering unemployment. Symptoms of another cyclical crisis surfaced in the economy of leading capitalist countries, chiefly the USA and Japan, at the outset of 1986.

In this situation Washington did a volte face, steering a course towards a steep downgrading of the dollar exchange rate. This would have been impossible to accomplish without the collusion of other leading capitalist countries, notably Japan and the FRG. Hence the USA's appeals for "common efforts" to stabilise the economic situation and, at the same time, the further sharp aggravation of the trade and currency war in the capitalist world.

The Reagan administration's tactical zigzags camouflage the immutability of Washington's hegemonistic, imperial strategy, of its line of expanding the international positions and profits of the US monopolies. The tendency towards "coordination" with other imperialist powers only bears out Lenin's words that the "capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it 'in proportion to capital', 'in proportion to strength' because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism."⁵

While it ensures enormous profits to the monopolies, Washington's imperial strategy inflicts colossal injury on the working class of the USA. The expansion of the transnational corporations and banks, the creation and seizure by them of innumerable industrial facilities in other countries led to the "export of employment", the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, a rising unemployment rate, and the deepening of the structural crisis, and facilitate the monopoly assault on the position and rights of the working people. In combination with imperialism's conspiracy against the Third World peoples, this expansion has led to a disastrous growth of the foreign debt of the developing nations, to a debt crisis, which constrains production and foreign trade and painfully hits the working class. The dollar manipulations, aimed at financing military expenditures, have brought the USA to the edge of economic bankruptcy and triggered an unprecedented import-export crisis.

Washington uses this crisis to promote a chauvinistic and protectionist assault and give the working class the illusion that the best way to mend the situation is to "join" its own corporations against foreign competitors. But the facts show that more than half of the USA's imports are goods shipped into the country by the US transnational corporations themselves or in collusion with Japanese and other monopolies.

In this situation the Communists of the USA see an urgent task in exposing and explaining to the working people the class essence of the Reagan administration's foreign economic policy, in showing that this policy benefits solely the transnational corporations and military-industrial complex, and that the working people are its main victims. Gus Hall, General Secretary of the CPUSA, noted that workers in all capitalist countries "must reject any idea of joining or cooperating with the syndicates of their own countries. The working class and trade union movement in this country has a special responsibility to help find solutions in the interests of the working class of all the capitalist countries and to help organise the fightback against this new assault on the international working class."⁶

The action programme adopted by the 23rd National Convention of the CPUSA envisages a working class offensive on the positions held by transnational corporations and banks. It calls for a ban on imports from countries where trade unions are outlawed, higher taxes on monopoly super-profits from overseas investments, the use of the money thus received for the creation of millions of new jobs. Further, it urges internationalist unity of action with the working class of other countries.

Why this Tractability

US imperialism's new tactics are yielding some dividends. In Western Europe and Japan the governments are still putting up with their unilateral, not quite equal relations with their overseas boss. Whence this timidity, this heightened tractability?

In the first place, it is the product of the continued military, political and partly, economic dependence of some nations on the USA. For instance, the Japanese Communist Party points out in its Programme that while Japan is a highly industrialised capitalist nation it is in fact dependent on and in semi-occupation by US imperialism.

Throughout almost the whole of the capitalist world there are groups and factions of the ruling class for which social revenge in the broad sense of the word has become a determining motivation of their policy. In the FRG, for instance, in addition to the conservative revenge sought by the "steel helmet"⁷ faction against the country's own working class, revanchist plans, more traditional to German imperialism and neofascism, are harboured relative to East European countries. But even in countries that have no direct territorial claims on their neighbours, there are quite strong pro-US quarters that constantly use the myth about a "Soviet and communist threat" to intimidate people, a myth they themselves do not believe but readily employ as a lever for reinforcing their own positions and political power.

The economic foundation for the pro-US bias in policy is the growing

transnationalisation of monopoly capital. Although there has been a significant exacerbation of the rivalry and competition between transnationals based in different countries, one can discern a mounting tendency towards the mutual amalgamation of their capital and towards a plot to divide spheres of influence amongst themselves. Not only is a widening section of the West European economy controlled by US-based monopolies and banks, but a considerable number of West European and Japanese monopolies buy industrial facilities and entire corporations in the USA and enter into joint ventures with US monopolies. What we are witnessing is a tendency towards intertwining and merging the finance capital of the three imperialist centres. The alliance of these centres is vital to the monopolies as a political buttress for a repartition of markets.

The international interlacing of military-industrial complexes has likewise become close in recent years, despite the growing competition for armaments markets and the rivalry in the development of new military hardware. The sale — with the consent of the Thatcher government — of a leading British firm to a US concern and the intimate links of the Flick concern (which includes the largest manufacturer of Krauss Maffei tanks not only in the FRG but in other West European states) with US concerns and banks are only two explicit illustrations of this tendency. Many leading West European and Japanese corporations are lining up with the US military-industrial complex. In the FRG, for instance, Pentagon contracts for the SDI programme have been awarded to, among others, the Messerschmitt-Bolkow-Blohm and Carl Ziess concerns, and the Dornier firm, which is part of the Daimler-Benz concern.

Washington is skilfully using the ferment and rivalry among its competitors, especially in the European Economic Community and between Western Europe and Japan, to shore up its hegemony. Despite the relative weakening of the US position in international trade and in the cumulative output of the capitalist world, it is still the strongest of the imperialist powers. The US market is the biggest and most attractive for Japanese and West European corporations. The US Federal Reserve System has a unique possibility for manipulating the dollar's exchange rate and thereby intensifying pressure on other countries.

All this gives US imperialism a "position of strength", which it uses to compel allies to toe the line. The threat of an open trade and currency war is used dexterously by Reagan to force the rival centres, regardless of how strong they are, to be tractable even if this sometimes hurts their own interests.

US Hegemonism and National Sovereignty

The USA's militarist, confrontational policy has support only in those quarters of allied nations that have close links to the military-industrial complex and to various reactionary and revanchist groups. Rather than giving it anything, this policy is economically prejudicing a significant section of the bourgeoisie. Many big corporations are opposed to the line pursued by the military-industrial complexes. This differentiation is growing more pronounced in each capitalist country and on the international level. The wide debate in Western Europe, notably in the FRG, over participation in the "star wars" programme has produced, for example, the conclusion that military contracts are lining the pockets of only a minority of entrepreneurs, that these contracts are a means of redistributing profits in favour of a handful of corporations working for military departments and NATO.

For the vast majority of West European corporations the reality is that far from getting anything from the alliance with US monopolies and the Pentagon, they are suffering losses on account of the intensification of the trade war by the USA. The interests of firms, industrialists, and farmers come into collision in this war. In the capitalist world disputes are resolved in a competitive struggle, by force. The hegemonistic settlements imposed from without by stronger on weaker imperialist partners bring hardship for hundreds of thousands if not millions of people.

West European firms are coming under mounting pressure from the US and their own governments that demand restrictions on sales to socialist countries. The usual pretext is that no high-tech goods should fall into the hands of the "enemy". But, in fact, this is motivated by the hegemonistic aspiration of the USA to force its competitors into a subordinate role. This practice precipitates dissatisfaction even among the ruling class.

Since last May's summit of the Seven, the Reagan administration has been trying to interfere directly also in the domestic economic policies of its allies. The understanding reached in Tokyo provides for regular reassessments of the policies of countries that "fall out of step". The significance of this in practice is exemplified by the Nakasone government's compliance with US demand for a cutback of exports and a higher consumption level in Japan itself.

In Western Europe the attitude to the Tokyo understanding is more sceptical. The FRG Finance Minister has declared that he doubts the feasibility of this understanding because economic policy is drafted not at international meetings but in the parliament and by the government of the given nation. The FRG turned down the US demand that it play the role of a locomotive hauling the economy of the capitalist world uphill. The danger of inflation, which Reagan would like to foist on other countries, is much too great.

Japan and West European states are more and more frequently proclaiming their resentment of the fact that in the decision of major international problems their voice is incommensurate with their economic potential. Enforcement of policies dictated from Washington prevents positive settlements of global and regional problems, hinders the establishment of a stable system of international security, and conflicts with the benefits and aims sought by these countries.

Realistically-thinking sections of the bourgeoisie are acquiring a new understanding of class interests, in which priority is given to the physical preservation of the capitalist system and their class, and consequently of modern civilisation. Peaceful coexistence and cooperation with socialism are the only reasonable alternative in the nuclear age. Acknowledgement of this reality leads to rejection of the US course towards confrontation, an escalation of tension, and balancing on the brink of military conflicts.

Lessons for the Working Class

Imperialism's "collective strategy" harbours clear-cut dangers for the working class and liberation movements. The greatest danger comes from the orientation towards stepping up the arms race, state-sponsored terrorism, and the attempts to disunite and set against each other various components of the international communist and working class movement, undermine the massive peace and anti-nuclear movements, and instigate the working people of some countries against those of others.

There is nothing new about this. Imperialism has always applied the principle of "divide and rule". The new element is that the line towards eroding the unity of the forces of progress, towards fragmenting them has now become a deliberately enforced policy scrupulously charted and coordinated on an international scale by the governments of the main imperialist powers under the leadership of the USA.

An effective instrument against this strategy is the internationalist solidarity of the various contingents of the international working class having their own national distinctions but common ultimate objectives. Maximum coordination of the actions of all whose basic interests are antipodal to the interests of imperialism is of particular importance today.

The scientific and technological revolution has accelerated the concentration of production and the growth of transnational capital. This has confronted the working class with some new, complex problems. However, the growing internationalisation of production is creating a new material foundation for the internationalist solidarity of

the working people in the struggle to establish a system of international security, dislodge the transnational monopolies, build a new international economic order, and defeat reaction and the military-industrial complexes. In particular, dynamic forms of internationalist solidarity on a higher level are needed to ensure cooperation between the working people of industrial capitalist nations and developing countries.

The growth of imperialism's centripetal tendency demands closer unity of action by the working class in each individual capitalist country. Monopoly pressure on the positions and rights of working people is only part of the general offensive mounted by militarism and reaction against peace and democracy. Hence the special, exceptional role and responsibility of the working class as the champion of peace and democratic freedoms of the entire people.

Underestimation of the class adversary's level of unity would take the revolutionary forces into a dead end, dull their vigilance. But the extent of the unity of imperialist interests should not, of course, be overrated, either. The facade of "collective strategy" hides an uncompromising rivalry. Conflicts and contradictions within the ruling class exist objectively, and they have always been and will be a reserve potential of the revolutionary movement in the struggle for peace, against nuclear weapons, for political liberation and social emancipation.

Relative to the other leading capitalist countries US imperialism is not only a rival but a force obviously determined to pare down their independence and national sovereignty. In these countries the interests of a section of the bourgeoisie including the monopoly bourgeoisie, are not identical and in many cases come into conflict with those of US imperialism. The controversy is not merely over markets and spheres of investment. In terms of content the ongoing antagonism between the US and the other imperialisms goes much deeper. It encompasses the reluctance of countries to allow their territory to be turned into a battlefield for the advancement of US imperialism's adventurist ambitions, and involves the conflict over US impingements on national independence.

A section of the ruling circles of West European nations is set on pursuing an independent foreign policy opposed to Washington's aggressive ambitions, on rejecting the confrontational course, and on easing international tension. This reflects deep-lying economic interests, an orientation towards a "third force" tactic, towards "balancing between two poles", a latent proneness on the part of some countries for political neutrality. Moreover, the ruling circles have to reckon with the spreading mass democratic movement for peace, against nuclear weapons, for effective disarmament. The conditions bringing these tendencies among the bourgeoisie to the surface will grow increasingly more favourable as the resistance of the people to the forces of war becomes more powerful.

Today it would be useful to recall the experience of the Second World War. In parallel with the rivalry between the two warring imperialist groups, it was a struggle against the subjugation not only of weaker but also of industrial capitalist states to German and Japanese imperialism. This gave shape to a broad anti-fascist coalition that included a significant section of the ruling class of a number of monopoly capitalism's countries.

Humanity now faces the threat of war that would imperil the physical existence of all peoples. There is the danger that many countries will see their political independence sacrificed to meet US imperialism's imperial ambitions and to pile up more wealth for transnational finance capital and for the military-industrial complex.

There is thus an objective foundation for a broad coalition of peace forces opposed to the forces of war, militarism, and imperialist hegemonism. A pressing task for the Communists is to look for and find ways of establishing closer and more productive cooperation with all sections of society, parties, political circles, public organisations and movements that are in fact determined to avert the threat of a nuclear war and set up a lasting system of universal international security.

This is not an easy task because it requires cooperation and even alliance with quarters that are highly disparate in terms of their class character and political affiliation. But it is only if heterogeneous forces act vigorously under the banner of peace that the battle for the preservation of human civilisation can be won and better conditions created for social progress.

¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 18.

² An account of this commission is given in *WMR*, No. 5, 1978.

³ They included the former US President Jimmy Carter and his adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, former US Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance, former FRG Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, former French Prime Minister Raymond Barre, former Japanese Foreign Minister Saburo Okita, and former British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington.

⁴ See *Thesen des 8. Parteitages der DKP, Neue Fragen des Kampfes für Frieden und Arbeit – für eine demokratische Wende*, 1986, p. 30.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 253.

⁶ Gus Hall, "The Working Class and the Import-Export Crisis", *Political Affairs*, August 1985, pp. 5-6.

⁷ This is the name by which the most reactionary section of the ruling coalition in Bonn is known in the FRG.

Amerindian Masses in the Revolutionary Movement

An International Symposium

In a situation in which capitalism's general crisis is deepening and the contradictions of Latin American states with US imperialism are growing increasingly sharper, ever larger sections of the people of these states are joining in the struggle for sovereignty and total liberation from foreign predominance, for democracy, social progress, and peace. A notable role is played in this struggle by the Amerindian movement, whose aims — the social emancipation and national liberation of the indigenous population — are an inalienable component part of the strategic objectives of the working class and other democratic forces.

In two republics — Bolivia and Guatemala — Amerindians constitute the majority of the population; they form large ethnic groups in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico; in Paraguay the population is overwhelmingly mestizo; Colombia, Chile and Brazil have large Amerindian communities; there are many Amerindians in Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela, Argentina, Surinam, Guyana, Belize, and other states of the continent. This explains the public attention that the international scientific symposium on the "Amerindian Movement in the Struggle for National Independence, Democracy, and Peace in Latin America", sponsored in Quito by the Communist Party of Ecuador jointly with *World Marxist Review*, attracted in many countries. The symposium was attended by representatives of the Colombian Communist Party and the Communist Party of Ecuador, academics from Guatemala, Cuba, Panama, and the Soviet Union, delegates from upwards of 40 Amerindian organisations of various political persuasions, and leading civic personalities.

The following summary of the principal papers presented at the symposium is by *Alvaro Oviedo*, CC member of the Colombian Communist Party, *Luis Emilio Veintimilla*, CC member of the Communist Party of Ecuador, and *Yuri Zubritsky*, senior research associate, Institute for Latin American Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Historical Background

In his opening address to the symposium Rene Mauge Mosquera, General Secretary of

the CPE Central Committee, noted that colonisation brought the Amerindian peoples slavery and untold misery, becoming one of the most glaring injustices in the history of humankind. The conquest and colonisation of Latin America were accompanied by genocide, uncurbed pillage, and the destruction of native cultures and religions.

In this context, it was pointed out in a paper submitted by the Social Research Centre of Colombia, the heaviest forced labour likewise fell to the lot of the Amerindians, large numbers of whom lost their lives in the course of the decades of conquest and the formation of a colonial society. The communities that found themselves in bondage lost their land, were forcibly resettled, and made to pay prohibitive taxes. As a result, the indigenous population was reduced to unspeakable misery: here it was exterminated, there it was scattered and assimilated in the new society through inter-marriage. However, in some places it was able to remain united and even achieve numerical preponderance in regional social conglomerates.

The colonisation process relentlessly destroyed the cultures of the numerically large Quechua, Aztek, and other peoples, who had reached a high level of development and knowledge. The Amerindians employed what were for those times were advanced methods of building and agriculture. Their communities were characterised by a certain measure of social stratification and fairly mature and complex political structures.

The conquistadores forcibly drove the indigenous inhabitants from the land that had always been theirs. Meanwhile, Spanish colonists were given *encomiendas* (an estate with the people living on it). *Encomiendas* were received also by religious missions. The inhabitants of these estates were "entrusted" to these missions, whose duty it was "to protect, patronise, enlighten, and civilise them, and also make sure that they performed their labour duties and paid their taxes". In some cases the newcomers preserved the office of *casique*, or chief, using it to organise farm labour and collect taxes. As well as paying taxes in cash and performing compulsory unpaid labour, the natives were made to participate in what was known as "minge", or public works — the building of churches, bridges, roads, and other projects.

The four centuries of colonial rule came to an end with the outbreak of wars of liberation, the proclamation of political independence, and the establishment of the republican form of administration in the new states. However, the plight of the Amerindians did not change under the new system. More having rid themselves of control by the crown, the local exploiters escalated the annihilation, oppression, and pillaging of the indigenous population. The landowning oligarchy, which inherited the *encomiendas*, retained all the feudal privileges of colonial times. To this day, under capitalism and imperialist domination in Latin America, the Amerindians remain condemned to live and work under incredibly oppressive conditions.

It was stressed at the symposium that the insuperable striving of the Amerindian peoples for freedom has always been an obstacle for conquerors. The latter constantly encountered staunch resistance in the most diverse forms: from armed risings to the defence of community lands and refusal to perform the serf labour demanded by landowners and missionaries. Dating from the years of the Spanish conquests, this resistance continues to this day.

The Marxist Approach to the Problem

By the mid-1920s, i.e., with the onset of the epoch of the Latin American proletariat's active appearance on the historical scene signalled by above all, the formation of communist and workers' parties, the Amerindian question in Latin America had developed into a burning issue and attracted close public attention.

This is reflected in the Indianism movement,¹ in which there are various trends: reactionary (up to anti-communist), bourgeois-liberal, and bourgeois-democratic, the latter being the most widespread. Although it deals with a wide spectrum of problems,

Indianism has proved to be unable to define the practical ways and means of settling the Amerindian problem. *Developments in the Latin American states*, it was noted at the symposium, *predetermined that this problem was to be resolved by the new revolutionary class (the proletariat) on the basis of Lenin's theory on the nationalities question.*

Leninism tore down the wall between "civilised" and "uncivilised" peoples, recognising that every people had the right to national liberation and social emancipation. Naturally, as soon as communist parties were formed on the continent they focused much of their attention on the Amerindian problem, studying it and working out ways of resolving it.

At the close of the 1920s Jose Carlos Mariategui, founder of the Peruvian Communist Party, was one of the leading theoreticians who studied the Amerindian problem and related it to revolutionary practice. He showed that feudal and semi-feudal landownership, which prevailed at the time in Peru and almost all the other Latin American states, was the socio-economic root of this problem. Instead of reducing it to a peasant, agrarian problem, he raised the issue of the national liberation of the Amerindians and the promotion of their national self-identity and culture as part of their common struggle.

Mariategui did not separate the Amerindian problem from the Latin American revolutionary process, declaring that "the demands of the Indian and thereby the demands of his history must be included in the programme of the revolution".² As was pointed out by Jorge del Prado, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Peruvian Communist Party, a major service by Mariategui was that he was in fact the first to see the nationalities question as encompassing the Amerindian population.³

Mariategui's followers regarded this issue in the light of his behests and, as such, it is mirrored not only in revolutionary theory but also in revolutionary practice. The Peruvian Communist Party supported actions of the Quechua and Aymara peoples that were part of people's struggles during the crisis of the 1930s, advancing slogans consonant with the class and national aspirations of the Amerindian peasants. This won enormous prestige for the party.

From the day the Socialist Party (renamed the Communist Party of Ecuador in 1931) was formed in Ecuador in 1926 — one of its founders was the Amerindian Jesus Gualavasi — the question of the Amerindian movement has been a high priority of its revolutionary programme. In 1931 the party attempted to hold a national Amerindian congress in Cayambe, but this attempt was aborted by the authorities and the delegates were arrested. In 1944 the CPE initiated the formation of the Federation of Amerindians of Ecuador. The Communist Party, as Rene Mauge Mosquera said, appeared on the tidal wave of the Amerindian movement.

The demand of Amerindians for the return of their land and for self-determination has figured in the programme of the Colombian Communists for many years, winning considerable support in the country. Among the founders of the Colombian Communist Party a prominent role was played by Jose Gonzalo Sanches, a leader of the Amerindian movement renowned for his participation in the Amerindian uprising in the early years of the present century (the objectives of this rising were to return land to the native communities and restructure the self-administration bodies).

In 1932 the Amerindian issue was closely scrutinised at the Eighth Conference of the Mexican Communist Party. By the early 1930s this problem had been addressed directly by the communist parties of Argentina, Chile, Honduras, El Salvador, and other countries. Recent history bears out that the *Communists have become the most consistent champions of the interests of the Amerindians, who are the most oppressed section of the population in Latin America.*

At the Present Stage of Development

The establishment of the capitalist mode of production throughout Latin America

introduced significant changes in the socio-economic structure of Amerindian society, and thereby, in the Amerindian national movements and their links and relationship with other progressive forces. However, the question of land remains central in their demands. Even where radical agrarian reforms have been enforced (Mexico, Bolivia, Peru), the land of the indigenous inhabitants remains the object of encroachment by former latifundistas, foreign companies, and rapacious capitalist entrepreneurs.

At the symposium it was noted that since the beginning of the 1960s the process of property and social differentiation among the Amerindians, precipitated by internal causes, has gained growing momentum in Ecuador and led to the rise of an Amerindian bourgeoisie. As in other Latin American countries, this bourgeoisie has no affinity with the white or mestizo bourgeoisie, for it continues to be subjected to discrimination. In other words, there is no exploiting strata of any significance among the Amerindians. This factor reinforces the general revolutionary-democratic orientation of the Amerindian movements.

Further, it was pointed out at the symposium that Lenin's proposition about there being two cultures in every national culture⁴ is borne out also by an analysis of the state of Amerindians in Latin American countries; in many of them class stratification often coincides with ethnic stratification and there is discrimination against indigenous cultures. However, the persevering struggle of the Amerindians themselves and of progressive forces has led to some headway in the past few years in the bilingual education of Amerindian children, in the development of Amerindian literatures, in the use of Amerindian languages in the mass media (to a small extent in radio broadcasting and publishing newspapers and journals), and so forth. But on the whole, the socio-economic situation is such that the lag in the development of Amerindian cultures is widening and the Amerindians are coming under growing oppression.

Moreover, they are denied the possibility of exercising the political rights proclaimed in many countries. In Ecuador, for instance, the Amerindians, who comprise nearly one third of the population, have no representatives in the government and are poorly represented in local organs of authority.

The awakening of self-awareness among the Amerindian masses and their inexorable striving to acquire a status of dignity are compelling imperialism to resort to subterfuges, to include in its propaganda arsenal demagogic concepts and projects designed to prevent the indigenous inhabitants from being drawn into the revolutionary movement. Bourgeois sociologists give priority to the ethnic struggle, hypocritically preaching a defence of purity of race, language, and indigenous cultural values. The question of and is avoided deliberately, while the agrarian problem is artificially separated from the ethnic issue. It is insisted that there have to be purely Amerindian political parties, the argument being that the whites and mestizos are the principal enemy of the Amerindians. Similar aims are pursued by some Protestant sects and a section of the Catholic Church. To force upon the Amerindians a religious, bourgeois-reformist, or undisguisedly anti-communist ideology, reactionary elements are making wide use of the specifics of Amerindian culture, way of life, and traditions.

In Ecuador several subversive organisations are operating in this direction: Mision Andina, Clubs 4F, the Peace Corps Volunteers, Plan Padrino, Vision Mundial, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (although the latter North American "institute" was formally expelled from the country in 1981). These organisations function in many Latin American states in violation of the national sovereignty and independence of these states. Their ideological machinations are opposed by various progressive forces, including the Church of the Poor, which in Ecuador is headed by the "bishop of the Indians" Leonidas Proano.

What is the present Communist approach to the problems of the Amerindian peoples?

The Communists are charged by their enemies that they are sowing hatred and inciting a class struggle in the indigenous population. But have the Amerindians not

been fighting for the rights for almost five centuries? The Communists are helping the Amerindians to acquire a class and political consciousness and to act consistently and in unity.

A class, revolutionary movement of these exploited ethnic communities, it was said at the symposium, is the only course that will enable them to acquire a real sense of freedom from exploitation and open the road to political self-administration. Words spoken by Mariategui were quoted in this context: "We cannot confine ourselves to recognising the rights of the Indian solely to education, culture, progress, love, and the heavens; hence we proclaim most categorically his right to land."⁵ This is by no means a subjective formulation of the question, nor is it a whim of the Communists. Participants in the symposium said that there is no need to look far into the past, to retrace the many centuries of the Amerindian's struggle for land; there is much today that justifies this approach. References were made to pronouncements by Alber to Andrango, Vice-Chairman of the Federation of Cotacachi Communities (Ecuador), about the most serious problem faced by the Amerindians — land-hunger that is the cause of growing migration. It was mentioned that the countries of the Amazon basin signed a treaty on regional cooperation, recommending a "bona fide agrarian reform with the purpose of finding an effective solution of the socio-economic problems of the rural population and a halt of the seizure of land belonging to Amerindians inhabiting the tropical rain forests".⁶ But this recommendation never got off the ground.

Drawing upon the lessons of history, participants in the seminar *noted the validity of the conclusion that the Amerindian problem cannot be resolved under capitalism.*

"We do not tire declaring," said Rene Mauge Mosquera, "that under the capitalist system, under bourgeois rule no solution can be found to the age-old problems of the Amerindian movement, of our ethnic groups, culture, and country as a whole . . . We say that our society's transformation into a socialist society (through the relevant stages) is the road that the nation has to choose quite definitively in the course of the political process at the transition stage, when profound anti-imperialist, agrarian, and democratic changes will take place. In saying this, we clearly formulate the line in relation to the Amerindian movement in our country, raising the question of its effective involvement in politics, of its participation in state administrative bodies, of the right of the Amerindian peoples to choose their own authorities, study their native language, publish newspapers, journals, and books in that language, and promote their distinctive culture, and of the orientation towards the consolidation of the state inhabited by different ethnic groups having diverse but overlapping cultures that facilitate the development of a common, rich, and many-sided culture. This is our unchanging stand at the present stage of development."

Character and Features of the Amerindian Movements

Studies of the present Amerindian movements provided the basis for considering their mutual relationships and their interaction with other progressive forces, with ideological and political schools. At the symposium it was emphasised that this approach is consistent with the present situation because the confrontation of the Latin American peoples with imperialism is steadily growing in scale and intensity. Moreover, mass Amerindian national organisations have sprung up in the past few decades and these have grown increasingly active. This is an objective element of the present socio-political situation on the continent. The formation of Amerindian national trends, movements, and organisations is now to be observed in practically all countries that have an Amerindian population.

Thus, the conditions are emerging for an alliance of organisations of the working class and peasants with the Amerindian movements. It is spearheaded against the common adversary — US imperialism and the local oligarchy. This alliance must become one more weapon of struggle for a socialist alternative for society's development.

Programme documents of Amerindian organisations indicate that many of them are

taking a clear-cut stand on this question. For instance, the declaration adopted by a number of Guatemalan Amerindian organisations affiliated to the Peasant Unity Committee says that their members are fighting for a new life in which nobody will be exploited.⁷ The guidelines of the Ecuarunari, the leading Amerindian organisation in Ecuador, likewise accentuate the significance of restructuring society: "We are fighting for the definitive liberation of our ethnic groups with the objective of creating a society free of exploitation and discrimination, a society in which there will be recognition of the rights of our ethnic groups to the development of their culture and their distinctive forms of organisation."⁸ Many other organisations are proclaiming similar aims.

The fact that the demand for a restructuring of society and the abolition of exploitation of man by man is spelled out in the programmes of the Amerindians of various parts of Latin America speaks of much — notably, it was emphasised at the symposium, of the need for fundamental social changes indicating the existence of a growing tendency towards the promotion of inter-ethnic relations on the continent. This signifies that *the vanguard of the working class and the Amerindian organisations are allies in the struggle for a solution of cardinal problems of society's progress.*

Equally, the progressive forces of Latin America, particularly the parties of the working class and the Amerindian national movements, are drawing closer together in their attitude to key problems of our time, above all the defence of peace.

The bulk of the Amerindian movements are taking a stand for world peace, against the imperialist threat of nuclear catastrophe and "star wars". The resolutions of the Fourth General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, most of whose members are Amerindian organisations of Latin America, contain "an appeal to the great powers to cease all nuclear tests in the atmosphere and under the ground".⁹ Serious concern over the build-up of thermonuclear armaments and other weapons of mass destruction is articulated by the journal *Pueblo Indio*, organ of the Amerindian Council of South America. This is further testimony that *the Amerindian movements constitute a major component part of the progressive potential of the continent's peoples acting to prevent a thermonuclear catastrophe and preserve life on our planet.*

The Amerindian organisations have taken an unambiguous stand on environmental protection. They are particularly active on ecological issues, for the pollution and any dramatic change of the environment will bring ethnocide, in other words, devastating consequences for the traditional economic structure and the customs linked to it for the very existence of many ethnic groups. They are protesting strongly against the pollution of seas, oceans, lakes and rivers, the destruction of forests and of grassland, and so on. As participants in the symposium noted, some Amerindian organisations justifiably see a link between the threat of nuclear war, the menace of an ecological catastrophe, and the danger of ethnocide.

Precisely this is the spur of the movement against the treaty signed by the Pinochet fascist dictatorship with NASA and the Pentagon. The building of a landing strip for emergency use by North American multiple-use spaceships has been started on Easter Island (a Chilean Possession in the South Atlantic) under the terms of this treaty. This cosmodrome will not only serve the USA's global militarist aims, which are a threat to world peace. It will inflict irreparable damage on the environment with grave consequences for the local population.

The fact that transnational corporations and the local businessmen are linked to them are moving into the rain forests is seriously endangering Amerindian peoples. The South American rain forests are often called the "planet's lungs", and humankind must be grateful to its indigenous inhabitants, who are protecting these forests with all the means at their disposal, sometimes at the cost of their lives. For instance, since 1985 the Amerindians of eastern Ecuador have been putting up a heroic though unequal fight to halt a "agro-industrial project" envisaging the destruction of forests to clear space for oil palms.

The indigenous population faces a lethal threat from North American imperialism.

In October-November 1984 world opinion was outraged by a crime perpetrated by the Pentagon in the Amazon basin in north eastern Brazil. This crime was the testing of highly toxic substances that caused the death of 7,000 Amerindians. A crime of identical savagery has been the massive forcible sterilisation of Amerindian women and men, sponsored by reaction, with the purpose of bringing about the extinction of local ethnic groups.

A particularly significant aspect of the struggle of the native peoples to protect the natural environment is that as this struggle unfolds an understanding of the social causes and effects of breaches of the ecological balance is acquired not only by the Amerindians themselves and by other peoples of Latin America, but also by the rest of the population of the world. They are coming round to understanding that it is not the development of civilisation but the capitalist mode of production that comes into unsolvable conflict with the task of preserving the natural environment vital for human life.

In the Struggle Against Imperialism, for Democracy

The anti-imperialist thrust of the Amerindian movements enhances their role as an ally the working class in the struggle for peace and social progress. At the symposium many examples were given to illustrate the fact that some Amerindian organisations justifiably regard imperialism, chiefly North American imperialism, as the historical heir of the terrible misdeeds of the period of the conquests, of the brutal forms of oppression and exploitation of the colonial period.

A manifesto issued by the Indian Power Regional Council in Kuntisuyo, Peru, states: "The forms and methods of the West European system brought by the Spanish are being continued and reinforced by Northern American imperialism, which controls the civilian and military oligarchy."¹⁰

The Amerindian organisations expose specific facets of imperialism's policy. They strongly censure the brazen US interference in the internal affairs of the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean. The Federation of the Campa-Ashaninka Communities of Peru, for example has proclaimed its "total solidarity with the anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist struggle of our Indian brothers in Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Costa Rica, against whom their eternal enemies, the imperialists, have started a dirty war".¹¹

Taking into account the fact that it was direct US support that enabled the anti-people military dictatorships, one of which ruled Guatemala until recently, to terrorise the indigenous population, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples denounced the USA for its economic, military, and other assistance to these regimes. The Amerindian masses expressed their shock and outrage over the imperialist aggression against Grenada.

One of the most striking illustrations of the struggle of the Amerindian peoples of Latin America against ultra-reactionary, pro-imperialist regimes is given by the actions of the Mapuche people in Chile who, with other democratic forces are demanding the removal of the regime of the Pinochet clique. The Mapuches, who number nearly one million, have formed the large militant AD MAPU organisation, which heads the people's resistance. Their movement is the logical response to the regime's attempts to split this ethnic group territorially and politically.

New opportunities for the growth of the Amerindian movement have emerged in Colombia with the signing of an armistice¹² between the government and the guerilla units (true, immense difficulties stand in the way of compliance with the relevant agreements because they are being constantly torpedoed by reaction). The prospect for an end to violence and the satisfaction of the Amerindian people's grievances by political means (including the return of land and respect for customs and traditions) is linked directly to the possibility that national life may be democratised, to a transition to advanced democracy, which is the aim of all popular revolutionary and progressive

forces.

However, Amerindian movements do not in all cases abide consistently by anti-imperialist positions. Socio-economic stratification that leads to communities' internal and external differentiation makes some strata of the indigenous population receptive of bourgeois ideology and even of revanchist thinking nourished by imperialism and its play on national feeling. The Amerindian organisations are themselves calling for vigilance relative to the "Amerindian opportunists who, to further their selfish economic interests, have set up fictitious organisations", and also "other Amerindian traitors, who sell their consciences and make an outward show of struggle in order to win office".¹³ It was noted at the symposium that North American imperialism has sown discord among the Miskito tribes in Nicaragua and drawn some of them into the camp of the counter-revolution. Another illustration of this is the deal made by some quarters in the Cauca Regional Council with the National Federation of Cattle Breeders of Colombia to create an anti-communist and anti-guerilla front on the basis of local Amerindian communities (consisting chiefly of quite prosperous cattle-breeders) and cattle-dealers who use the banner of "ultra-Indianism" against all the other Amerindians advancing democratic, political and economic demands.

At the symposium mention was made of other ways and means used by imperialism and the oligarchy to spread conservatism, conformism, indifference to politics, anti-communism, anti-Sovietism, and consumerism among Amerindian peoples.

Here the purpose is obvious: to weaken or even cut short the alliance of the Amerindian movements with the vanguard of the proletariat. The distrust bred and fostered by the ruthless killing, exploitation, and oppression of the indigenous population over the course of many centuries is a serious obstacle to the realisation of the subjective prerequisites for such an alliance in the struggle against imperialism, for peace, democracy, and social progress. This distrust of the white population is still alive among a section of the Amerindians. In this context, words spoken by Lenin were quoted at the symposium: "National antipathies will not disappear so quickly: the hatred — and perfectly legitimate hatred — of an oppressed nation for its oppressor *will last* for a while; it will evaporate only *after* the victory of socialism and *after* the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations."¹⁴

The contradiction between the objective need for an alliance with organisations of the working class and all other progressive forces of Latin America, on the one hand, and the factors hindering the consolidation of this alliance, on the other, is to be seen in the guidelines of some Amerindian movements. However, the attitude of the Amerindian organisations to many cardinal present-day problems allows saying that *it is now quite realistic to expect the formation and strengthening of such an alliance and the active involvement of the Amerindian movements in the struggle for a better future*. The Amerindian organisations that adopt an anti-imperialist stance and seek to restructure society are quite aware that this is a productive course.

This, it was said at the symposium, is fostered by two circumstances. First, the proletarianisation of large numbers of Amerindians — rank and file members and leaders — into Latin American progressive organisations and parties, including communist and workers' parties. Despite the efforts of the ruling classes to keep Amerindians away from the political struggle large numbers of the latter are joining in revolutionary activity.

The distinctive conditions obtaining in each Latin American republic, it was said in conclusion, predetermine the distinctions in the formulation of the Amerindian problems in the programme documents, policy, and concrete actions of the communist parties. However, it is unanimously held that the vital interests of the Amerindian peoples must be worked into the prospects of the struggle for the genuine independence, peace, democracy, and social progress of all the peoples of Latin America.

¹ Widespread in Latin American countries, this social movement is dedicated to improving the condition of the continent's indigenous population. — *Ed.*

² Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Essays Interpreting Peruvian Reality*, Moscow, 1963, p. 357 (Russian translation).

³ See Jorge del Prado, "Unity of Thought, Will, and Action", *WMR*, No. 12, 1984.

⁴ See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 24.

⁵ Jose Carlos Mariategui, *op.cit.*, p.89.

⁶ *Cuadernos de Nueva*, June 1983, p. 128.

⁷ *ALAI*, No. 10, 1981, p. 112.

⁸ L. Conterón, R. de Viteri, *Organizaciones indígenas del Ecuador*, Quito, 1984, p. 21.

⁹ *ALAI*, No. 67, 1985, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Hatun Chaski*, Lima, No. 2, 1982, p.3.

¹¹ *CISA*, Lima, No. 6, 1984, p.17.

¹² See Gilberto Vieira, "On the Agenda: Democratisation", *WMR*, No. 5, 1986.

¹³ *Riccharishun*, May 1985, pp. 7, 8.

¹⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 353.

The Functions of the State in the Light of the Class Struggle

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The functions of the state in industrially developed capitalist countries is a question of great interest to the working class movement. A historical analysis of these functions helps to better understand possible ways of progressive change and alternative policies. The Belgian example demonstrates well that the sphere of the state's activity and its prerogatives change with the evolution of capitalist society.

The Course for Capital Accumulation

There are first of all such traditional inherent functions of state power as general administration, justice, national defence, public order, external relations, emission of money, etc. With the triumph of capitalism, a set of other functions has developed, i.e. functions that are essential for the accumulation of capital but which the private sector does not take upon itself. Initially, these were confined to the developing of economic infrastructure (railways, roads, canals, ports, means of transport, postal, telegraph and telephone communications) and organisation of much of research and development. This infrastructure, of course, does not only provide conditions for turning capital into profit but may serve to meet certain social requirements. Consequently, it is rather an object of struggle than a "tool at the service of capital".

In Belgium, the state began to participate in the financial and credit life of the country as early as in the nineteenth century when it created the General Pension and Savings Bank and the bank *Crédit communal*. The period between the two world wars saw the appearance of the National Industrial Credit Society, *Ducroire*¹ and *Commission bancaire*. The 1960s were marked by a burgeoning of national and regional holding companies. These two types of the state's economic functions — the development of infrastructure and credit services — are inseparably bound up as both serve to create conditions for capital reproduction and for surplus value formation.

Yet another group of functions covers the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. This involves not only the education of the elite but mass training of personnel necessary for the capitalists, the development of medical and other social services, and certain activities in the cultural field. While these functions are not new,

they have assumed particularly great scope after the Second World War. This was largely the result of two mutually complementary and dialectically interconnected factors — the growth of the productive forces and determined pressure on the part of the working class and all salaried employees.

Beginning from the latter half of the 1970s, the deepening economic crisis has caused the state to directly intervene in the production sphere on an ever larger scale. It undertakes to salvage old enterprises in need of overhaul, "lame ducks" whose wings have been clipped by capitalism, and the so-called traditional low-profit or unprofitable sectors, though not exclusively these sectors.

There is sometimes a tendency to underestimate the state's mediation between the national economy and what may be called the "transnational capitalist superstructure" as represented, say, by the European Economic Community and other supranational bodies. It is they who generate numerous plans of reconstruction in the textile, metallurgical and ship-building industries. The state "digests" these plans with the result that decisions and directives adopted abroad are served up "under a Belgian sauce", as it were. This latter function is of course closely linked with the preceding one, for playing the role of a "drive-belt" is unthinkable without direct economic intervention.

The capitalist state also, to a certain degree, performs the ideological function that affects all the other spheres of its activity. I say "to a certain degree" because the religious and private life of the people is out of its competence. The function of intellectual leadership in the cities and among the rural elite is exercised without direct government participation. But in view of the broadening of the state's prerogatives it can be said that the state possesses exceedingly important ideological levers to reproduce ideas and attitudes that ensure continuity of capitalist relations.

Through the education system — from nursery school to university — and through the mass media the ruling class seeks to impose its stereotypes of thinking: chase of profits is part of man's nature, the man works and the woman stays in the kitchen, competition and rivalry are the law of life, the market is the only regulator of production. The pollution of bourgeois thinking seeps into all the social pores almost imperceptibly. The ideology of the dominant class has an extraordinary capacity to adapt itself, assimilate even alien conceptions and alter them in accordance with the correlation of forces at a given moment. The 1960s, for example, saw efforts to disseminate the ideas of "the welfare state", "the consumer state", "the assistance state" and "social consensus" — the whole range of ideas skillfully used by the bourgeois to mute class conflicts and ensure favourable conditions for capitalist regulation.

The ideological function of the state in asserting and perpetuating capitalist production relations is not confined to schools, radio and television studios. The trappings of our state still bear the imprint of the church. Although the voice of the state may not be heard in our churches and cathedrals, the ideas purveyed by the church continue to contaminate the souls of private individuals and government officials. However deep may be the contradictions between the clergy and the lay mass, religion, when all is said and done, remains, besides being and "opium of the people", a material that cements the ideological conceptions generated by the capitalist establishment. It is not the only material, but one of many.

All the main functions of the contemporary state, both traditional and those intended to create the necessary conditions for capital accumulation and the reproduction of the labour force (in the broadest sense), are closely intertwined. Even a cursory examination of the state of affairs reveals that the bodies engaged in particular activities are working closely together and every government decision, say, on economic matters, involves from five to ten ministers. Even by simply buying goods and services, paying salaries to its officials and employees which are then turned into consumer goods and partially into private savings, and by its various investments the

state influences capital accumulation by all the elements of its mechanism.

Private and Public Interests

Two traditions coexist in our political and socio-economic system. The first is inherent in the notion of the state power and is rooted in such principles as unconditional subordination of the lower rungs in the hierarchy to the higher rungs, primacy of the national interests and independent status of government officials. In time, as we have seen, other functions were added to those of national defence, justice and public order. Sometimes they were geared to some social needs and social rights for the working people (in health, education and social security).

For this tradition to prevail, democratisation of the state apparatus is necessary. This can be achieved by tests for aspirants to office. Here is an example. Before the war, the diplomatic career was the privilege of the aristocracy which had the necessary qualifications for it: adherence to caste principles, training, education and often international family ties. Little by little, however, the profession was taken over by members of the bourgeoisie and fewer and fewer ambassadors now boast the aristocratic particle in their name. And when Paul Spaak became foreign minister, some "socialists" (who as a rule are more Atlantist than our aristocrats) were able to climb the administrative ladder.

There is undeniably a certain downgrading of the sense of civic duty and erosion of democratic gains. Unlike other Western countries, Belgium appoints public officers on the basis of belonging to a certain social group. While competence may be a factor, the decisive criteria are regional, local, linguistic and political. The state is blighted by "clientalism",² bloated ministries, venal prime ministers, ministers, deputies, officials, and police officers.

Many rank-and-file civil servants are genuinely concerned about the common weal and try to serve the people honestly. But this does not mean that the administration of the public sector or enterprises with a large share belonging to the state is geared to regional development, preservation of employment or improvement of labour conditions. Much remains to be done in that area and if it is to be done, the progressive movement must rely on the above-mentioned tradition and principles of service to society.

The second tradition is that of the marketplace. It upholds values that are antipodes of the state power. Private interest is opposed to the common interest, risk to stability, pursuit of profit to public consumption, anarchy to organisation, the "hand of providence" to conscious regulation, decentralisation to centralisation, the technocrat's philosophy to the approach of the civil servant.

The state is increasingly exposed to the market and more and more often tends to adopt its logic. This is true of the activity of government firms and credit institutions, state support for the private sector which is driven solely to the profit motive, and of the very image of the administrators the government sends to the administrative councils of joint stock societies who look every inch like their colleagues from the private firms. When the state holds commanding leverage in an enterprise, it entrusts the post to a representative of capital. The government accord of December 18, 1981 put certain services on a commercial basis: under the slogan of combating disloyal competition and cutting public deficit part of the government sector is being brought under the rules of the private sector.

These two traditions coexist in our society; this explains why the "love affair" between the bourgeoisie and the state is a love-and-hate relationship. Love, because the state creates the conditions for capital accumulation. Hate, because the state exacts subordination and its non-commercial sphere looks like something foreign and alien to the world where everything is for sale.

The neoliberal policy puts its stake on the second, the market, tradition, and the alternative, in our opinion, should seek to expand the first of the two traditions. This

presupposes major reforms in the state mechanism itself.

The exercise of power is not confined to administering state bodies. Accordingly, obtaining a few extra ministerial seats does not mean "exercise of power". However vast the sphere of governmental activities, power does not rest with the government. In describing the functions of the state, it is important to see that although national defence, the economic infrastructure, schools, sporting facilities, etc. are formally within the competence of the state, the decisions are born outside the state.

Everyone who adheres to the Marxist doctrine is very well aware that power in bourgeois society belongs to capital which imposes on the worker a pattern of social relations that guarantees surplus value to the owners of the means of production. The terms of the sale of labour force can be more or less harsh, less so when labour productivity grows comparatively quickly (as in the "Golden Sixties") or more so in the conditions of crisis. But the nature of social relations remains the same.

One can argue endlessly about the specific ways in which capitalism exercises its power in an enterprise: through managers who run it day-to-day, through engineers who are in charge of technology, or through experts in information. All these details lose their relevance in the face of one trivial fact: these persons are immediately dismissed if their decisions run counter to the logic of capital, of private profit and solvency. In investing money, producing and selling goods, the capitalist demands only one thing—net profit. Whatever the genre, the *mise-en-scène*, the actors and the extras in the play being performed, the final word lies with capital, the author and director. The alignment of forces sometimes makes it agree to compromise, prevaricate, move surreptitiously and manoeuvre, but still it has the final say.

The Role of the Monopolies

One should not take a simplistic view of the relations between the monopolies and the state. Lenin's analysis of these relations is many-sided, richly nuanced and offers insights into the present-day realities. Theoretical advance in this domain often means no more than a return to the source, to the undistorted Marxism of Lenin.

First and foremost, the relations between the monopolies and the state are a field of class struggle. It is often said that this struggle "runs through the state". We believe it is necessary to discern two interconnected but distinct aspects to the problem.

First, the creation of numerous new state bodies and the evolution and restructuring of the existing ones more often than not reflect the results of such struggle and represent a kind of compromise embodying the relationship between opposing forces at a given moment. In Belgium, this is borne out by numerous examples, from the formation of the SNI³ in 1962 to the creation of several regional offices by the legislative acts of August 1980.

Second, state acts, at whatever level and by whatever bodies they are adopted, represent the result (even if not a final one) of conflict and clash of contradictory interests. In most cases the monopoly bourgeoisie prevails and the decisions usually meet its interests. However, this is not always the case, and certain measures taken by the state indicate victory of other social forces. And of course, the monopoly bourgeoisie is not an air force squadron flying in combat formation, with each plane taking its assigned place and firing in the same direction. On the contrary, it is often disunited because it consists of competing enterprises, sellers and buyers, capitalists oriented towards the external or internal market. To be sure, internal differences are set aside when the bourgeoisie needs to present a united front against the working class, but even then everything is not always smooth. All this leads us from the concept of "the state as tool" to the concept of "the state as an object of struggle".

The relationship between the monopolies and the state is also influenced by international factors. It is only by taking them into account that one can address important economic and social realities and the need for the progressive movement (at least in the EEC countries) to have a European dimension to its strategy.

The relationships between big private firms and "their" state are complex and multifarious. In parallel, private national and multinational enterprises enter into close contact with superstructural transnational organisations. The relations between every individual state and such bodies are but a tip of the iceberg. The Belgian Marxist Economic Group⁴ has described the interrelationships in Western Europe as a "single transnational mechanism" comprising the following elements: private firms (European—Phillips, Unilever, Siemens and American—General Motors, Ford, ITT)—the 12 EEC member countries—transnational superstructures (the Commission of the European Communities,⁵ other Common Market bodies, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the International Monetary Fund and COCOM⁶).

It is a two-way relationship. For example, a monopoly may bring pressure to bear on the Commission of the European Communities through "its" government. At the same time steel firms often prefer to make use of the Commission which, in turn, seeks to bring about changes in the national economic policies of the government, for example in steel production.

Today the "single transnational mechanism" is also riddled with class struggle. The state, therefore, is not just a relay stage: in restructuring the national economy in accordance with the Common Market directives, the Brussels government has to take into account the class struggle inside the country. Although this struggle takes place on Belgian territory, the internationalisation of capital lends international significance to the numerous internal social conflicts. This presents the trade unions with new challenges. We believe that the trade unions still have a lot to do to strengthen the solidarity among workers on the European level. The strikes of German metal workers and British miners have not, in our view, evoked adequate response in other capitalist countries.

Hegemony of the Ruling Class

If class struggle "runs through the state", if the state becomes the focus of social battles and has to legitimise many gains of the working people why, then, are its foundations not shaking?

Before answering that question, some clarifications must be made. In our view, there has over the past fifteen years been a tendency to overestimate the results of the "pressures on the government" by progressive forces.⁷

Some were inclined to transfer the historical experience of some fascist regimes with a medium level of production and a less strong hegemony of the bourgeoisie to the highly developed capitalist powers where this class has centuries-long experience in power.

The fascist state apparatus in Franco's Spain, Caetano's Portugal and Greece under the "black colonels" was affected in its last years by a gangrene. Broad alliances had emerged in these countries which managed to isolate the extreme reactionary forces. Even the industrial bourgeoisie needed to cast off the shackles of the outdated political system to achieve its goals. The result was a "historical bloc" of forces ranging from the working class and intellectuals to civically minded bourgeoisie. It was dominated by democratic rather than anti-capitalist sentiments. Like in our country in 1945, the progressive forces failed to make the democratic phase develop into the anti-capitalist phase. Can one today assert "that the structures of the present monopoly capitalist State are in a very shaky condition",⁸ and apply this thesis which may have been true of the state apparatus in Spain, Portugal and Greece to the EEC countries, US and Japan? That would be a hasty conclusion to say the least.

There has also been a tendency to overestimate the gravity of the crisis of the state's ideological apparatus and contradictions in the midst of the clergy. Some people got the impression that at a certain period the positions of the majority of the "cultural forces" drew much closer to those of the working class.

Political realism today demands that cracks in the state structures of industrialised capitalist countries should not be overestimated. To be sure, the hegemony of the ruling class is not exercised automatically and it, too, faces the problem of alliances. The problem is all the more acute because concentration and centralisation of capital tends to narrow the social base of bourgeois rule. Even so, the edifice of the state is not about to crumble.

No one would contest the fact that the bourgeoisie has mastered the art of manipulating public opinion. It organises strident anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns. Day after day, it justifies the austerity regime telling the masses that sacrifices are necessary, that crisis is inevitable and social regress is a harsh necessity.

Why is it that the political Right can get across its message with such ease? The reason is simple: the mass media are addressing a public whose mentality has been made receptive to such talk by school, university, the whole education system and the social milieu. A sign from the press or television is enough to bring back stereotypes of thought. And visa versa, large doses of antidote are needed to oppose the general trend.

The Communist Party of Belgium proceeds from the assumption that in the process of transition to socialism our state bodies—both the parliament and the government—must express the political will of those social strata which constitute the vast majority of the population, including the objective allies of the working class. That presupposes the existence of parties upholding their interests, their preoccupations and their world-view. This requirement can only be met if certain conditions are observed. The basic condition, in our view, is that the umbilical cord linking our traditional Belgian parties with financial groups should be cut. Some recent studies have highlighted the strength of this constant link. Funds are not only directed to the central treasuries of the main parties, but are offered as personal donations to its leaders, usually those who are being groomed for ministerial posts.

This connection between traditional political groupings and industrial and financial interests makes a travesty of the principle of pluralism. What we have is not a genuine multi-party system that enables various social strata to freely express their interests, but a facade masking the links between financial tycoons and politicians which enable capital to perpetuate its dominance over the state.

To sum up, then. Power is indivisible. It is fully in the hands of capital. The capital-state axis will prevail as long as bourgeois dominance exists. During the transition to socialism, it should be replaced by the labour-state axis which pre-supposes an end to the hegemony of the big bourgeoisie.

Change requires active participation of the masses, especially at critical moments in social development. Depending on the circumstances, one and the same reform may strengthen capitalism or bring socialism closer. Let us take but one example. Government takeover of an unprofitable enterprise or a group of enterprises threatened with "transnationalisation" is not in itself a revolutionary act. But if it is accompanied by other measures that gives workers a say in the key decisions and form part of a comprehensive industrial policy in the interests of society, such a measure may bring about political, socio-economic and ideological conditions in which a step towards socialism can be made.

Partial, even though not revolutionary reforms, may be useful to the working class. No one in Belgium regarded as revolutionary such measures as the creation of the Price Commission, the Central Economic Council, the Programming Bureau, etc. While their main aim was to lubricate the capitalist regulation machine they also benefited the working class because, in the past, they made it possible to bring pressure on the establishment and gain improvements in the living conditions of the workers. Today they restrict the government's room for manoeuvre and tomorrow they may become important instruments of an "alternative policy".

In order to see the outlines of the traditional phase, it is necessary to have a good view of the present, to see it as a result of a certain past and as a transition to the future.

¹ The state export-credit organisation. — *Ed.*

² This term is used in several Western European countries to denote the widespread system of "scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" relations between politicians and voters. — *Ed.*

³ Société nationale d'investissement (National Investment Society). — *Ed.*

⁴ This research team, commanding considerable authority in Belgium, consists of economists, historians, sociologists, both communist and non-communist, who are interested in Marxism. Since 1977 the group has published a series of studies on contemporary capitalism.

⁵ Executive organ of the EEC — *Ed.*

⁶ A co-ordinating committee controlling exports to the socialist countries. Established in 1949, it comprises the NATO countries (except Iceland) and Japan. — *Ed.*

⁷ See, for example, Santiago Carrillo, *Eurocommunism and the State*, London, 1977.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

viewpoints

Socialism's Ethical Values

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In the past few years there has unquestionably been a more concentrated focus on ethics in our country. As well as by social scientists, related questions are being addressed by members of the cultural community, the reason for this being that an intellectual comprehension of present-day developments has many points of contact with the portrayal of reality in literature and art. Heightened preoccupation with these questions is a symptom characterising major aspects of socialist society's development.

Let me make the reminder that Marxism-Leninism sees morality as a concrete historical sum of ethical notions (principles, perceptions, values, and standards) and the concomitant forms of actual behaviour and moral relations. Marx was the first thinker to place ethics on a consistently materialistic foundation. He brought ethics from the realm of the abstract to reality, demonstrating that rather than being autonomous this form of consciousness is rooted in social life, finding its explanation in it and bearing the imprint of the objective conditions of human activity.

Ethical notions, ideas, principles, and evaluations are put forward and formulated by ideologists expressing class interests; diverse world-views clash here, as in other areas of society's life. Consequently, morality is not a code of abstract everlasting truths and norms mandatory for one and all. Engels insisted upon the view that virtue, justice, and morality "are by no means the basis, but on the contrary the product, of the society in which they feature".¹ The dialectics of history and the class struggle encompass morality; in close association with the other components of intellectual life, especially its ideological forms, ethical notions influence social aims and practice, changing together with them.

What is the role of morality in the formation of the ideal of socialism?

On many occasions the classics of Marxism-Leninism took exception to those who deduced the aims of the Communists directly from moral sentiment, from a meritorious censure of the malpractices and contradictions in society. The thesis that

the entire social product should belong to the working people on the grounds that they are the only real producers "is ... wrong in formal economic terms", Engels wrote, "because it is just an application of morality to political economy. Under the laws of political economy the larger portion of the product does *not* belong to the workers who produce it. But when we say that this is unjust, that this should not be the case — political economy has nothing directly to do with this. We only say that this economic fact comes into conflict with our moral feeling."² Lenin likewise saw as subjectivist the desire to build a new society "from the standpoint, let us assume, of truth, justice, and labour egalitarianism". The socialist ideal must express "the interests of an actually existing class, whose living conditions compel it to act in a particular sense".³

Thus, in propounding socialism, Marxists draw their arguments not from moral feeling but from the objective course of history, the laws governing society's material life, the development of its productive forces and relations of production. However, morals are indispensable as an impulse to understanding and evaluating economic and social processes, the essential relationships and conflicts in society's life, as a motivation inducing people to change the reality they live in. What "is wrong in the formal economic context may be correct in the world historical context," Engels wrote in enlarging upon this idea. "If the moral consciousness of the masses declares some economic fact as being unjust..., then this is a proof that this fact has outworn itself... Behind this formal economic untruth there consequently may be a latent true economic content."⁴ When in economic life some phenomenon begins to arouse negative moral emotions, it is an unerring signal that there are serious contradictions and new tendencies in social reality.

But then the society draws close to a social upheaval, to the attainment of the socialist ideal — and once again a dialectical relationship can be seen clearly between morality and practice. An individual's ethical principles and standards take shape under the influence, first, of his upbringing and, second, of the circumstances in which he lives and acts — this was clear to the French materialists of the eighteenth century. This logically raises two questions: is the purpose of remoulding the individual for the better at all realistic if his upbringing has been dictated by objective circumstances? And are these circumstances amendable to change if people remain unchanged? The Encyclopaedists failed to produce a satisfactory answer, and the vicious circle was broken only by the Marxists: they regarded revolutionary practice as covering changes in circumstances and in human activity. In his *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx makes the point that "the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as *revolutionary practice*".⁵ Indeed, in the interpretation of ethical problems the shift of emphasis from idealistically perceived subjectivity to the reshaping of objective circumstances (as to the requisite for forming the new morals and to the motive force of their development) has been the remains to be one of the conditions of the success of the socialist revolution. The Marxists achieved this success by going beyond a theoretical solution of the problem.

Moral attitudes and behaviour patterns conflicting with society's ideals, expectations or aims are to be observed also under socialism. Simply to shrug off such excesses, to say they are relics of the past or the product of the old world's influence (which they are undoubtedly are), to seek the roots of undesirable phenomena in the human being's imperfection or even to attribute them to the operation of socialism's principles, to its fundamental hallmarks would be tantamount to justifying and advocating a passive attitude to reality.

The materialistic credo and the dialectical understanding of the relationship between morality and social practice demand a concrete, comprehensive, and scientific analysis of the objective reasons for transgressions of socialist morality. This analysis should answer the question of how to change the conditions of life and work and regulate social relations and the system of administration in such a way as to eradicate deviations from socialism's ethical standards. The responsibility for such deviations

cannot be imputed entirely to objective circumstances. After revolution has readjusted these circumstances, further progress in particular situations depends on changes in the individual himself. This concerns his ideological persuasions and ethical principles, will, readiness to act in the name of particular ideals and aims, his consciously adopted decisions, and the moral atmosphere encouraging such behaviour and reinforcing the inner propensity for conscientiousness and responsibility, especially personal, which nothing can replace. All this can influence society's development very strongly, while society itself — this is of the utmost significance — comes under and is in need of such influence. (Nor will it do to overrate the pressure of the subjective factor because its impact is effective only when the conditions for activity change at the same time.)

As distinct from all preceding social systems, socialism is built and developed by the conscious, planned efforts of the people led by Marxist-Leninist parties. And since ethical principles can be a factor promoting this consciousness, growing urgency is acquired by the question of the motive forces of our society's moral progress, especially as the class adversary is trying to exercise a purposeful influence on the moral relations in it.

As well as exemplifying a system of principles and requirements, morality, including socialist morality, is one of the ideological forms in which people resolve the material and social conflicts of their life. It constantly has to do with the dialectical interests of the individual and the collective, the individual and the class, and the individual and society, serving under socialism as a means for the intellectual and practical surmounting of contradictions between the individual and the social whole in favour of society. Morals operate in a specific area — in situations where the choice of this or that option depends on the subject's will, understanding, value orientations, and conscience. To use legal language, "the standards of morality cannot claim to have the state compel compliance with them".⁶ They cover behaviour or actions "accessible to the individual's own, free, and responsible decision. In this sense Kant was right in regarding moral law as a sort of code of the exercise of freedom."⁷ A peculiarity of any moral conflict is that the individual is confronted with the need to choose between possible patterns of behaviour, each of which is often equally consistent with the demands of ethics. This is what explains the fact that morality is a major motive force of socialism.

Public property in the means of production and the power of the working class have fundamentally reshaped the dialectics of personal, collective, and public interests and created the objective basis for eliminating antagonism between the individual and society. In the relations between them there have appeared some distinctively new elements, which require and will continue to require intensive moral "processing". What I mean is that the phenomena we are talking about give rise, on the one hand, to ethical situations, problems, and conflicts, and, on the other, to some processes in the mass consciousness that merit the closest study by ideological workers.

Let me name four such elements.

First, the actual socialisation of production and labour is proceeding rapidly. In the GDR, for example, the volume of per capita basic assets increased in the period between 1970 and 1984 from 58,600 to 120,200 marks, and the per capita national income from 17,700 to 32,200 marks.⁸ This means that the social conditions for various activity are expanding as fast as its results. The link between the operation of the entire national economy and the work of the individual and collective is becoming stronger and, at the same time, a growing responsibility devolves on them.

Second, society's social structure has changed. The SUPG Programme notes that the classes and strata of our society are gradually drawing closer together; in the latter half of the 1970's, as a result of this process, "the essential distinctions in the living and working conditions of individual social groups *within* classes and strata become more clearly defined than the cumulative distinctions *between* the corresponding classes and strata as entities. This allows drawing the general conclusion that in a socialist society,

as distinct from societies with antagonistic classes, social inequality is now determined chiefly not by factors sustaining the existence of classes but by visible elements such as situation in the social division of labour and, hence, directly by working conditions."⁹

In a socialist society new, more differentiated distinctions are in fact gradually complementing class distinctions — in labour, housing, size of earned incomes, possibilities for satisfying requirements, and so on. These differ from class distinctions by the fact that they are not programmed, irreversible vital circumstances but depend on the individual's activity and development level and, consequently, can be influenced by the individual. *This underscores the role of the individual as a subject, not least of social and individual experience.*

Third, much headway has been made towards satisfying the requirements of the individual, including the aspiration to have social confidence. It seems to me that the question of socialism's ethical values has attracted heightened interest precisely now that the task of upgrading the people's living standard is being addressed on an incomparably higher level than previously, just as there is nothing accidental about the strong impetus that the artistic community was given to pondering the sense of life and personal success. The SUPG is consciously drawing public attention to the ethical values orienting the individual in a socialist society.¹⁰

Fourth, the link between the individual and society is now very strongly influenced by the fact that the individual is coming into more direct contact with historic, epochal processes. Take, for example, the unparalleled urgency of the question of war and peace: humanity's further existence now depends on how this question is decided; other global problems have been clearly identified; the relationships in the world economy have grown more perceptible since the latter half of the 1970s; international communications have been accelerated, particularly by the mass media. One cannot take a detached view of this when pondering social relations, whose appreciation in intellectual and practical terms is in our day the content and criterion of the individual's development and the point of departure for acquiring a sense of moral responsibility based on lofty humane values.

Wide scope for gaining an ethical understanding of reality is opened up by the dialectical link between the past, the present, and the future. The strategy for our society's development in the coming 15 years is defined in the resolutions of the 11th Congress of the SUPG (1986). These documents, said Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the party's CC, "lay down a lucid guideline for the ways and means of successfully fulfilling the tasks set for the years up to 1990 and for the period up to the beginning of the next century. The German Democratic Republic will continue to develop dynamically as an economically strong country giving our citizens confidence in their future and steadily raising their living standard and cultural level. We shall steadfastly continue following the course towards unity of economic and social policy."¹¹

In a socialist society contemplation of the future is a profoundly moral process, for the dialectics of the ideal and reality are one of the key levers of its advancement. In this society the vision of the future acquires an ethical aspect on account of the dynamic coincidence of social, collective, and personal interests, because the most significant aims and decisions affecting the whole of society are consonant with the hopes, desires, needs, and expectations of individuals and groups. They accept these aims and decisions as their own ideal or see them as steps towards what they aspire to have. That is why people do not simply dispassionately note the new tasks and the difficulties that arise in carrying out what is programmed but regard them as directly concerning themselves.

Hence, the process of critically analysing the stage reached by society by comparing it with long-term aims is quite normal for the communist system. *This comparison proceeds most intensively at the stage of building developed socialism.* A landmark level has now been achieved in the realisation of the new society's principles, aims, and

ideals, and today a constant *collectively* agreed notion about the future is becoming a crucial condition of progress. The planned economy, the socialist system of public education, the social confidence of citizens, the equality enjoyed by them, the attributes of collectivism in the consciousness and behaviour of people, and so forth are not only an achievement but, equally, the starting point for paving the road to the future. Socialism is now developing not merely as an alternative to capitalism, and hence the modified aspect being acquired by the dialectics of the old and the new. What has become outworn today is not necessarily something inherited from the exploiting system: it may be a phenomenon or attitude generated in the course of socialist construction but no longer consistent with the imperatives of the day.

It is not at all easy to draw a clearly defined boundary between where the exchange of views, observations, experience, and judgements of economic, social, political, and cultural facts and realities, and of the need for fulfilling adopted decisions ends and where the specification of new value orientations, the birth of new emotions, expectations, claims, and hopes, i.e., of new subjective characteristics begin. Of course, when some serious decision is adopted definitively in our society, one has to see the distinction between the results of a scientific analysis and a moral assessment. But this does not signify that at the stage when new tasks have not yet finally crystallised and been formulated, at the stage of summing up and generalising society's experience, the moral judgment is devoid of all significance.

It must be noted that the concrete historical comparison constantly drawn in our society between the ideal and the reality is gradually acquiring new features, for this comparison is being made by *new generations*. When we speak of our ideals we justifiably have in mind chiefly those formed in the class battles of the workers against capitalism, in the struggle for social progress and humanism. We will not retreat an inch from these ideals. However, the time has come for giving the most serious thought to identifying the new ideals inspired in the course of gaining a practical, constructive understanding of the processes implicit in the new society, of its regularities, needs, and contradictions. This was also mentioned at the congress: "Nor should one lose sight of the fact that in the GDR there are now generations for whom the socialist way of life is implicit and whose pursuits, thoughts, and habits are in their entirety characterised by a socialist attitude to labour, a high level of education, and a substantial information intake."¹²

A large set of ethical problems loomed up out of the content and character of people's activity related to the present development level of the productive forces.

A distinctive feature of our society, harmonising with its inner essence, is the manifest attraction that creativity has for the individual. We assess this as a positive feature of the human character and we consciously encourage it among young people.

It is now conventional wisdom that intensive extended reproduction calls for a higher standard of creativity than extensive reproduction. Study and experience have shown that in order to fulfil plans (not only where they relate to scientific and technological progress) people have now to display considerable independence, the ability to adapt to situation changes and to the scale of production, an aptitude for original thought and action, a sense of responsibility, a readiness to adopt decisions independently, and the capacity to respond accurately to the requirements of the national economy as a whole and of society. I do not wish to simplify things, but I have to mention a distinctive positive tendency, namely, that a steadily growing number of people is inclined to see their personal responsibility in a broad sense, extending it not only to their direct labour functions but also to the conditions for carrying them out.

Those who are today responsible for decision-making in various areas of life have to take many factors into account. The intensification of production with its inherently new hierarchy of factors of economic growth, the closer relationship between the internal and external conditions of our activity and, above all, the need for socialist humanism that is increasingly felt with the consolidation of socialism's foundations

make social processes more complex and accentuate the mutual dependence of economics, politics, culture, technology, the way of life, and education. The social prerequisites and effects of individual actions are not only multiplying but becoming qualitatively different, more diversified and differentiated. In a critical analysis of GDR literature of the 1970s it was quite rightly noted that the "make-up of the individual is expanding; the measure of his vital manifestations, which may be put under the heading of positive values, is widening".¹³ As a matter of fact, this is generating ethical problems as well. In order to explain what I mean let me accentuate that the wider the spectrum of such vital manifestations that have socialist values at their root the harder it becomes to conform to all of them concurrently. It becomes necessary to choose, and in the process it is found that what appears to be equally positive variants of an option may in fact lead to quite different consequences.

Obviously, in the process of building a developed socialist society the dialectics of the forces motivating the behaviour of the individual come more clearly to light. On the one hand, experience has shown the significance of the motivating roll played by the principle of distribution according to work. Any deviation from this principle has always led to extremely harmful consequences and yet it is still premature to consider that this principle has occupied a fitting place in the hierarchy of values, in the social consciousness. Much remains to be done to have it applied consistently. It would be a serious mistake, however, to reduce to material incentives the entire sum of motivations inducing a person to act in one way or another. On the contrary, the ideological and ethical debates generated by precisely the desire to implement the principle of distribution according to work to the fullest extent rather than by any underestimation of or attempts to circumvent it show that a broader and richer meaning is beginning to be put into the concept of labour achievement. Of course, distribution according to work will be the predominant principle as long as objective and subjective labour remains the main source of the means of life, as long as it is the means for attaining particular objectives. However, this does not rule out elements of the new: with the passage of time people will see their achievement in work as something more — as a means of self-assertion, as a possibility of making a personal contribution to the common cause, of creating something really significant for future generations, in other words, as an end in itself and as a need.

Unquestionably, very much depends on the content of work and on working conditions, on the extent of the responsibility devolving on the worker, and on the possibility of applying intellectual power. But it is also evident that an active, creative credo does not take shape as a direct derivative of working conditions or of the material incentives for work. A crucial role is played by what the author Hans Weber called the "humanitarian qualification of society".¹⁴ This surfaces in the fact that work is seen as an extremely important but not the only criterion of an individual's merits.

Marx had pointed out that the principle of remuneration according to work rests on an abstraction, he wrote: "...Unequal individuals...are measurable only by an equal standard in so far as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one *definite* side only, for instance, in the present case, are regarded *only as workers* and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored."¹⁵ Attempts to reject this abstraction and use some criterion other than work as the basis for distribution would be disastrous for a socialist society. Nevertheless, it is dangerous to fail to see how important it is to complement the assessment of an individual according to his work with other criteria, to bring other dimensions into such an assessment; for instance, it should take into account the motivations and considerations prompting the given individual to work, how much effort he makes to achieve a particular result, and what the returns of his work are not only in economic but also in broader terms.

In recent years many examples showing how the production results of individual workers or of entire work collectives differ markedly have been cited in documents of the SUPG, the trade unions, the youth organisation, and the press of our republic.

Apropos of this the author Volker Braun noted: "Fewer grounds remain to a person to refer to conditions; these are becoming identical for all. How a person arranges his life depends increasingly upon that person. And because more is coming to depend upon people themselves and because their abilities and courage are likewise dissimilar, the time is coming when, to quote Marx, genuine joy and genuine mortification are only beginning."¹⁶

Why then are people nonetheless behaving differently if the circumstances of their life and work are now similar or comparable? One of the reasons has, possibly, to be sought in their abilities and characters. As socialist social relations develop, the role of the individual, of inimitable individuality can be seen with growing clarity.

As the distinctions between the external social conditions of the development of individuals diminish there is simultaneously a growing need for inner-motivated individual behaviour. To give the operation of the external factors determining this behaviour full scope there must be new modes of reassigning, redefining, and mediating them by internal factors, for instance, by the individual's multiple value orientation. This orientation motivates the behaviour expected by society even in the absence of direct pressures from without or of incentives.

The interaction of the internal and external conditionalities of the individual's behaviour intensifies under the impact of two objective processes.

First, the specific tendencies of scientific and technological progress. Economists, sociologists, and psychologists have long noted that the external determination of a person's behaviour in the form of a direct influence by machinery and technology is gradually lessening. Let me explain. Work at a conveyor is an example of the most direct, manifest conditionality of the actions of a worker when each movement he makes is programmed by a machine. If he falls behind its rhythm or makes an error this is noted immediately. From this standpoint some phases of the manufacture of microelectronic elements are the direct opposite. During these phases the least miscalculation, the least violation of strict quality requirements, inattention, or error nullifies the work of an entire collective, and it is practically impossible to establish exactly who is to blame. In this case correct behaviour is demanded not by external but by internal factors: conscientiousness, sense of responsibility by the participants in the production process, and conscious collective ethics.

Second, policy is a determinant of individual behaviour; it is also increasingly demanding internal and ideological mediation. The political processes that can visibly influence an individual's actions are usually seen in the shape of international, historic developments and relationships. People keenly respond to them only when they understand these processes, when this understanding is demonstrated intellectually, by considered action and decisions.

Hence the conclusion that existing socialism has significantly modified the relations between the individual and society. We are witnessing a steep growth of the importance of personal participation, of the sense of responsibility on the part of each person, of every person making decisions and acting consciously.

The present landmark in this dialectic is not the first in history. Let us recall Marx's words: The positing of the individual as a *worker*, in this nakedness, is itself a product of *history*." Explaining his view of the role of the individual in precapitalist systems, he writes: "The individuals may appear great. But there can be no conception here of a free and full development either of the individual or of the society, since such development stands in contradiction to the original relation."¹⁷ It is indicative that Marx regards the free development of the individual and of the society *in unity*. His approach becomes even clearer when he characterises the epoch of transition to capitalism that gave birth to the illusion that there were "isolated individuals" when in fact before us was the epoch of the "most developed social...relations".¹⁸ As Marx saw it, the communist ideal is: "free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and on their subordination of their communal, social productivity as their

social wealth".¹⁹

Here we see the confluence of two concepts into one. The first is that there can be no historical progress in the formation and development of human individuality that is not simultaneously an advance in the socialisation of production whatever the antagonistic character of the link between them has been in the past. Socialism needs individuals who, relative to their environment and to themselves, behave (or can behave) more freely and more consciously than the typical individuals of preceding social systems and epochs.

The second is that Marx's understanding of "free individuality" is an ideal that cannot be realised in one person. The reason for this is not only because any concept necessarily differs from reality. The transformation of the communal and social productivity of individuals into their social wealth, Marx writes, is a social process that does not unfold in individual behaviour. And today when we speak of the need to accentuate the role of the individual, we see it not in contradistinction to the society but only in comparison with the preceding level of its maturity.

Ethical problems arise from the fact that unity between the "universal individual" and "social wealth" (Marx in some cases combines these two concepts in one — "social individual"²⁰) is achieved not as a result of an autonomous process taking place outside real individuals and real society, but as a result of the appearance, movement, and settlement of contradictions between needs and production, between the wish and the plan, between spontaneity and discipline, and so on. A task of the social sciences, which they are still far from having fulfilled, is to explain the essence of these contradictions and what the attitude to them should be, to bring it home to people that the subordination of the individual to the collective, to society's potentialities, which is hard to attain, is ultimately one of the (if not the most important) orientations of the development of individuality. To quote Marx again, "human emancipation" will have been accomplished only when "man has recognised and organised his '*forces propres*' as *social forces*".²¹

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 301.

² Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 4, Berlin, 1959, p. 561.

³ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 330.

⁴ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 4, p. 561.

⁵ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 14.

⁶ Karl A. Mollnau, "Recht und Moral im Sozialismus", *Einheit*, No. 7/8, 1982, p. 777.

⁷ Wolfgang Eichhorn, *Wie ist Ethik als Wissenschaft möglich?*, Berlin, 1965, p. 20.

⁸ See *Statistisches Jahrbuch der DDR*, 1985, Berlin, 1985, pp. 14, 108.

⁹ *Lebensweise und Sozialstruktur. III. Kongress der marxistisch-leninistischen Soziologie in der DDR*, Berlin, 1981, p. 27.

¹⁰ See *Protokoll des IX. Parteitages der SED*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1976, p. 141.

¹¹ *Neues Deutschland*, April 22, 1986.

¹² *Bericht des ZK der SED an den XI. Parteitag der SED. Berichterstatter: Genosse Erich Honecker*, Berlin, 1986, p. 86.

¹³ Klaus Jarmatz, "Erkundungen, Erfahrungen, Erwartungen", *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, No. 3, 1983, p. 130.

¹⁴ Hans Weber, "Jugend und Literatur", *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, No. 7, 1983, p. 71.

¹⁵ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 18-19.

¹⁶ Volker Braun, *Es genügt nicht die einfache Wahrheit*, Leipzig, 1979, p. 122.

¹⁷ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse. Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, 1973, pp. 472, 487.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 706.

²¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 168.

Regardless of Bourgeois Chauvinism

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In the course of several decades our party has been working unremittingly for a democratic settlement of the nationalities problem, inherited by Sri Lanka from colonial times. With capitalist relations predominating under a reactionary bourgeois regime this problem has erupted into a violent ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils inhabiting the country. This mounting communal crisis is a colossal threat to Sri Lanka's future and must be resolved without further delay. Thousands of Sinhalese and Tamils have lost their lives in only the past few years in flares-up of communal fighting, military operations by government troops in preponderantly Tamil-inhabited areas, and terrorist actions.

The Sri Lankan Communists have considerable experience of dealing with a complex, explosive situation of this kind. We approach problems of inter-ethnic relations from the standpoint of Lenin's theory on the nationalities question, applying this theory to our distinctive local conditions. This article offers an analysis of what led to the conflict, of its socio-economic origins, and of the ways that could lead out of the crisis. The programme on the nationalities question mapped out by the Communist Party during the years of independence and class battles is now winning growing recognition in Sri Lankan society and contributes to the common efforts of the Sinhalese and Tamil working people to foster ethnic amity, democracy, and social progress.

Class Dimension of the Problem

Sri Lanka is a multinational country. Alongside the large ethnic communities — Sinhalese (74 per cent of the population of 15 million) and Tamils (of local and Indian origin — 12 and 5 per cent respectively) — there are other ethnic groups, for instance, Sri Lankan Moors (about 7 per cent)¹ called Moslems in the country.

On the island, as in their other colonised possessions, the British imperialists enforced their policy of "divide and rule". The Tamil minority was set against the Sinhalese majority. The Tamils had the opportunity to learn the English language. They were selected for posts in the civilian administration and could, in the main, count on acquiring a skilled profession (in medicine, engineering, and so forth). Although the Sinhalese comprise almost three-fourths of the population they felt as though they were a humiliated minority. A contributing factor was that a region of India (now the State of Tamil Nadu) with a population of 55 million Tamils was only 25 miles away from Sri Lanka. It was there that the British plantation owners recruited labourers, most of whom settled in the central part of the island.

Following the proclamation of Sri Lanka's political independence (in 1948) the situation in regard to the nationalities question began to change gradually. In the pro-imperialist bourgeois government formed at the time by the United National Party the majority of the posts were held by Sinhalese. The authorities instituted steps that hurt the interests and national feelings of the Tamils. Sinhalese townships were built in traditional Tamil areas (North and East of the country). Moreover, a discriminatory citizenship act, which denied suffrage to Tamils of Indian origin, was passed. The chauvinistic leanings of the reactionary bourgeoisie and its government, headed by the UNP leader D. S. Senanayake, obviously had a class motivation. By denying to Tamils their homeland and the civil rights they had once enjoyed, these quarters squared some of their class accounts with the plantation proletariat that had opposed the United National Party at the 1947 elections and supported the candidates of the Left.

The attitude of the bourgeois parties to inter-ethnic relations has also been self-serving in class terms, chauvinistic, unprincipled and inconsistent. The posture of the bourgeois governments, that replaced one another, relative to the Tamil language is noteworthy. As a start the Sri Lanka Freedom Party government, headed by Solomon Bandaranaike, that came to power in 1956 proclaimed Sinhala as the sole official language of our multinational country. However, with its eye on enlarging its social base that government later concluded an agreement with a prominent leader of the Tamil community — Chelvanayagam — that cleared the way for an act recognising Tamil as a national language. Further, intending to grant ethnic Tamils the right to self-administration through the formation of regional councils the government, as a first step, gave its consent to a semblance of autonomy for the Northern and Eastern provinces. Although these would have been very small concessions, they were resented by the UNP leaders. In collusion with Buddhist religious circles they started a chauvinistic campaign that torpedoed the conclusion of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam agreement and the adoption of the Tamil language act. Recognition of Sinhala as the sole official language led to profound changes in the ethnic composition of government bodies and state institutions, and also in their technical, medical, and many other services. Once a minority among civil servants, the Sinhalese became a majority. Analogous changes took place in education, chiefly in the universities, where formerly Tamil students predominated over Sinhalese students numerically. Thus, the colonialist tactic of driving a wedge between the ethnic groups inhabiting one and the same country was taken over by bourgeois regimes. Meanwhile, their economic policy exacerbated social problems and this affected the status of Sinhalese and, to a growing extent, Tamil young people.

The difficulties encountered in getting an education, the unemployment, and the deprivation of land — all these mounting hardships, generated chiefly by the exploiting system, by capitalist practices, were attributed by the Tamil bourgeoisie exclusively to the "Sinhalese government". It stirred nationalistic sentiments in order to broaden its social base, particularly in areas inhabited by Tamils (for example, Tamils constitute 98 per cent of the population in the Northern Province, whose capital is Jaffna). This is a typical case of bourgeois practical chicanery aimed at splitting the working people in accordance with their ethnic affiliation. The Sinhalese chauvinists did not leave this unanswered: they argued that had it not been for the Tamil presence, the country's economic and other affairs would have been in much better shape. While camouflaging the oppression and exploitation of the working people, the bourgeoisie sowed hostility for Tamils among the Sinhalese population. The acute and unresolved problem of inter-ethnic relations thus revealed its central — class — dimension.

Let us now consider the situation in the Tamil community more closely. Its spokesman for many years has been the Tamil United Liberation Front, which is the political organisation of the Tamil bourgeoisie. Shortly before the present UNP government came to power (1977) the Front held a special congress at which it proclaimed that its purpose was to set up a Tamil *eelam*, or a separate Tamil state. Since the social and other troubles of the Tamils were imputed exclusively to the Sinhalese government, the TULF came up with the call that the Tamils should form a government of their own. There was a considerable response to this nationalistic incitement from disinherited people, especially youth.

At the general elections nine years ago the vast majority of TULF candidates won seats in the parliament, while on the Jaffna Municipal Council practically all the members are TULF people. However, Tamil bourgeois leaders tried to enter into secret negotiations with the ruling United National Party on a number of issues. But youth elements in the Front saw this as a departure from the *eelam* slogan and denounced such negotiations, declaring that the intention was to hold them not at a round table but under the table. Disappointed to the actions of the bourgeoisie and losing confidence in it, some youth leaders steered a course towards an armed struggle,

towards the formation of a separate Tamil state on the island, the idea for which, as we have already noted, had been suggested by the bourgeoisie itself.

Separatist sentiments gained some momentum because in the late 1970s and early 1980s Tamils began asking themselves whether they could at all get along with the Sinhalese. People were greatly disturbed by the many outbursts of violence. Actions against Tamils were conducted with the backing and support of influential elements in the government representing the most reactionary chauvinist groups of the Sinhalese bourgeoisie.

An extremely serious outbreak of inter-communal violence in 1983 took a toll of hundreds of lives. At least 100,000 people fled from the bloodshed. Many small Tamil-owned factories and shops were destroyed. Tens of thousands of people lost their jobs. The Northern and Eastern provinces were virtually occupied by government troops and came under what essentially was a military administration. Separatist tendencies were fuelled in the tense atmosphere of those years by the desperation of the Tamil masses and by the extremism of a section of young people, who acted under the Tamil *eelam*, or separate state, slogan.

What Prevents a Settlement?

In order to present some of its steps in this direction in a "favourable light", the present government has time and again promised to settle the ethnic problem. For example, Tamil has been recognised as a national language, and this is inscribed in Sri Lanka's new constitution. However, it has not been recognised as an official language. Sinhala and English continue to be predominant throughout the country, including the areas inhabited by Tamils.

The absence of any visible progress towards a settlement is due to several class, political reasons. First, despite its public statements that it wants a negotiated settlement, the government is systematically using troops to suppress the Tamil masses. Terror and repressions against Tamils have, under President J.R. Jayawardene, become inalienable elements of the government's assault on the democratic rights and freedoms of the entire population of Sri Lanka. Second, the procrastination over the settlement of the conflict is enabling the regime to divert the people's attention from the dismal economic situation caused by the UNP "open economy" policy. This policy had been composed upon our country from outside — by the neocolonialists, by imperialist-controlled international financial institutions (International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). Third, the ruling party is constantly looking over its shoulder at other bourgeois parties in order to cut short any belief that it is yielding to Tamil pressure, especially as the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, headed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike, is likewise seeking to benefit politically from Sinhalese chauvinism; the United National Party has no intention whatever of letting the SLFP gain any advantage in this area.

The behaviour of the Tamil bourgeoisie in the prevailing situation is extremely indicative. For its part, too, the Tamil United Liberation Front had for many years not ventured to accept a constructive settlement that would end the bloodletting and restore inter-communal peace. Its leaders feared, on the one hand, a negative reaction from their own masses and, on the other the bellicose groups of Tamil youth operating in the north of the island. Five of these groups have a large following, while some, in addition to a military wing, have a political organisation. The "boys", as the paramilitary Tamil youth are called, are carrying on an armed struggle against the government. However, far from all young people subscribe to separatist feeling.

There is one more dimension to this problem — the international dimension, and I should like to deal with this in some detail.

The Communist Party of Sri Lanka has pointed out on many occasions that the Reagan administrations's policies are a threat to all South Asian states. The USA is trying to destabilise India, counting on internal subversive separatist elements, on a

spread of religious-communal discord, and on fanning hostility for New Delhi in neighbouring states. Sri Lanka is not bypassing by this geopolitical game played by the US strategists, who want to turn the Indian Ocean into a sphere of US "vital interests".

The unresolved ethnic problem and any complication in the relations between Sri Lanka and India play into the hands of Washington. While declaring publicly that the ethnic conflict on the island has to be settled, the US government is in fact pursuing a perfidious, hypocritical policy towards Sri Lanka, a policy that harbours the threat of weakening our country, of undercutting its sovereignty. Secret US support is being extended to some Tamil youth groups demanding a separate state. US agents are infiltrated to conduct subversive activities in the country's north and northeast. There are circles abroad that are funding these activities abundantly.

All of this is being done in order to debilitate the republic and compel the ruling regime to link its destiny still more closely to neocolonialism, to imperialism's aggressive designs in the region. In particular, the entire range of relations between Sri Lanka and India receives unremitting attention from the Reagan administration.

Normal, stable development of Sri Lankan-Indian relations is a crucial factor of peace in South Asia, a condition for a lasting settlement of the aforementioned problems that arose historically and whose early solution requires energetic efforts by both countries. However, efforts to erect obstacles are being made by some forces in India itself. It is no secret that in the neighbouring Indian State of Tamil Nadu the opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, led by M. Karunanidhi, has on several occasions openly urged the Rajiv Gandhi government to support the "liberation struggle of our Tamil brothers", the formation of a separate state, and go so far as to send Indian troops to the island.

Inflammatory statements are clouding the relations between the two nations, generating confusion in Sri Lankan society that is further fanned by the local bourgeois mass media. The latter are trying to mould public opinion with sensation mongering, for instance of which is the venal assertion that India is planning "military interference" and that such "interference" would be met with a request for US military assistance. Statements derogatory to India have been made by many leading spokesmen of the ruling circles. This incitement of hostility for our neighbour is only creating further obstacles to a settlement of the ethnic conflict. Nevertheless, the CIA is conducting active subversion in India and in Sri Lanka in order to sustain tension.

The situation remains volatile. In Northern Province the civilian administration is not functioning and public activity has come to a standstill. Tamil militants have destroyed most of the police stations. Further, the government has lost control of the situation in Eastern Province. From time to time the authorities announce the losses inflicted on the "Marxist terrorists", and in the meantime government troops kill innocent people. The operations against the "boys" involve light aircraft and helicopters, and this leads to further loss of life among civilians. The government's expenses on punitive operations against Tamils have reached 160,000 rupees a day and this is one of the reasons for the further deterioration of the state of the country's economy and finance.

In a statement issued this summer our party noted that the government had failed to settle the ethnic problem, that it is incapable of safeguarding the population's security. This situation has led to Sri Lanka's growing isolation on the international scene and grievously hurt its relations with India. We demanded an immediate halt to the armed clashes and terror — by the government and by the armed Tamil organisations — and urged another attempt at negotiating a reasonable and democratic political agreement between the Sinhalese and the Tamils with Indian mediation.

Attitude of the Communists

Underlying the attitude of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka to the ethnic issue is

the internationalist motivation to see fraternal relations established between the two main ethnic communities that have been living side by side on one land for many centuries. We are harbouring no illusions: the ethnic problem cannot be solved definitively in a capitalist society. But the Communists believe that the way to such a solution — essentially democratic, even if temporary — can be found within the existing system.

Back in the 1960s the Communist Party had distinctly formulated its stand, saying bluntly in public that the Tamils of Sri Lanka have the right to self-determination. What this means was explained to the people by the Communists, namely, that it is the right of the Tamils to safeguard and develop their distinctive identity, language, and culture, their right to administer their own affairs in the areas populated by them; that by and large this means recognising that the Tamils of Sri Lanka constitute an ethnic community enjoying equal rights with other communities.

Furthermore, we made the point that in the specific conditions of our country the right to self-determination must be used not to divide it territorially in accordance with ethnic settlement, which is inconceivable in practice because everywhere on the island, with the exception of Northern Province, the Tamils live side by side with Sinhalese and people of other nationalities.² For example, in Eastern Province the Tamil and Moslem communities each comprise 40 per cent of the population, the remaining 20 per cent being Sinhalese. For that reason the province's destiny (Tamil organisations want it merged with Northern Province) should not be decided without taking the freewill of the other nationalities into consideration. In Northern Province the Tamil community is the largest, and there is justification for raising the question of regional autonomy as a form of implementing the right of the Tamils to self-determination in a united Sri Lanka.

Two decades ago, the Communist idea of regional autonomy for Tamil areas drew vehement opposition practically everywhere. But with the passage of time this idea made a niche for itself in the public consciousness and became popular. It was recognised even by the bourgeois Tamil United Liberation Front, although the bourgeoisie represented by the TULF demanded the merging of the Northern and Eastern provinces as a first step.

We are uncompromisingly against division, and in our country this expresses the working class stand on the nationalities issue. A really democratic settlement of this issue must in future serve as the factor uniting all working people — Sinhalese, Tamils, and other ethnic groups — and promoting the interests of socialism.

As a party of patriots and internationalists we are working to reinforce our country's political and economic independence. Since the local reactionaries and their imperialist patrons have today exposed Sri Lanka's sovereignty to danger we have to press for unity aiming its ethnic communities, chiefly among working people regardless of their ethnic affiliation. If the island is divided into two "states", imperialism, US imperialism in the first place, will ultimately be the sole beneficiary. Separatist feelings are grist to its mill, and essentially alien to true patriots of Sri Lanka, to say nothing of the fact that secession of the north with its meagre natural resources and arid climate would make it generally unviable. This would most certainly be used by the enemies of our independence.

It is noteworthy that the Communist Party's stand on the nationalities question is winning growing understanding among the Sinhalese because while we insist on recognition of Tamil ethnic identity we are categorically opposed to the country's division, to separatist scenarios. Moreover, we are active in the north of the country, particularly in the trade unions and other public organisations.

The interests of working people receive priority also in our attitude to the destiny of the population group consisting of descendants of Indian Tamils, in other words, of the plantation workers of the central part of the island. For decades on end they have been regarded as "non-nationals", or stateless persons and denied elementary human

rights. Under the agreements signed in 1964 and 1974³ India pledged to repatriate and grant Indian citizenship to 600,000 Tamils, while Sri Lanka pledged to accord citizenship rights to the remaining 375,000. However, of the Tamils who were to be repatriated to India, 94,000 chose to stay. The problem of stateless persons proved to be fraught with complications for the relations between the two neighbouring countries. On this issue, too, we abide by our stand: those who of their freewill would like to live in India are justified in expecting the government of Sri Lanka to help them make this move, and it should show understanding for those who wish to become Sri Lankan citizens.

Early this year the Communists supported an action staged by plantation workers demanding a faster settlement of the citizenship problem. The main participants of this action, which took the form of prayers during work time, were members of the largest plantation workers' union headed by Tondoman, a member of the government. Officials of other trade unions and ordinary workers linked to the Communist Party joined in this action. Eventually, the government succumbed to this pressure: on January 31, 1986 the parliament passed an act granting Sri Lankan citizenship to the remaining 94,000 Indian Tamils. Those who voted for it included National Party, MPs (worried by the regime's growing isolation among large sections of the population) and the Communist MP. The other bourgeois parties voted with the opposition in order, as is constantly done by the UNP itself in similar circumstances, to use this as yet another opportunity to inflame chauvinistic feeling with the objective of undermining the government. In the given case the attitude of the Communists was consistently motivated by considerations of class, for we were confronted not only by an ethnic but also a workers' problem, which had to be settled in the interests of the ongoing mass struggle of the working people.

We constantly encounter the unprincipled, selfish actions by bourgeois politicians. The Communist Party and its allies have time and again called upon the government to settle the ethnic problem by negotiations, to convene, as early as possible, the promised representative conference of all parties, as well as of organisations of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka. Although round-table conferences have been held, not all the sides were represented. However, whenever there was a real possibility to move towards a settlement by means of a democratic dialogue, chauvinist quarters tried to compound the already explosive situation. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party likewise does not advance any alternative proposals to those that have been already been made. The bourgeois leaders and their organisations are prepared to plunge the country into chauvinist chaos in order to win political power for themselves, and to this end they are playing on the people's patriotic feelings, on their national pride.

The Communists and their allies are countering the unscrupulous ambitions of the Sinhalese and Tamil capitalists with a patriotic, internationalist attitude permeated with concern for the country's future, for the fraternal nationalities inhabiting it. Although most of the blame for the present situation devolves on the government, it is now not enough to identify those who bear the responsibility. Armed operations and terrorist acts must be stopped by both sides, and the conditions created for a peaceful, even if interim, settlement of the conflict.

The alliance of three parties — the Communist, the Socialist, and the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party — supported a proposal made at a recent round-table conference for setting up elective provincial councils,⁴ as this would help to establish communal peace in, above all, Tamil areas. Let me repeat: we are advocates of a *democratic* settlement of the ethnic problem even if for the time being it is not final, and we will support a decision of this kind if the parties of the Sinhalese and Tamil bourgeoisie make an effort to reach an agreement. The following steps could help create the conditions for a settlement:

— annulment of the recent discriminatory and unlawful dismissal of Tamils from some government institutions and state-run corporations;

— cessation of the unconstitutional arrests of Young Tamils in Colombo and elsewhere;

— an assurance by the government to all persons taken into custody under the anti-terrorism act (and other similar acts) that within three months they would be charged in a court of law or released;

— repeal of the sixth amendment to the Constitution, for it in no way protects the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. On the contrary, it only serves as the authorisation for punishing people for their views and inhibits the democratic and peaceful discussion of problems;

— recognition of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as an ethnic community enjoying equal rights — including the inalienable right to promote and safeguard their language, culture, and national identity — and a declaration by the government that it is prepared accordingly to transfer them to some of the functions of the central authority;

— provision of a guarantee that the land settlement programme now being put into effect by the government will not upset the ethnic composition of any part of the country.

In considering Sri Lanka's ethnic problem against the background of international politics I should like to stress that its settlement would help to improve the situation in South Asia, reinforce good-neighbourly relations and confidence among the South Asian countries, and frustrate the dangerous plans of the USA in the region. The peoples of Sri Lanka and neighbouring India and the cause of peace would benefit by a settlement of this acute internal political conflict. On the other hand, a protraction of internecine strife, in view of the existence of other inflammable problems in the vast Asian zone, would only further compound political instability.

The build-up of US imperialism's military presence in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean is a serious threat to the peoples of Asia and the whole of mankind. The USA is rapidly militarising these oceans with the collusion of its closest allies — Japan and South Korea. Plans are being laid for drawing some other countries into these military preparations. The steady flow of conventional and nuclear armaments from the USA to these regions, the growing activity of US submarines and the succession of naval exercises are making the situation here more volatile than it has ever been.

In this light one can appreciate the profound attention that was aroused in Sri Lankan society by the speech delivered recently in Vladivostok by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. The Soviet initiatives show a deep concern for the peaceful future of the huge Asia-Pacific region and clearly mark out the ways for easing tension, establishing peace and security, and building good-neighbourly relations between nations. These initiatives create a sound foundation for solving the acute problems inherited from the past. The leader of the Soviet Communists clearly indicated how to move towards an improvement of the situation in Asia and the Pacific: above all, practical steps are needed, and the Soviet Union has itself set an example, as is demonstrated, in particular, by the announcement that part of the Soviet military contingent would be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of this year. The time has come to begin considering measures that would lead to confidence-building and to the renunciation of the use of force. Once this path is taken there could be tangible progress towards the next objective, which is to convene a Helsinki-model conference of all the states gravitating to the Pacific Ocean. All who want peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region are bound to support the new Soviet initiatives.

We are greatly encouraged by the efforts of the CPSU and the Soviet government to normalise the relations between the Soviet Union and China. Moreover, the Communist Party of Sri Lanka is in favour of an improvement of relations between China and Vietnam. Normalisation of the relations between the socialist states of the region would serve the cause of freedom and social progress and contribute to stabilising peace and security and averting the nuclear threat.

¹ Descendants of mixed marriages between Arabs and local inhabitants. — *Ed.*

² One third of the Sri Lankan Tamils live amongst the Sinhalese population.

³ The first was signed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri; the second by Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indira Gandhi.

⁴ In order to get as many functions as possible transferred from the central to the provincial authorities, we called upon the government to invest the provincial or similar councils with broad rights in areas such as education, employment, land settlement, and the maintenance of law and order.

An Active Component of the Democratic Spectrum

Robert Steigerwald – GCP Board
member

A protest movement, objectively directed against contemporary capitalism and dominated by non-proletarian strata, is expanding in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The paramount objective factor behind its emergence and development is that the scientific and technological revolution is occurring in the absence of a social revolution, amid the general crisis of capitalism and with state-monopoly structures developed to the full. Hence the threat of a war in which weapons of mass destruction may be used; hence the environmental crisis, hunger in the so-called Third World, and many new problems — like those stemming from the advent of gene engineering or the revolution in information and communications. All classes and population strata have to respond to these developments.

Simultaneously, important changes are underway in the social structure. Specifically, a new middle stratum is taking shape, dependent on the sale of its labour — “new” not in the sense that it did not exist previously but in the sense of its considerable growth and much greater social significance. The shaping of this stratum is connected, in part, with the changes in the status of intellectuals. Their social composition has become broader, largely due to the successful struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie’s monopoly on education; their living and working conditions are also changing. The intelligentsia is losing its erstwhile privileges and suffering from a stricter regimentation of its work; it sees this as an infringement on the freedom of creative effort and direct self-expression, as something that calls forth democratic protest. The erosion of bourgeois democratic “values” also has an impact on intellectuals.

Those who engage in expressions of non-proletarian protest usually dissociate themselves from existing socialism. This is explained by the anti-communism that has struck deep roots in social consciousness and by the difficulties and problems the socialist countries encounter. Consequently, the movement holds a kind of middle-of-the road position on all major issues, from the type of property — neither large-scale capitalist nor socialist but medium- or small-scale private property (including cooperative property) — to the type of democracy it advocates — neither bourgeois (under state-monopoly capitalism) nor socialist but some “third” sort.

I use the concept of “non-proletarian protest” simply for want of a better term, although this is a definition by exclusion. A definition by inclusion would give us “middle strata protest”. But this, too, would be only relatively accurate because here we do not refer to the middle strata as such. Unlike the old middle strata, that is, craftsmen and some peasants, the new middle stratum owns no means of production. It lives mostly by selling its intellectual labour. Joining in its protest is a part of the working class, first and for most young workers.¹ Therefore, the term “middle strata

protest" would not be any better.

It appears that the Communists in industrialised capitalist countries will have to deal with non-proletarian-dominated movements for a long time to come because these movements have an objective basis and develop as a response of these strata to the problems of our age. For all the contradictory nature of contemporary non-proletarian protest, for all the heterogeneity of the world-views that separates us from its spokesmen, it is not identical with the petty-bourgeois protest of old which Marx and Engels justly described as partly reactionary (because it was directed generally against progress, if not always). The old petty bourgeoisie was a moribund class of feudal society and often attacked the then still revolutionary capitalism from positions oriented on the values of the past. The protest expressed by the middle strata of a new, modern type and objectively directed against capitalism in decline is a movement of the working class's allies, even though it rejects the socialist alternative. Hence the dual, Janus-faced nature of this protest: on the one hand, it is a protest against the past and on the other, against the future.

The Communists are therefore working hard to secure a political alliance with its representatives while criticising the erroneous and sometimes reactionary views of the latter.

The new middle strata entered the arena of political and ideological struggle some twenty years ago. In the Federal Republic, this struggle can be easily divided into two stages. During the first stage (late 1960s-early 1970s), it took the form of the "New Left movement", "neo-Marxism" and "student rebellion". One must note here that the character of a political movement and the ideology that influences it do not necessarily coincide. Many people take part in a movement while reflecting or sometimes knowing nothing about its ideology. Such movements can be objectively anti-capitalist and at the same time be influenced by an ideology opposed to social progress.

During the first stage, the theorists of non-proletarian protest (such as Krahle, Lefebvre, Dutschke or Rabehl) presented it as Marxist or "neo-Marxist". Although the movement itself was made up of different currents and lacked a single, integral system of views, these theorists believed that it was acting in place of the working class which had allegedly lost its revolutionary essence; this was why they rejected the traditional working class movement and existing socialism. Still, the working class movement and representatives of the non-proletarian strata often acted jointly in the Federal Republic.

The second stage is developing at a time when the threat of a war in which weapons of mass destruction may be used is becoming ever more obvious and other problems, those mentioned earlier, have deteriorated. Today, however, the theorists of non-proletarian protest no longer pose as "Marxists" or "neo-Marxists" or lay claim to revolutionary action. They have adopted a different approach rooted in the distinctive ideology of the middle strata.

This ideology hinges on the assertion that there is a contradiction between nature and civilisation (or culture). According to the theorists of non-proletarian protest, this contradiction stems from the fact that civilisation, or culture, is developing at a rate too fast for nature to cope with. The conclusion is that in the final analysis, this contradiction is rooted in a rationalistic philosophy which prompts man to treat the world around him as an object of exploitation. And so, it is claimed, this approach must be abandoned, and one should either check the advance of civilisation in an effort to secure "zero growth", or completely give up the level of progress that has been attained. Brought to its logical conclusion, this view means that people are to cut their needs and that science, technology and large-scale production must develop no longer.

Such is the response of the middle strata ideologists to the dangers born of capitalist progress. Guided by Marxism, the working class movement has long spotted these dangers but connected them immediately with the operation of the capitalist system; it calls for this system to be jettisoned in favour of a different, socialist and communist

type of social development. Therefore, the demand is for a social shift that differs radically from the one advocated by the new middle strata. Their rejection of the need to discard the capitalist system and follow the path to socialism and communism is, in the final analysis, a manifestation of bourgeois ideology (although we define the protest itself as anti-capitalist).

The strategy of the movement under discussion is largely reformist. The movement is filling the vacuum which appeared between the Communists and the Social Democrats when the latter underwent the transformation from a traditional social reformist party into a reformist party of the period of state-monopoly capitalism.

This movement, politically organised as the Green Party in the Federal Republic, does not confine itself to a single demand but is active on a broad range of issues — from economic problems to questions of peace and disarmament. The concepts it advances stipulate changes in the material means of managing the environment, in the attitude to the world around us and in the organisational forms of our life and work. As I mentioned earlier, the movement sets itself the task of defending small- and medium-scale property and, in certain cases, advocates its cooperative form. Viewed from the standpoint of historical materialism and Marxist political economy, all this can be described as an intention to transform the means of labour, the tools of production and the modes of thinking (the irrational replacing the rational), as an offensive against large-scale property.

An analysis of the movement's platform leads one to the following conclusions.

First, the capitalist — or, as the Greens would have it, alienated — attitude of society to nature (which is a necessary concomitant of private property in the means of production, property that generates pursuit of profit and, consequently, the plunder of natural and manpower resources) is separated from capitalism and presented as "human nature"; in other words, capitalism is exonerated.

Second, the idealistic idea that thinking plays the decisive role is combined with the arbitrary claim that one mode of thinking can be easily replaced by another.

Third, decisive priority is accorded to the means of labour in society; consequently, the question of property is dismissed and man as the maker of history, the subject of production and the creator of the means of labour, is relegated to the background. This position can be defined as theoretical anti-humanism.

Clearly, the differences between the Marxist working class movement and the spokesmen of non-proletarian protest affect the basic issues of social development. This is also true of our differences with the Greens (more about this later) because they represent a distinctive form of the social protest expressed by the middle strata.²

In the Federal Republic of today, the political aspect of this protest is very important. In this connection, let us examine the salient characteristics of the Green Party which, owing its emergence to an upsurge of extraparliamentary mass struggle, has participated successfully in parliamentary elections and become a significant force in the country's internal politics.

In addition to the factors already listed, there were others which helped this party to gain ground:

- the fact that the Reagan administration abandoned the policy of detente;
- the consequent deployment of new US medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe;
- the acceptance of this NATO decision by the then government of the FRG with the Social Democrats at the helm;
- the series of unpopular moves taken by that government (such as the construction of a fast nuclear reactor at Niederrhein or the clearing of a large forest area to enlarge a major airport convertible to military uses); this facilitated the unification of movements which were fighting to defend peace and protect the environment.

Another factor was that the Greens, who had no connections with existing socialism, were a poor target for anti-communist demagoguery, and the advocates of the "two

superpowers" concept could vote for them in the elections. Besides, many voters hoped that the Greens would surpass the five-per cent limit and that the ballots cast in their favour would not be lost. In turn, the Greens' success in the parliamentary elections won them the support of a part of the working class, particularly young workers.

There are several different currents within the Green Party, but all of them share a common ideological and political denominator. Their policy statements display a broad consensus on the basis of a common approach to environmental problems. The Greens' philosophy can in many aspects be defined as ecological reformism.

They downgrade the significance of production relations and describe society as "industrial" or "growth-oriented". Criticism is levelled above all at the material aspects of production. Socialism is equated with capitalism along the lines of the "convergence" theory; both are seen as equally flawed industrial systems (alienation, red tape, domination by an elite, and worship of economic growth and labour productivity). As an alternative, the Greens suggest a society of self-governed and self-sufficient economic and administrative units oriented on decentralised small-scale production. The question of political power remains largely ignored.

Most of the Greens keep aloof from the working class, asserting that it is unable to bring about a revolutionary transformation of society. Marxism is dismissed as a nineteenth-century theory; political economy is replaced with ecology. Marxists and those who worship economic development are equally presented as prisoners of an obsession with economic growth and consumption.

The differences that exist between various trends within the Green Party are chiefly over its future political orientation and over individual ideological guidelines. The attitude to the Social Democrats is an issue that gives rise to particularly heated debate. This is a topical issue for the party because recently, the Greens have largely abandoned the extraparliamentary course of action and are operating almost exclusively within the parliamentary framework. This means that they are faced with the need for parliamentary alliances.

Today, the influence of the "ecological realists" is growing among the Greens. This current formed mainly around two objectives — that of securing tangible reforms and that of establishing a coalition with the Social Democrats. The spokesmen of this current have adopted a realistic approach to the policy of detente and to a number of social problems; nevertheless, they entertain illusions about the character of the Social Democratic Party. The "ecorealists" are particularly active in Hessen, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony; their ranks include former Maoists with their strong anti-communist attitudes.

Another current — the "ecoliberals" — should be described as conservative. It uses pseudo-radical environmental precepts to justify its right-wing positions — for example, its acceptance of cutbacks in the social gains of the working people. The "ecoliberals" are concentrated primarily in West Berlin and Baden-Württemberg and share the "ecorealist" views about a coalition with the Social Democrats.

The "ecosocialists" make up the left wing of the party. They usually voice harsh criticism of capitalism and imperialism and of the "superpowers" theory as applied to issues of disarmament and of Third World countries. In their analysis of contemporary society, they attach much greater significance to production relations than do other groups of Greens. This current does not see today's Social Democrats as possible allies with whom it would be worth to cooperate in order to implement the Greens' policy. The "ecosocialists" expose the inconsistent policies the Social Democrats pursue to consolidate the position of their party. The current is particularly active in Hamburg, North Rhine-Westphalia and West Berlin.

The "ecofundamentalists" were, until recently, especially strong among the Greens. In their Manifesto, they denounce "industrial society" from which the individual must "withdraw", and they equate socialism with capitalism. Their position vis-a-vis the Social Democrats is as follows: "We resolutely reject the existing industrial system;

therefore we reject any cooperation with it or collaboration with the political forces that support it." The "ecofundamentalists" are strongest in Hessen, although their influence has recently been on the wane there.

Relations between the Social Democrats and the Greens are aggravated by a number of factors. The Greens formed their party when a federal government led by the Social Democrats was in power, and the new party criticised this government's policies severely. During the formative stage, the Greens were active in the peace movement which was firmly opposed to NATO's "two-track" decision. The campaign the then leaders of the Social Democrats launched against the peace forces directly affected the Greens too. Since then, there has remained a strong feeling of bitterness towards the Social Democrats among the Greens.

Besides, the two parties are competing openly for supporters. Both address their appeals to young people, including young members of the middle strata who depend on the sale of their labour. This competition is also inevitable because in the final analysis, both parties hold reformist views, do not question private property in the means of production, do not raise the issue of the character of government and, in class terms, are unwilling to really orient themselves on industrial workers.

However, aside from the differences and the disagreement it produces, this similarity also opens opportunities for cooperation. It is no accident that the "ecorealists" are articulate advocates of joint action with the Social Democrats up to and including the formation of a coalition government. And presently, this current is only a little less influential within the party than the "ecosocialists" and the "ecofundamentalists" taken together.

The German Communist Party proceeds in its policy from the view that the Greens, are, above all, a new radical democratic force. They have succeeded in winning important positions in the Bundestag and the Landtags, thus breaching the monopoly the leading parties used to hold in these representative bodies for decades. Broad participation in the struggle for peace, environmental protection and democratic rights, as well as an active stand on issues of economic and social policy have brought the Greens closer to the trade union and political working class movement.

"We support the Greens in the struggle for peace and disarmament, for the protection of the environment and for the defence of democratic and social rights," the Eighth Congress of the GCP, held in May 1986, stated in its Theses. "At the same time we criticise their intention to dissociate themselves from extraparliamentary movements, and we oppose the Greens' tendency to treat as absolutes the humanitarian aspects in those problems of peace and the environment which have their class roots in the capitalist system with its pursuit of profit and in imperialist expansionism; we oppose their tendency to equate socialism with imperialism and scientific and technological progress, with its uses under capitalism."³

The Greens' policy is very important in the light of the struggle against the current right-wing coalition government in Bonn. The Communists maintain that its replacement by a more progressive government is impossible without at least partial cooperation between the Greens and the Social Democrats. We therefore criticise the leading forces of both parties when they categorically reject any form of cooperation.

The Theses of the Eighth Congress of the GCP also stress that the Greens command a potential which is essential for success in the struggle for a transition to democratic and social progress, for anti-monopoly transformations. Therefore, our advocacy of joint action by the working class movement and the Greens is an integral part of our party's policy of alliances. The GCP has already tried to identify forms of joint action with them in the forthcoming 1987 elections to the Bundestag. However, some Greens were not prepared for this because of their parochial, self-serving attitudes and others, because of their anti-communist prejudice.

At the same time, we are striving for an alliance with an alternative movement broader than the Green Party. The Communists have scored frequent successes in

specific extraparlimentary actions. Besides, the GCP does not lose sight of the fact that its policy is aimed primarily at the left spectrum of industrial and office workers who are oriented on the Social Democrats. A dialectical interconnection exists between more concerted joint action by the Communists and the Social Democrats and their vigorous participation in the peace struggle on the one hand and, on the other, the establishment of an alliance between the working class and the new middle strata.

¹ For details, see Robert Steigerwald, "Changes in the Wage-Labour System", *WMR*, No. 9, 1985, p. 79.

² The concept of "non-proletarian protest" as used in this article is close to the concept of "non-proletarian socialism" in Third World countries. There is a certain social kinship and ideological similarity between these two phenomena. One should remember, however, that, due to economic, social and political circumstances, the currents of "non-proletarian socialism" are either close to revolutionary positions or display a revolutionary character, while kindred movements in industrialised capitalist countries are reformist.

³ *Protokoll des 8. Parteitags der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei*, Neuss, 1986, p. 594.

When Injustice Becomes the Rule

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Whatever the form of the class struggle in capitalist countries, regardless of whether it is out of sight or erupts into large-scale social conflicts, the Communists regard it as the outcome of a clash of objectively existing social interests, a product of social inequality. This inequality is bred by the dissimilar status of classes in the society, their relation to the means of production and ownership, and their disparate share of social wealth.

The position held by the exploiting classes of any individual capitalist country is presently ensured by the economic and political predominance of world financial capital, personified, among others, by the transnational corporations. This is what makes the widening social inequality an international phenomenon: it is seen in the low development level of a number of countries and even entire regions, then growing exploitation of the working class on a national and an international scale, and the activation of various forms of discrimination.

Capitalism's present-day development, which was marked by severe crises in 1974-1975 and 1980-1983, has led to a significant aggravation of its contradictions, to a further growth of inequality. Periods of crisis are characterised by coercive methods of intensifying the exploitation of the working people. The effects of this are to be seen everywhere, including where the contrast between poverty and wealth had not earlier acquired particularly ugly forms. Even if capitalism portrays itself as "civilised", it remains aggressive and seeks omnipotence through economic, political and military power.

The permanent basis of the growing inequality lies in "normal" exploitation, in the appropriation and redistribution of social wealth by the ruling capitalist class. In the period from 1964 to 1983 the growth rate of the incomes of non-wage earners in Austria was, according to official statistics, on the average 50 per cent higher than that of wage earners. However, even this disparity does not mirror the ongoing polarisation. It must be borne in mind that small-commodity producers are classed with billionaires as "non-wage earners". The "upper ten per cent" get half of the incomes of this category of tax-payers. Obviously, in capitalist society a considerable proportion of small and medium proprietors experience the brutal effects of the mounting social inequality in many instances almost to the same extent as the working

population.

Exploitation-based appropriation of social wealth leads to glaring disparities in the personal incomes of Austrians. Since 1980 there has been a diminution of the share of this wealth allotted to wage earners. The net mean real income in Austria has dropped to the 1975 level. The other side of this process is the growth of the share going to financial and big capital, which has in fact undividedly appropriated all the fruits of the growth of labour productivity in the past ten years. According to the most conservative estimates, the proportion of all the registered profits going to the banks rose from 37.5 to 40.2 per cent. If we take only their revenue from interest on loans, we shall find that in this period it increased fivefold. The officially declared incomes of the "top ten thousand" tax-payers indicate that these were, on average, 20 times larger than the incomes of industrial workers.

The steadily widening social inequality, including the growing imbalance in the distribution of social wealth, springs from the logic of the way capitalist society functions. Wages are only enough for the renewal of the working person's strength and for the upkeep of his family, satisfying only the most elementary social and cultural requirements. As a rule, the same may be said in this case of individual savings. On the other hand, the propertied classes want not merely to live in luxury but also to constantly increase their wealth, to reinforce their economic and political predominance. And in keeping with the aforementioned logic the revenues of finance capital, which is the actual focus of power in the present-day state-monopoly system, show the fastest growth.

As in other capitalist countries, the concentration of large incomes in Austria reflects the process of the concentration of property. Statistics reveal the fact that 52 per cent of the taxable property is in the hands of 1,277 persons, each of whom has a fortune exceeding 30 million schillings.

This mention of *tax* statistics is not fortuitous. A distinction of Austria is that the state does not register the biggest incomes and fortunes. And this in a country with an administrative experience covering many centuries, a country where the bureaucracy, it would seem, is able to put together information even about trifles. If such statistics had been kept they would have laid bare much sharper social contrasts. Large capital in cash is nothing less than "undeclared money" systematically kept immune to taxation. Studies made by the Austrian Economic Research Institute show that between 1970 and 1980 the private accumulations in cash and shares added up to 770 billion schillings. But tax statistics under the relevant head record only 65 billion schillings that have been "declared".

Under the state-monopoly system the widening social inequality is fostered to a large extent by tax legislation. National wealth is systematically redistributed in favour of the "upper" classes. As much as 80 per cent of the tax revenues come from the rank-and-file tax-payers. This percentage is growing steadily. Moreover, the state budget is becoming the most lucrative source of the revenues of finance capital, which pockets one-fifth of the tax revenues in the shape of interest on loans.

In capitalist countries the rank-and-file tax payer usually pays his taxes when he receives his wages or purchases consumer goods. The case is different with wealthy persons and big property owners. They fill in their tax declarations themselves, with the help of lawyers. In Austria it was found that over a period of several years a slippery tax evader had built up a "debt" of some half a billion schillings to the state.

In some capitalist countries this "normal" process of widening social inequality, based on intensifying exploitation, was not distinctly discerned during the years of a relatively high economic growth rate (the 1960s to the mid-1970s). It developed in a situation marked by a rising living standard, steady employment, and the enlistment of women into production. It was easy for the reformists to mislead people by citing absolute statistics and making no mention of the share of public wealth going to the ruling monopoly groups. As the decades succeeded one another the policy and

ideology of "social partnership" gradually eroded the class consciousness of the working people, who were prevented from working out their independent understanding of their own interests.

However, much was changed by the two latest world economic crises. The paring down of the working people's social gains and the fall in real wages are widening the gulf between monopoly capital and all other classes and strata. Unemployment, the principal vice of capitalism, has reappeared as a mass phenomenon even where formerly it seemed that it had been almost entirely eradicated or had at least shed its worst and most ugly forms. Exploitation brings poverty not only to contingents of the working class employed in traditional industries and most sensitive to the effects of crises but also to new categories of working people, notably young people, who find that they are the first victims of unemployment. A new poverty is spreading swiftly in the "social welfare state".

While preserving the old class privileges capitalism creates new ones. A striking example is the realisation of the right to education. Of course, in the past few decades the number of young people with access to institutions of higher learning has increased in Austria; this is dictated by the higher skill standards required at the present stage of the development of society and its productive forces. However, it is symptomatic that there has been almost no rise of the number of students from working class families. In Austria, according to official figures, their proportion has hardly exceeded 13 per cent of the total. Consequently, possession of a university degree remains the prerogative of people on the highest rungs of the social ladder. Bourgeois parties are not hiding the fact that they want this situation to persist. They subsidise costly private educational institutions (some of which are run by the Church), and obstruct the establishment of uniform compulsory schools on the pretext of maintaining "pluralism" and "diversity".

Class privileges unquestionably include those enjoyed by politicians. Holding top posts in the government they have, by virtue of belonging to the ruling circles, the same incomes and living standards as the executives of monopoly corporations. Moreover, both the former and the latter speak openly of the mutual changeability of their functions. In Austria, cabinet ministers receive huge salaries, while four years' service in this job (ten years for members of parliament) gives the right to an impressively large pension. For statesmen there are no restrictions envisaging a decrease or discontinuation of these pensions in case the recipient has additional sources of income. Double and even treble salaries from state funds are not rare. Those who receive them are also entitled to additional allowances and grants when they retire.

The maximum pensions of cabinet ministers are almost 15 times larger than the old-age pensions of factory and office workers. While persons covered by the general social insurance scheme have lately been denied some state allowances granted by the place of work, the additional payments recorded in contracts with executives of capitalist firms and the institutionalised pensions for top level politicians have been left inviolate.

The identity of benefits received by executives of capitalist enterprises and statesmen is one of the indications of the link between politics and business. This link is the basis for the preservation of the capitalist system and allows "integrating" the holders of elective posts with the state-monopoly system. Without any qualms, the political circles in power extend their own privileges while forcing the working people to tighten their belts. An example of this was given by Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who raised the pay of senior bureaucrats and cancelled the guaranteed minimum wage for young working people. The Social Democrats heading the Vienna Municipal Council have likewise increased their own pay by several thousand schillings and, at the same time, cut back the city budget's allocations for social aid to the most needy citizens.

The apologists of the capitalist system have to muster the entire potential of their ideological arsenal to justify the widening social inequality. Extreme right-wing leaders

cynically say that this inequality is indispensable for the normal functioning of bourgeois society. Typical spokesmen of this school of thought are the economists and ideologists grouped around the Reagan administration. At the same time, in West European capitalist states the bourgeois parties of the social Christian, conservative, and liberal type pose as proponents of social justice, as being opposed to extremist violations of this justice. But they urge resignation to social contradictions, their two main arguments being: first, that property is the sole basis of the freedom of each individual and, second, that the labour of each person must be rewarded with the commensurate remuneration. This is exemplified by the recently adopted programmes of two of Austria's bourgeois parties.

In the *Manifesto of the Future*, the Austrian People's Party states: "An increase of property must lead to more liberty and also greater social mobility, . . . possession of property is a tested way of turning the individual into a strong personality and of reducing the power of the apparatus over the individual. . . . In a market society property performs three functions. It sustains the society's fundamental principles, and ensures social equilibrium and the distribution of responsibilities. The person who uses money to create jobs and public wealth should have the commensurate reward."¹

The new programme of the Liberal Party of Austria says: "Recognition of private property is the basic condition for any free society. We want to see as much of all sorts of property as possible, notably in the means of production, in private hands and broadly deconcentrated. . . . for it reinforces personal independence, fortifying the freedom of each person."²

Of course, the authors of documents of this kind had to reckon with the unceasing concentration of capitalist property, means of production, land, real estate, and finances in the hands of a few. Hence the demand for a larger "deconcentration" of property, the issue of "people's shares", the creation of opportunities for accumulation of property by wage earners, and so forth. Here the objective is to back up the official statements about efforts being made to ensure the welfare of all members of society. The bracketing of the concepts of "property" and "freedom" is a fraudulent public relations exercise for in this case the property acquired as a result of personal labour is equated to property acquired through the exploitation of the labour of others.

What is there in common between the owner of a car and the owner of an automobile factory, the possessor of an insurance policy and the head of an insurance concern, the owner of a small bank account and a banker? And what is there in common between expending one's own labour and investing money in a capitalist venture or an international financial operation? Yet both are depicted as meriting "remuneration for a large labour contribution". Capitalist reality gives the lie, over and over again daily, that by conscientiously working an exploited person can achieve a fundamentally new status. This reality cannot be refuted by the destiny of those few who managed to become "owners" and sustain an illusory independence.

Naturally, the concept of "labour contribution" is by no means alien to the working class movement. However, socialism is the only social system that creates the foundation for adequate remunerating this labour. The argument justifying social inequality under capitalism with references to the need for a balance between invested labour and remuneration is pure demagoguery. Even where it is not the case of incomes based on the appropriation of surplus value, the glaring distinctions in the levels of earnings are usually due to the privileged status of some people and the discrimination against others.

The concept of "social mobility" is closely linked to the traditional ideological postulates of bourgeois parties. It alleges that there are "equal opportunities" and that this holds out the possibility of becoming a member of the propertied classes. However, despite all allegations of this sort, development proceeds in the opposite direction: there is a constant process of "social degredation", in other words, a transition from the propertied classes to the dispossessed strata; the working class and

other working strata are being constantly augmented.

Lately, among the Social Democrats and in trade union and Christian circles there has been mounting criticism of the prospects before capitalism, reflecting public awareness of the crisis of this society. The gulf between those involved in the process of social production and those denied the opportunity of taking part in this process is one of the most striking manifestations of social inequality. There is the threat that two-thirds of society will consist of "possessors of jobs" and one-third of jobless. Fearing this prospect, some persons are saying that the receipt of means of subsistence should not be made strictly dependent on the labour contributions, that all citizens should receive, regardless of whether they work or not, the same basic income, a so-called basic wage.

But however serious and justified the criticism is of the glaring contradictory social consequences of the capitalist use of scientific and technological achievements, the introduction of a "basic wage" is certainly not the way to put an end to the existing inequality. On the contrary, although this idea has some positive elements it is, objectively speaking, aimed at perpetuating class distinctions and the social injustice stemming from these distinctions. The working class is fighting not to stabilise a society of jobless but to ensure the implementation of the right to work for everybody and to shorten working time for everybody so that the development of each would be the condition of the free development of all. Underlying the socialist concept of social equality, which conforms to the interests of the working person, is that person's participation in society's life and in the administration of its affairs. Workers are the main driving force fighting against class privileges, capitalist exploitation, and the social inequality generated by it.

In bourgeois society actions against social inequality are a major means of countering capitalist exploitation. This concerns all levels and forms of trade union, political, and ideological activity. The Austrian Communists are currently focusing their efforts chiefly on fighting the interests of big capital in taxation and incomes policy and urging an end to the privileges of capitalist executives and of the powers that be.

In particular, they are demanding the implementation of the principle of equal remuneration for equal work, the introduction of hard and fast indexes of compensation for the soaring prices, and a rise of the incomes of the working people in keeping with the growth of labour productivity. The Communist Party considers that there should be a tax reform aimed against the possessors of large fortunes and representatives of finance capital, a reform that would, in particular, annul the secrecy in which their bank accounts are held. In this struggle the Communists are guided by their anti-monopoly programme, which shows the actual causes of social inequality in capitalist society.

¹ *Das Zukunftsmanifest der ÖVP*, Vienna, 1985, p.23.

² *Programm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs*, Vienna, 1985, p.23.

What the Socialist International's Lima Congress Showed

Semou Pathe Gueye – Political Bureau member, CC Secretary, Senegal Party of Independence and Labour

A span of several months now separates us from last June's 17th Congress of the Socialist International in Lima, capital of Peru. Nonetheless, it would be useful and

even essential to take another look at it. There are several reasons for this, and I would like to begin by listing these reasons.

The attention that the Senegalese Communists give to everything related to the international social democratic movement is motivated, above all, by national considerations. The party now in power in Senegal calls itself "Socialist", parades "democratic" persuasions, is active in the Socialist International, and tries to put its strategy into effect in Africa. Although the ruling party's official policy is not determined by the Socialist International's resolutions and attitudes, it has, at least on some issues, to take this international organisation's guidelines into account. That explains why the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour devotes a certain measure of attention to them, taking into account the influence, even if it is limited, of these guidelines on our national life.

Indeed, we believe that the activities of the Socialist International are followed with quick interest also in other quarters. The Socialist International is represented in practically all continents and unites many parties of diverse status.¹ Some hold the reins of power, while others are in some instances the most influential opposition force in their countries. Many millions of people are members of these parties and many more vote for them at elections. Lastly, in some countries the likelihood of a left alternative to reactionary governments depends largely on how correctly the question of the relations between the Communist and Socialist or Social Democratic parties is resolved. In other words, the Socialist International carries considerable weight and is a real force in international political life and the Communists cannot be indifferent to its resolutions, activities, and attitudes. It would therefore be not amiss to take a close look at how the congress in Lima approached vital issues of our epoch and attempted to respond to them.

Humanity is today confronted with many problems and its future, perhaps even its existence, depends on how they are resolved. These are, in the first place: delivering the peoples from the threat of nuclear catastrophe; preventing militarisation of outer space; reorienting the material resources, the scientific and technological potentialities, and the natural wealth presently being wasted on the arms race towards the elimination of unemployment, poverty, hunger, and threat to the environment; establishing a new and just international economic order; and uprooting anachronisms such as colonialism, neocolonialism, racism and apartheid.

Unquestionably, all these problems had to be dealt with in the debate at the Lima Congress and in the resolutions adopted. I had the opportunity to observe the proceedings at this congress² and I would identify some distinctive features that allow piecing together an idea of the Socialist International's strategy for the next few years.

First, a responsible, positive and constructive approach was to be observed towards the most burning issues of our time. This approach was based on a sober, realistic appraisal of the modern world, on a clear awareness of the magnitude of the dangers threatening humanity, and a fairly explicitly expressed desire to move from words to concrete action in order to avert these dangers.

Second, problems were considered in their objective inter-relation. The mainspring of the universal need for fighting for peace and disarmament is that if this struggle achieves its aims it will open up better prospects for resolving other problems, such as fostering socio-economic progress and ensuring genuine national independence and democracy, problems that preoccupy the minds of the peoples of developing countries.

Third, a keynote of the documents adopted by the congress is that there is an imperative need to achieve unity of action on the part of all the forces seeking to make a solid contribution to the struggle for peace and disarmament.

Fourth, let us note that the Socialist International is entering a phase of ideological reappraisal in order to be able to act more effectively and, on the political level, to take into account the effects of the growth of its influence in the Third World.

Let us consider this point. Evidently, there are two basic motivations for the

reappraisal. One is the aspiration to renew the political offensive in the face of the neoconservative tide that in Western Europe has driven out quite a few Socialist and Social Democratic governments. The other is to isolate communist parties socially and politically in order to reduce them to the role of a springboard to power for the Social Democrats in some countries or even to edge them away gradually from the arena of social struggles. The latter aspect, in my view, induces the Communists to take a determined stand against this course to marginalise them. Of course, this should under no circumstances place in doubt the need for unity of action in areas where such unity is possible, especially in the principal area, namely, the defence of peace.

The French author Antoine de Saint Exupery noted: "To be a human being means to be responsible." In the nuclear age the significance of the concept of responsibility has grown immeasurably. Responsible behaviour has today become vital for all states, peoples, and organisations. Students of antiquity know what Rome had to pay for the megalomania of an emperor who believed he could play with fire with impunity. While such irresponsibility was dangerous in that distant age, it can much less be permitted today when gigantic arsenals of self-destruction are endlessly increasing the gravity of its consequences.

For that reason our epoch, more than any other, demands that political leaders show, above all, a sense of responsibility, in other words, *a clear understanding that the whole of humankind has a common destiny*. In the face of the threat of nuclear catastrophe, which would be irreparable, all are in one and the same boat. Either *we save ourselves together* by combining our efforts to prevent the global threat, or *we shall perish together*, having failed to realise opportunely the need for such unity. This understanding of the responsibility of the moment permeates, I believe, the following words of *The Manifesto of Lima*: "The Socialist International calls upon all forces, people from all walks of life to join in urgent action for peace and disarmament and for the utilisation of resources now spent on arms for world-wide economic and social development."³

Moreover, a sense of responsibility implies an impartial study of problems despite the West's continuing efforts to confuse them by diplomatic and propaganda subterfuges. Hence, one hardly needs to comment on Willy Brandt's words spoken at the congress that "all serious proposals must be taken seriously . . . even if they happen to originate in Moscow". These words of the Chairman of the Socialist International are unquestionably an acknowledgement of the efforts being made by the Soviet Union to find for humanity a way out of the nuclear deadlock. In the same statement one sees a diplomatically couched exposure of the posture maintained by the Reagan administration, which, while sitting on a huge nuclear "powder-keg", is not ceasing to play with matches like an unmindful child. Indeed, the Socialist International explicitly stated that the USA "should reciprocate the Soviet moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests".

We see this call, addressed specifically to Washington, as being more than justified. Everybody knows that on August 6, 1985 the Soviet Union declared a moratorium on its nuclear tests, a moratorium that it subsequently extended four times — the latest to January 1, 1987. In the meantime, the USA responded to the Soviet initiative with some 20 nuclear explosions. Two such diametrically different approaches allow each person to draw obvious conclusions and have a clearer perception of who in fact stands for peace and respects the peaceful aspirations of nations and who brushes these aspirations aside. The special interest in drawing a comparison between these antithetical attitudes is that it cuts the ground from under the rope-walking theory of the "equal responsibility of the great powers" for the arms race. Credit must be given to the Socialist International for the fact that having noted the constructive initiatives of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community in questions related to peace and disarmament it has recognised that now the ball is in the court of the other side.

As I have already pointed out, the responsible and constructive approach taken by

the congress to international problems is based on the entirely justified statement of the fact that in a nuclear war and in the arms race there will be no winners, there will only be losers. "As individuals and nations," it was declared in Lima, "we are being deprived of our right to life and survival; our right to fully develop our societies; and our right to live in peace, freedom, and solidarity." What can be done to remedy this situation?

As a start the Socialist International rejects, quite rightly, the idea that innovations in weapons technology and defence systems effectively resolve the problem of nuclear safety: "Technology cannot liberate mankind from the nuclear threat." Hence the conclusion: "It is not the quality of weapons but the quality of politics which must be improved." An essential element of this approach lies in a critical reassessment of the "national security" concept in the shape that it is often seen, namely, from a prejudiced and self-serving viewpoint.

"True security", *The Manifesto of Lima* says, "is common security. It can only be built in partnership, taking into account the security requirements of all countries and aspirations of all peoples." In accordance with this collective security concept, which, incidentally, underlies many of the proposals of the socialist countries, the Socialist International points out the "fallacy of security through arms build-ups and innovations in arms technology". The congress called for a broader "renovation of foreign and security policy" saying that "security should rely more and more on political and economic cooperation, mutual trust and openness, in short, an new *detente*".

Rejecting the trend towards confrontation across the board, the congress called for the settlement of the problem "by patient and determined negotiations aimed at significant measures of arms control and disarmament". To secure this reorientation of the prevailing international situation the Socialist International appeals to the goodwill of states, notably of the major military powers, urging them "to prove that they are not just trying to cover militarisation by speaking about arms control and deferring tangible results, which must include effective verification arrangements".

These words need to be specified. A person familiar with the recent Soviet statements and concrete proposals on the question of armaments verification is bound to assess a statement of this nature as a slightly veiled criticism of some Western countries, of the USA in the first place. With their demagogic pacifist rhetoric, unfounded charges about the USSR violating existing agreements, and dodges on the verification question they are in fact trying to provide a screen for their policy of unbridled militarisation. This duplicity, when one thing is vocally proclaimed and cynically the very opposite is done, was in fact exposed by the Social Democrats in Lima.

The congress called for concerted efforts not only by the great powers but also by all other states, big and small, that have something to say on problems of peace and disarmament and can advance realistic initiatives. Lastly, the Socialist International appealed to the peoples and diverse organisations to unite in the struggle for peace and disarmament and to pressure their respective governments into adopting a positive attitude on these issues.

In a more detailed examination of the various specific proposals and recommendations made by the Socialist International on the basis of its positions of principle, one can, of course, find implications we cannot accept. But, I would say, the Socialist International's general line extends the possibilities of the Communists for common action in the interests of peace and disarmament with those who subscribe to the principal guidelines laid down by the Lima Congress.

There is today no Communist Party that has not put the question of preserving world peace in the focus of its concerns, political programme, and even work among the people. It would be hard to assume that on account of a sectarian attitude or of ideological divergences Communists anywhere have rejected joint actions with this or

that component of the peace movement. Lastly, we know of no fraternal party that does not share the view that in the modern epoch differences between countries must be settled by political means accommodating respect for the independence, security, and sovereignty of peoples rather than by dictation, intervention, or state terrorism.

The Communists staunchly abide by the principles that characterise them as a force that most consistently champions world peace and social progress. They are always open to discussion and dialogue in order to develop the optimal means for mobilising the broadest sections of the people. Consequently, it is our view that if the Socialist International's call for unity of action encounters difficulties, these will not be difficulties created by the communist movement.

The Socialists and Social Democrats have the support of the Communists wherever they are seriously determined to move from words to deeds and pursue their own policy as defined in their positive statements. Further, it must be acknowledged that while the communist movement has made considerable efforts to weed out manifestations of sectarianism in its ranks relative to the Social Democrats, among the latter anti-communist prejudices are still strongly entrenched.

In this context it is striking that *not a single* Communist Party, not even from any socialist country, was invited to the Lima Congress, in spite of the fact that in the communist movement the practice of late has been to invite representatives of socialist and social democratic parties to congresses and conferences. Further, it is doubtful that the presence at the congress of apparitions disguised as "parties in exile" from East European countries had in any way fostered the promotion of the mutual confidence propounded by the Socialist International.

It would be appropriate also to note that many socialist and social democratic parties adhere to positive positions in the period of struggle for power, but pursue an entirely different course once they are in power. The recent evolution of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party on the question of NATO membership is only one more case in point. Unfortunately, Spain is by no means an exception.

While the Communists do not write off positive statements, they set concrete actions above them. But even if leaders of socialist or social democratic parties refuse to move to such actions, their positive statements are of certain interest. They can serve the Communists as *new terms of reference* for a dialogue with sections of the people influenced by the Socialists and Social Democrats, for a gradual clearing of the way to unity of action by all the peace forces at grassroots level. That is why we see as generally positive the Socialist International's stand on questions of peace and disarmament. We feel that to a large extent it can help to mobilise the people for the defence of peace, for the struggle for disarmament and the planet's definitive deliverance from the spectre of nuclear danger.

At the Lima Congress the delegation of the "Socialist" Party of Senegal attracted attention by taking a stand that conflicted with the attitude of others. This surprised many foreign observers. The delegation urged converting the whole of Africa into a nuclear-free zone on the basis of an international agreement that would be recognised, complied with, and guaranteed by the great powers; it pleaded for an unconditional ban on nuclear tests in our continent; it called upon socialist and social democratic parties to direct the efforts of the public influenced by them against the export of armaments to Third World countries; it suggested imposing a tax on the sale of armaments and on military budgets (beginning at some fixed level) and using the resultant revenue for socio-economic and cultural programmes; lastly, it supported the suggestion that a conference be convened on questions of development and disarmament. It went so far as to declare that Senegal, a member of the Socialist International Disarmament Advisory Council, would be prepared to facilitate the implementation of its recommendations.

It is obvious to our party that the Senegalese delegation's statement is demagoguery of the first water. One need not go far for evidence. The "Socialist" Party has done

nothing so far to inform national public opinion about the recommendations made at Lima, recommendations that quite evidently serve the Senegalese government's desire to maintain a good image in the eyes of world public opinion while pursuing a ruthless anti-national and anti-people policy. Although our party is aware of all this, it takes note of the statements made by the Senegalese "Socialists". We see our duty in doing our utmost to mobilise public opinion in our country to compel the demagogues to live up to their promises.

Although the questions of peace and disarmament clearly predominated at the Lima Congress, they were not the only theme attracting the attention of the Socialist International. This was the first time it held its congress in Latin America, which is experiencing economic, political, and social difficulties. This was reflected in the proceedings. The recent numerical growth of the Socialist International's membership with the admission of parties from developing nations likewise influenced the approach that was adopted at the congress to present-day international economic relations, some regional conflicts, and the problems of freedom and democracy.

It would be impossible, of course, to consider in any detail all the policy planks formulated by the Socialist International. I shall therefore confine myself to mentioning what in my view are the more significant trends.

At the congress Third World problems were examined in the context of the general crisis of the system of international economic relations. This crisis, in the opinion of the Socialist International, has its origin in the breakdown of the Bretton Woods financial system in 1971-1973. This breakdown coincided with the end of the US economy's total hegemony in the postwar world and with the drastic diminution of the funds allocated by OECD⁴ states for development assistance, and the resultant growth of the role of private cash flows. The oil boom accelerated this trend, for it permitted Western bankers to make massive investments and pocket colossal profits. The profits recycled in the shape of loans to Third World nations helped the latter to survive and the Western economies to avert a depression.

In the short run these steps yielded some results and demonstrated, it is asserted in *The Manifesto of Lima*, that "a massive transfer of funds from North to South is a critical part of the common solution to the world economic crisis". However, in the form it was conceived in the 1970s the strategy of addressing the Third World's difficulties with loans laid the foundation for the debt crisis of the 1980s. This took place "primarily because international cash flows between North and South had become hostage to private banking priorities". The monetarist policy of the USA led not only to the worst recession that started in about 1975 but to a rise of interest rates. It thereby set off a reverse flow of funds from the South to the North.

The increase in arms sales to developing nations and the inefficient management of capital in some of these nations accentuated this trend. Conducted in this context, the IMF's "strength" and "austerity" policy dramatically exacerbated the condition of many nations along the capitalist periphery: "the masses," it is stated in *The Manifesto of Lima*, "had to pay with their living standards for debts which had often been undertaken by anti-democratic regimes and had, in any case, been artificially and unfairly increased by the anti-inflation policies of Western conservatives".

In the view of the Socialist International, taking into account the interdependence of national and international problems, the settlement of this crisis can only be a global one. In other words, as in questions related to peace and disarmament, this settlement can only come from collective negotiations and the promotion of multilateral international cooperation on the basis of equality, justice, and mutual benefit.

The congress adopted an Action Programme, which, in view of new circumstances, is on the whole founded on the recommendations in two reports of the Brandt Commission (1980 and 1983) on international development. It would hardly be worth to dwell in detail on this document in this article. However, we feel that economists of fraternal parties will have to make a serious critical analysis of this programme, which,

at least in general terms, has points in common with many of the demands of the champions of a new international economic order. Such a critical analysis would enable communist parties, notably in the Third World, to be better prepared for the debates that will most likely take place in the coming years.

In examining the present system of international economic relations the Socialist International uses categories that do not in all cases coincide with those used by us. That is why we do not speak of a "world economic crisis" generally when we are witnessing an exacerbation of a specific and tangible general crisis of capitalism (even if its consequences affect the whole world). Or, instead of speaking abstractly about "North-South contradictions" we clearly identify two radically different tendencies in the system of international economic relations. One of these reinforces the mechanism of exploiting Third World countries and characterises their relations with industrial capitalist powers; the other, stemming from mutually beneficial collaboration, defines the essence of the relations of these countries with the socialist world community.

Another point to be noted is that on such a crucial issue as debt the Socialist International preferred a compromise solution, which circumvented this problem and left it unanswered in the context that it was clearly spelled out by Fidel Castro: mathematically (and, hence, economically) the debt is not repayable.

However, while underlining this distinction, we should note that in their analysis of the reasons for the crisis the Communists and Social Democrats have drawn very close together: the way the capitalist economy functions; the policies pursued by the USA and reactionary Western governments; the arms race, in which some irresponsible leaders of Third World countries are taking part instead of utilising their meagre national resources for the socio-economic and cultural development of their countries; the negative effect of the recipes proffered by the International Monetary Fund. They are also agreed that there should be collective negotiations for a serious examination of the present state of international economic relations.

We feel that it is vital, on the basis of this convergence of views, to continue the discussion and comparing attitudes in order to see to what extent it is possible to combine the efforts of the Communists, the Socialists, the Social Democrats, and the peoples of developing countries in the struggle to inaugurate a new international economic order and promote socio-economic progress. Thus, in our view, there is nothing to indicate that a minimum accommodation is unattainable in this context. This would open up further opportunities for enlarging the sphere of unity of action. Of course, this prospect implies that the Communists should themselves give more attention to Third World problems and have a more exact idea of the role that the processes taking place in the Third World could play in our common anti-imperialist struggle.

For instance, the problem of apartheid is today seriously preoccupying all democratic and progressive people in the world, especially the African revolutionaries. We therefore welcome the clear stand taken on this issue by the Lima Congress. It emphatically condemned not only the apartheid regime but also the attempts to modify that regime instead of abolishing it. Moreover, criticism was levelled at the attitude adopted by the Western powers that are supporting the Pretoria racists directly or indirectly. The congress rejected the rhetoric justifying the refusal to apply effective economic sanctions and adopted the relevant recommendations for a boycott of South Africa to be brought to the attention of all the anti-racist forces in the world: a boycott on the unloading and loading of South African aircraft and ships at ports and airports; an appeal for deinvestment in South Africa; and various economic sanctions.

Our party, which attaches immense significance to the struggle against apartheid, clearly declares that it is prepared to consider any possibility for unity of action against the shameful regime with any Senegalese organisation or movement, including quarters close to the government. But we have to note with regret that on this issue as well the "Socialist" Party of Senegal prefers public relations exercises to concrete joint

actions in support of the South African freedom fighters.

Let us sum up. On quite a few issues the Lima Congress adopted a positive stand to which the Communists cannot remain indifferent. However, some points indicate that the Socialist International has in no way modified its attitude to the communist parties of non-socialist countries. It continues to belittle the role and influence of these parties on the political scene of their respected countries in order to place them before the option of either gradually moving into the background and ultimately disappearing or totally abandoning the revolutionary prospect and reducing the sense of their existence to an adjunct of the Social Democratic bandwagon.

It is well known that in any country a course towards the realisation of reformist alternatives, whose anti-labour orientation does not differ from outright capitalism, is incompatible with the class-defined, dynamic, and consistent policy of the Communist Party concerned. In this sense the Lima Congress was another exercise in misrepresenting the communist concept of freedom and democracy. People least qualified to teach us lessons in patriotism and devotion to the interests of our peoples went out of their way to depict the Communists as isolated politically, socially, and culturally, as "aliens" in their own countries. To what extent will the Socialist International act on these attitudes? We shall be able to answer this question after new principles (to replace the Socialist International's 1951 Frankfurt Declaration) are formulated at the next congress.

But even today there should be no illusions. After the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the congresses of fraternal parties of some other socialist countries had determined a strategy, whose implementation will powerfully accelerate the development of existing socialism, our class adversaries are stepping up their subversive manoeuvres in an effort to confuse people because they feel that they are increasingly unable to influence the future. It is also natural that as the Socialist International draws closer to our attitudes on crucial issues, the more conservative forces in it are intensifying their resistance and engaging in rearguard battles. We Communists should effectively rebuff them. We should raise still higher the militant banner of our unfading ideals of true democracy, tangible freedoms, genuine social justice, and peace. We should strengthen our unity, solidarity, and cooperation on the basis of the principles of creative Marxism-Leninism.

¹ The 17th Congress was attended by nearly 700 delegates from 75 social democratic, socialist, and labour parties of Western Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. — *Ed.*

² The author attended the congress in the capacity of a journalist. — *Ed.*

³ The quotations used in this article are from documents circulated by the congress Press Centre: the report of the Socialist International's Disarmament Advisory Council, the report delivered by Willy Brandt, the Chairman of the Socialist International, and *The Manifesto of Lima*. — *Ed.*

⁴ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development is an inter-governmental association of 24 capitalist countries. Its official objectives are to promote the social and economic development of member and non-member states and to work out ways for coordinating trade and aiding developing nations. — *Ed.*

A Political Report

How Cities Ought to be Helped

Italian Communists in
Municipal Councils

Anatoli Voronov — WMR editorial
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Small, weathered photographs are displayed on a wall of Bologna's ancient Palazzo Comunale facing the Piazza del Nettuno, where crowds of tourists take pictures near the fountain of the god of the sea. There are scores and scores of faces, young and old,

stretching row upon row along the entire length of this dark-stone wall. Here and there in a space between photographs, is a small star framed in laurel leaves. The inscription above the photograph reads: "Bologna, September 8, 1943 — April 25, 1945. Resistance fighters who fell in the struggle for freedom and justice, for the country's honour and independence."

This was where the Nazis executed Italian patriots. At that time there were words on the wall reflecting the diabolical humour of the butchers: "Recreation ground for partisans." Photographs of those who were shot at this wall were put up here after liberation.

Bologna is the capital of Emilia Romagna region, where the flames of the anti-fascist Resistance raged unquenchably during the Second World War. The brunt of this struggle was borne by the Communists. The popular prestige won during those years was solidified after the war. For more than 40 years Communists have been administering this city, either jointly with the Socialists or by themselves.

The neofascists deliberately chose this community as a venue of their crimes. In August 1980 they exploded a bomb in the city's railway station, killing more than 80 persons, adults and children; a memorial plaque is a reminder of this outrage. Earlier, in 1974, a bomb exploded in the *Italicus* train as it was running through a tunnel near Bologna. Ten years later the same atrocity occurred in train No. 904.

"These attacks were unquestionably against the city and region, where the civic, democratic consciousness level of the people is among the highest in Italy," Bologna's mayor Renzo Imbeni, member of the ICP Central Committee, said in an interview. "The principle objective of the terrorists was to strike fear into the people, to compel them to desist from participating in political and social affairs. Moreover, they thought this would make the people believe that the democratic forces are weak and helpless and thus deprive the latter of popular support. But they miscalculated. Their criminal blackmail fell on deaf ears."

My interlocutor pointed out that although at the latest elections to local authority bodies last year the Communist Party garnered somewhat fewer votes throughout Italy (30.2 per cent) than previously (for instance, 33.3 per cent to the European Parliament), its position has remained strong in "Red regions" such as Toscana, Umbria and Emilia Romagna. In some of the largest cities — Bologna, Venice, Genoa, Milan, Turin, and Florence — the ICP continues to poll the biggest vote. It has a considerable number of seats in regional, provincial, and communal councils.¹

How are the Communists operating today in local self-administering bodies? In what way are they championing the interests of working people in a bourgeois society without having the central levers of power? What are the potentialities and limits for their intervention at local level in socio-economic processes?

These were the themes of the interviews with Italian Communists in Bologna and then in Florence and Milan.

What Can A Municipal Council Do?

We were received by Renzo Imbeni in his office in the Palazzo Comunale. On that day there was to be a meeting of the municipal junta, while in the evening the ICP municipal committee was scheduled to consider the Communist proposals on budget issues.

At the latest elections in Bologna the Communist Party polled the largest number of votes (44 per cent). It commands a relative majority in the city municipal council: 29 of the 60 seats. The other councillors are Christian Democrats, Socialists, Social Democrats, Republicans, or members of the ultra-right Italian Social Movement and the ultra-left Proletarian Democracy. As regards the junta it has only one "colour": it consists of Communists and two independents elected from the ICP's lists. The

Communists suggested setting up a junta of representatives of left-wing parties, including Socialists, Social Democrats, and Republicans, but there was no affirmative response. A programme statement defining the council's basic tasks was signed with the Socialists at the close of last year.

The mayor listed the principal areas of the junta's work: urban development, extension of public utilities, transport, health education, tourism, environmental protection.

Says the mayor: "We are trying to organise life in the city so as to focus on people's interests. Of course, we are guided, above all, by the requirements and aspirations of working people."

Bologna is one of Italy's first five cities in terms of standard of living. The network of medical service, administered by the municipality, meets all of the city's medical requirements and is seen as outstanding nation-wide. One-third of the patients of its polyclinics and hospitals are from other regions.

This is the only regional centre in Italy that in recent years has made full use of the funds allocated by the central authorities for housing construction. Since 1980 the municipal council has built more than 4,000 apartments, while the city's public housing consists of more than 20,000 apartments, mostly in so-called people's houses where rents are low. This is of considerable importance. Thousands of privately-owned apartments in Bologna, as in other Italian cities, are untenanted because few people can afford the rent. In only the beginning of this year some 8,000 families received eviction notices from the landlords. The building of people's houses allows easing the acute housing problem. Further, the Communists insist that in privately-owned houses rents should not exceed a fixed level and that the rents should be compatible not only with the quality of the apartments but with the size of tenants' incomes. This, however, requires legislation, which the party is seeking on a national scale.

The problems of urban development, the mayor said, are linked closely to the allocation of land for this development. Bologna's history goes deep into the ages, and it has many outstanding cultural monuments. Their conservation and restoration are one of the priority concerns of the municipal council. For this purpose it is important, on the one hand, to prevent the pulling down or fragmentation of innercity districts and, on the other, to preserve the verdure.

The organisation of the city transport is a major concern. Of course, Bologna's ancient streets were not built with an eye to automobiles. If all its inhabitants were to drive their cars in the streets at one and the same time, traffic would be paralyzed, Renzo Imbeni noted. He added:

"We are not blaming our forefathers, who could not foresee the invention of the automobile and built the streets for oxen and horses. The thing is to find a way out in the interests of our people. We see it in enlarging public transport and giving it priority over private transport. Some streets and squares, especially those that are of architectural or historical value, have been closed to all but pedestrian traffic."

The priorities of the city municipal council depend largely on the socio-demographic processes taking place in Italian society. For instance, there has been a sharp increase in the number of women working in production and in the services industry. In Bologna the level of female employment is the highest in the nation. Hence the rising demand for child-care centres. In just the past few years more than 40 of these have been opened, and the requirements of almost all the families have been met.

Another problem is the significant numerical growth of senior citizens in the total population. This is due to the longer life expectancy and the fall in the birth-rate. There is now a bigger demand for homes for the aged. During the past decade the municipal council has opened 35 such homes. For this purpose many old suburban villas and houses in rural communities have been purchased and restored with the participation of the municipal authorities.

The junta constantly keeps the problems of young people in focus, one of the most

important is unemployment. Although the jobless rate in the region is below the national average, particularly in the south, it is still a very tangible problem. Between six and eight per cent of the able-bodied citizens, notably young people, have no jobs. The levers at the disposal of the local authorities are not strong enough to cope with this evil effectively, for most of the economic activity is beyond their control. However, they are trying to use every opportunity to ease the pressure of unemployment.

The municipal council and the trade unions, the mayor said, have reached an agreement on compiling lists of unemployed people. The latter have the possibility of joining in municipal programmes such as construction, cleaning territory, landscaping, and some services, but this does not of course solve the unemployment problem although it gives temporary occupation for some young people. What are called "transition workshops" are being set up in the city and the province to train young artisans who are provided with premises and equipment free of charge. They work here for two or three years, until they acquire sufficient experience. They then look for work, while the workshops admit others. In this way many of them have become watchmakers, jewellers, cabinet-makers, and makers of musical instruments.

In characterising the principles underlying the work of Communists in the municipal council, Renzo Imbeni said:

"We have to draw a distinct line between the political initiatives of the party, of its organisations, and the work of the council on basic programmes approved by the majority. The Communists seek cooperation and dialogue with diverse forces and do their best to take various opinions into account. Considerable importance is attached to promoting initiatives by the city's inhabitants, to their participation in the administration of the city's affairs. Bologna was, for instance, the initiator of the practice of electing neighbourhood councils, whose status was institutionalised in 1980 by a special law. These handle many problems.

The Communist way of administration in local bodies of authority is distinguished by honesty, selflessness, and unblemished reputation. But given even the best of intentions and programmes, the most honest and efficient administration of affairs, there is much that cannot be done.

"The Italian Constitution proclaims that local bodies of authority are vested with wide autonomy and are the principle vehicles of the nation's economic and social development. But in practice the powers and financial resources of the regions, provinces and, particularly, communities are limited. The state subsidies allocated to them are dwindling from one year to another. For that reason it is now crucial to press for a reform of the legal and financial status of these bodies."

Capital of Culture

Before our interview Michele Ventura, deputy mayor of Florence and member of the ICP Leadership, received a group of Chilean democrats in the Palazzo Vecchio. They discussed plans for holding in Florence an international meeting, "For the Freedom of Chile", to be attended by more than 150 civic and political figures from different countries and by representatives of cultural circles and youth movements.

"Our city," Michele Ventura said, "has long-standing humanitarian traditions. We take very close to heart everything related to peace, freedom, and democracy."

Florence has been the venue of many national and international anti-war actions. The local authorities recently decided to proclaim the province and city nuclear-free zone. The initiative for this came from the Communist youth with the active support of the ICP. This initiative was joined by Catholic youth and many public organisations and movements. The provincial council is currently considering the question of converting armaments-related industrial facilities to the manufacture of civilian goods. The Communists are insisting that the city schools include in their curriculum special classes educating children in a spirit of peace and international cooperation of aversion to war.

An indication of how high anti-war feeling is running in Florence was given when thousands of young people filled the streets to demonstrate against the US bombing of Libya. On the same occasion, the trade unions declared a three-hour strike to signal their alarm over the growing threat of war in the Mediterranean.

"We see the struggle for peace," Michele Ventura said, "as indivisible from the problem of safeguarding and increasing the cultural values of our city and the whole of Italy. By speaking up for peace and friendship we uphold the most vital condition for preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of all humanity."

This year, in connection with the award of the title of European Capital of Culture to Florence, the city has hosted many meetings, festivals, and exhibits. One has only to stroll about its streets to understand why that honour was bestowed upon it. Magnificent palaces and cathedrals, the bridges across the Arno, the museums with their vast collections, and the streets and squares named after great Florentines, whose work is representative of an entire epoch in the development of human culture.

Lines from Dante's *Divina Commedia* (Divine Comedy) are engraved on the walls of the inner courtyard of the 600-year-old Palazzo Vecchio, which houses the municipal council. As well as Dante, the many distinguished Florentines include Petrarch, Boccaccio, Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo, Michaelangelo, Vasari, Giotto, and Donatello. How to protect the priceless creations of these great masters today? How to safeguard these treasures for the present and future generations? It is not only a matter of averting disasters such as the flood of 1966 in Florence, when the Arno overflowed its banks. The pressure of modern industrial civilisation, the heavy automobile traffic in the ancient streets, and the countless numbers of tourists coming from all ends of the world pose the local authorities with staggering problems.

Piazza della Signoria, which the Palazzo Vecchio faces, evokes the memory of many events in Italy's history. Monarchs and leaders of the republic spoke here, and the echoes of wars and the rumble of uprisings were heard. The days of the Florentine commune and republic, the long rule of the Medici, and the struggle for the country's unification when Florence was the nation's temporary capital have left their mark on the make-up of this splendid architectural ensemble that was built in the Middle Ages and through to Renaissance. At the close of the Second World War Florence was the scene of bitter fighting between the Nazi invaders and the partisans, and many of the buildings and architectural monuments around the square were seriously damaged. For example, the famous Corridor de Vasari, which links the Palazzo Vecchio across the Ponte Vecchio with the Palazzo Pitti on the other bank of the Arno, was restored and opened to visitors only in 1973, almost 30 years after it was ravaged.

Repairs are now under way in the Piazza della Signoria with its sculptures, fountains, loggia, and the small slab immured in the road on the spot where the irrepressible Girolamo Savonarola was burned at the stake. The worn cobble-stones are to be replaced and the pavement will be ornamented with marble. A sum of 3,600,000,000 lire has been allocated for this reconstruction. This is a timely project, but hundreds of other notable time-beaten buildings and monuments are still awaiting assistance.

The Programme of Recommendations, considered by the 17th ICP Congress held in Florence last spring, states: "Italian culture is one of the mainsprings on which our country can count for its development. But only an insignificant portion of its potential is being used. This enormous historical and artistic patrimony requires much more investments by the government, a restructuring of its management, and the coordination of the work of regional self-administrative bodies with a simultaneous enhancement of their joint responsibility."²

Enlarging upon this, Michele Ventura noted:

"We are trying to attract funds from various sources for the restoration and

preservation of cultural monuments: credit institutions, organisations, and private persons. The difficulty here is that in many cases these investments are regarded as unproductive. However, apart from its immeasurable cultural, aesthetic, and educational significance this project is beneficial economically, for it facilitates the promotion of economic activity linked to trade, services, and hotels for tourists. The restoration and protection of national monuments could become a major sphere for the employment of young people, for the creation of jobs.

"The city's affairs are managed jointly on the basis of a common programme by representatives of the Communist, Socialist, Social Democratic, and Liberal parties. The ICP has the largest number of seats on the municipal council — 25 of the 60. The participation of Liberals in the ruling majority, which includes Communists, is unusual for large Italian cities. But we have agreed on a specific joint programme and the parties are cooperating despite political and ideological differences."

The interview turned on matters that constantly confront the municipal council — transport, health services, public utilities, housing, rents, jobs... The problem of environmental protection has likewise grown acute. Shortly before our interview people had protested against the pollution of the subterranean waters in Florence's suburb of Bagnoa Ripoli by a number of factories. In the city itself considerable inconvenience has been caused by the conflict with garbagemen. The latter staged a strike, demanding changes in the system of remuneration for their labour, but in the meantime mountains of uncollected garbage bags accumulated along the sidewalks. The local newspaper *Corriere Di Firenze* wrote about a "garbage war". The municipal council had to mediate in this conflict, because a settlement depended on the attitude of the central authorities. But on this issue, as on many others, the potential commanded by the municipal council itself proved to be inadequate. The city's public transport system is short of funds, and the government is continuously cutting back the subsidies for the health services. The Communists are, for that reason, demanding that the local administrative bodies should have more authority to raise funds in the communities: currently, this authority is severely restricted.

An Authoritative Opinion

Lombardy in North Italy is one of the largest and most highly industrialised regions in the country. Its capital, Milan, has the largest population after Rome and is an important industrial and financial centre. Many major concerns and their industrial facilities are based in Milan. The huge glass and reinforced-concrete buildings of banks, insurance companies, and all sorts of offices and enterprises are a characteristic feature of the cityscape, especially in Milan's new centre.

The Communists enjoy high prestige among the region's working population. However, they lost some of their positions at last year's municipal elections. While formerly they were members of the administration of four (of the nine) provinces in Lombardy, they are now represented on only two, and on about one-fourth of the community juntas (of a total of 1,800). In many communities with solid working traditions their influence remains strong. Until the last elections Milan itself was administered jointly by the Communists, Socialists, and Social Democrats, but although the Communist Party got the largest number of votes it found itself in the opposition on account of the defection of its former allies to a coalition with other parties.

In assessing the results of last year's local elections and some other important political campaigns, delegates to the 17th Congress of the ICP identified, among other priorities, the need for reinforcing the party's somewhat weakened links to some sections of society.

"The changes that have taken place in Italian society in recent years," said Silvano Ambrosetti, Secretariat member of the Lombardy regional party organisation, "were mirrored by our relations with voters. The number of workers in the region, for

instance, has diminished. On account of the crisis in some traditional industries, notably steel, there has been a diminution of the groups of working people among whom the party's influence was considerable. On the other hand, there has been a numerical growth of white-collar workers, technicians, scientific and technical intellectuals, and of people working in the services industry and trade. Among these groups our links are for the time being weaker."

The party organisation is taking these changes into account. The rapid growth of financial institutions, for example, has brought the number of bank employees in Milan to 45,000. The regional committee now has a special department looking into the problems of this large group of working people. Work is being revitalised among women and young people, and this is also mirrored by some organisational innovations, notably, the formation of a league of students of secondary educational establishments in the Communist Youth Federation (it consists of various professional leagues).

"In adapting the organisation's structure to the changes in society," Silvano Ambrosetti said, "we are trying to give closer consideration for the requirements of the different sections of the population in the work of, among others, local bodies of authority. Of course, the working class remains the party's mainstay but the links to other groups of working people have also to be strengthened."

Then the question was discussed of how the Communists, even where they are not represented in the ruling administrative bodies, can influence the situation and of what their fundamental approach should be to resolving key local problems.

"We," said Carlo Cuomo, ICP regional committee member responsible for social security, "are trying to develop points of contact with representatives of other parties in councils so as to achieve concrete results in the interests of the working population. I am, perhaps, stating my own opinion, but it seems to me that the boundaries of left-wing policy on many issues are quite mobile. Let me illustrate. Quite recently the problem of immigrant workers became acute in our country. As you know, Italy was mostly an exporter of labour. Many Italians went abroad to find jobs. But now there are many immigrants, mainly of African and Arab origin, in the country. It is estimated that there are some 80,000 without families. We have no exact statistics. Many of these people live in make-shift dwellings, have to put up with random earnings, and their labour is neither regulated nor protected by the law. The Communists are insisting on guarantees for the rights of immigrant workers and on measures to prevent discrimination against them. Here, in Milan, it is often easier to find a common language on this problem with Christian Democrats than with other parties. We have invoked moral principles to which Catholics are very sensitive and have won positive decisions.

"Of course, there are marked differences between us and the Christian Democrats on many other fundamental issues. For instance, the Communists hold that employment policy cannot rely on market ebbs and flows, on neoliberal methods. It requires active intervention by the authorities."

In the north of the country the jobless rate is lower than in the south, but even there it is a serious problem. Since 1982 there has been a 10 per cent rise of the number of jobless youth, and there is a steadily growing number of chronically or long-term unemployed. A particularly hard lot is faced by persons over the age of 45 who had held jobs in traditional industries that have been shut down. For a certain period they were paid allowance amounting to 80 per cent of their wage out of so-called integrated funds. But then the payments were suspended and the people who had been receiving them were reduced to desperate straits.

The CPI considers that to ease the unemployment problem it is necessary to allocate nationally at least one per cent of the gnp annually for the creation of jobs. Moreover, the party has advanced a series of concrete proposals for a gradual shortening of the working day, large investments in industry, encouraging cooperatives and handicrafts,

and so on. It attaches much importance to reorganising the system of vocational training.

"The modernisation of production," Carlo Cuomo believes, "can not only abolish but also create new jobs. But people skilled in new trades are needed, and hence the need for retraining working people. The local authorities have a paramount role to play in this. We criticise the policy of the regional council, headed by Christian Democrats, that is doing nothing to build a network of public vocational training courses. They are giving preference to private training centres, many of which are run by the clergy."

The expansion of social services, housing construction, and public works would likewise help to spur economic activity, reduce unemployment, and contribute to meeting the population's day-to-day requirements. But the government's policy in this area has proved to be unproductive. For instance, it was planned to build about half a million apartments in the past ten years, but in fact only one-third of this number was built.

The potential of the Communists to influence the decision-making on economic issues and the fulfilment of important projects depends on their ability to rely on mass movements and put forward argued opinions consistent with the interests of working people. These projects include the reconstruction of Milan's Malpensa airport, and the building of a large inter-continental communications centre. The latter, which will cost 1,500 billion lire, is important for the development of the city and the entire region. How are economic interests to be brought into line with environmental protection? The opinion of experts, trade unions, and the population was solicited in order to make a competent judgement. The problems linked to construction were discussed at meetings of Communists on the regional, provincial, and community councils.

The proposals moved at these meetings reflect the views of large sections of society. The Communists are, on the whole, in favour of the airport project, but criticise its shortcomings. The road network, they feel, could be planned more rationally with less damage to the environment, and provision could be made for more effective noise control. Besides, the government allocations are not sufficient, adding up to less than one-third of the sum needed for the project.

As regards to the protection of the green areas, the former left-wing municipal junta of Milan had approved a plan for a huge park of about 80,000 hectares in the south of the city. The Communists are insisting on the fulfilment of this decision, and on their initiative a special committee is being set up to supervise the protection and development of verdure zones.

As in Bologna and Florence, the Communists of Milan noted the limited potential of the local authorities and the reduction of state appropriations. This year, for instance, the region is to receive 770 billion lire less than last year, with the result that it will not be able to carry out many of the programmed projects. Local budgets are now becoming a critical problem throughout the country. It was no accident that the June parliamentary debate of a draft law on precisely this issue precipitated discord in the ruling majority and was one of the causes of a government crisis.

The Communists insist on steadfast compliance with the Italian Constitution's progressive provision on the role of local authorities. This is the context of the reforms proposed by them. The Communist Party has stated that constraints on local authorities are a part of the conservative assault of recent years. These institutions, which "give the Italian state distinctive features", are "still surrounded by mistrust and inhibited by paralysing fetters".³ The granting of more actual independence, wider powers, and larger material resources and possibilities to the regional, provincial, and community authorities and the establishment of new relations between them and the central authority are regarded by the Italian Communists, apart from all else, as "a decisive condition for new socio-economic development by means of democratic

programming",⁴ as a key component of policy consonant with the interests of the people.

¹ Italy is administratively divided into regions, provinces, and rural and urban communities (municipalities) administered by the corresponding regional, provincial, urban (municipal) and rural councils, which form executive bodies called juntas (*giuntas*).

² *l'Unità*, December 17, 1985.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

surveys, information and mail

The World After the October Revolution: Historic Changes

The world is entering the seventieth year since the October Revolution. This event, which changed the course of human history, remains quite recent in historical terms, thus adding to the significance of the far-reaching changes that have been occurring in the world's socio-political fabric—changes that received their momentum from the October Revolution of 1917.

THERE is no doubt that the *transformation of socialism, which originally became a reality in a single country, Soviet Russia, into a world system*, was the most important factor which changed the world radically. At the close of the 1920s this new social system was in operation over little more than one-sixth of the world's inhabited surface where less than eight per cent of mankind lived. Today, the socialist countries account for more than one-quarter of the world's land area and about one-third of the human race.

The decades that have elapsed since 1917 have demonstrated the essential advantages of socialism over capitalism and shown that socialism is consonant with the interests of the popular masses. These advantages are reflected, among other things, in the much higher rates of *planned* economic development, with *public property in the principal means of production*.

Table 1

**National Income Growth Rates in Socialist and Industrialised
Capitalist Countries**

Year	All Socialist Countries	Including CMEA Countries	Industrialised Capitalist Countries
1950-1			
1960	2.6	2.5	1.5
1970	4.6	4.8	2.4
1980	8.0	8.0	3.3
1984	9.5	9.1	3.6
Average annual growth rates			
1951-1984	6.8	6.7	3.8
1971-1984	5.2	4.7	2.9

Sources: United Nations, USSR Central Statistical Board publications.

It follows from the Table 1 that over the postwar period, average economic growth rates have been almost 1.8 times higher in the socialist countries than in the industrialised capitalist world. The somewhat lower growth rates in the 1970s and 1980s, connected with the fact that the opportunities of extensive reproduction were becoming exhausted, have prompted the socialist countries to adopt a policy of accelerated socio-economic development. The motive forces behind this acceleration are to include scientific and technological progress, all-out intensification of production, a radical restructuring of the economic mechanism, and the creation of an effective and flexible system of management which will make it possible to use the opportunities of socialism more fully.

This strategy has been substantiated thoroughly in the decisions taken at the recent congresses of the fraternal parties in the socialist community countries. Internationally, the emphasis is on a collective approach to the tackling of the tasks at hand, specifically, on closer socialist economic integration and on the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress which the CMEA countries are already following. The priority tasks of this programme include the electronicisation of the national economy, comprehensive automation, accelerated development of nuclear power production (at a higher level of reliability and safety), new materials and technologies for their production and processing, as well as biotechnology. The implementation of the programme which has outlined the essential thrust of the current and future CMEA activities will enable the socialist community countries to raise their economies to a radically higher level.

The socialist system is exerting, both directly and indirectly, increasing influence on world developments. The direct impact is due, first, to the creation, consolidation and perfection of socialism, a system that rules out social antagonism, exploitation and oppression, and, second, to the vigorous international peace policy pursued by the socialist countries and to their support of all forces of freedom and peace. The indirect impact stems from the force of example provided by socialism, from the tangible way in which it has solved many fundamental problems capitalism is unable to cope with, from the demonstration that war can actually be banished, from full employment, social confidence, effective environmental protection and historical

optimism under socialism.

The emergence of the world socialist system, the formation and consolidation of the community of sister nations is the decisive factor behind the radical change in the international alignment of forces in favour of the peoples striving for social progress, democracy, national freedom and peace. The socialist community is a reliable mainstay of world peace, the chief obstacle to the schemes of imperialist reaction, a principled and consistent champion of sound, peaceful and democratic international relations.

The October Revolution also gave an impetus to another highly important process—that of the *rapid growth of the international communist movement* which has now become an *ideological and political force of exceptional influence in today's world*.

Table 2

The Growth of the Communist Movement

Year	Number of countries where communist parties operate	Numerical strength of communist parties (million members)
1928	46	1.7
1939	69	4.2
1946	78	20.0
1960	87	35.0
1969	88	50.0
1985	95	over 80.0

Sources: estimated from documents of communist and workers' parties.

The total number of Communists increased by more than 30 million over the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, and it is by no means the socialist countries alone that account for this increment. Naturally, the opportunities for the growth of communist parties are different in the socialist world and outside it. Ruling parties have no limits to this growth except the self-imposed rules and norms adopted to regulate their strength and composition. The situation is different in the non-socialist world. Large-scale, sophisticated and well-orchestrated anti-communist propaganda is conducted through the bourgeois mass media. Moreover, in many countries membership in or even sympathy for the Communist Party is a crime, with all this entails. In these conditions, the communists cannot expand their ranks fast or continuously.

Still, these ranks are growing in overall terms. For example, the communist parties in the non-socialist world grew by more than 1.5 million members in the 1970s. Their strength increased by over one million in industrialised capitalist countries, by more than 300,000 in Asia (less Japan) and Africa, and by almost 90,000 in Latin America. New communist parties are emerging. Such was the case in Malta in 1970, in Pakistan in 1974, in Saudi Arabia in 1975, in Jamaica in 1978, in Egypt in 1980, in Senegal in 1981, and in Palestine in 1982.

This geography speaks for itself, confirming the growing influence of communist ideas and policies in the developing countries. This is also reflected in the fact that several revolutionary democratic parties and movements, including ruling ones, have embraced scientific socialism.

The growth in the numerical strength of communist parties enabled them to exert a stronger impact on politics in the international arena and in many individual countries. Of course, this does not mean that the development of the communist movement is completely free from difficulties. There have been and there remain difficulties, quite considerable at times, as well as unresolved issues, errors and mistakes. In the socialist countries, these factors are behind the currently acute question of substantially accelerating socio-economic progress and perfecting social relations, a question that is important for the entire communist movement too. In the non-socialist world, particularly in some industrialised countries, fraternal parties encounter symptoms of stagnation and losses in membership; within the parties, there are cases of dissent over important questions. Differences between parties also remain; naturally, this hampers the efficiency of joint action.

However, for all the complexities of the current historical period, the vanguard ideological and political role of the communist movement in today's revolutionary process is clearly in evidence. This role is reflected, first, in the vigorous, resolute and consistent *struggle of the Communists for peace*, both at the government level (witness the policy of the ruling parties in the socialist countries) and in the form of recurrent anti-war actions, conducted both independently and within the framework of the mass movement for peace.

Second, there is the communist parties' practical *work to effect revolutionary transformations*. The world socialist system, the greatest achievement of the communist and the entire working-class movement, is marching ahead confidently. Communist parties in several non-socialist countries have won many important victories in their struggle for the interests of the masses, although no radical shift in social development has yet been achieved in these countries.

Third, the ideas and slogans advanced by the Communists—concerning the inadmissibility of nuclear war, the need for peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation among nations, the elimination of all forms and manifestations of colonialism, democratisation of international relations, and protection of fundamental human rights, above all the right to life and employment—are spreading inexorably among the masses throughout the world.

On the whole, the cause of social progress could not have advanced as far as it has in global terms without the great and invaluable contribution made to it by the world communist movement, which has been and remains in the front ranks of the struggle to solve the most pressing problems of mankind and which expresses man's humanitarian ideals.

The emergence of *mass democratic movements in the non-socialist world* is a typical development of our time. Although considerably heterogeneous in terms of their social composition, age groups of the participants, political orientation and specific objectives and tasks, these movements do display common features. First, they refuse to accept various consequences of monopoly capital domination, the militarisation of society, racial and ethnic discrimination, infringements on the rights of women, young people's diminishing education and employment opportunities, environmental damage and the like. Second, they advance relevant alternative proposals, objectively striving to change the social fabric in a way that rejects the policy pursued by imperialism.

Particularly popular and widespread are movements that tackle cardinal issues such as the defence of peace, environmental protection, solidarity with the developing countries, unemployment and education. It is difficult to devise a common formula describing the scope and the forms of their action. However, one can say confidently that today's anti-war, anti-nuclear movement has assumed particularly great dimensions in capitalist countries.

At the beginning of the current decade it took the form of powerful

public resistance to the plans of deploying US first-strike nuclear missiles in NATO's European member-countries. Although eventually it proved impossible to prevent the deployment, this does not mean that efforts to remove the nuclear threat and curb the arms race are an exercise in futility.

Today, the peace movement has developed a vast potential (the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and of the entire socialist community have recently done a great deal to help it grow) and an unprecedented diversity of forms. Great masses of people are now aware of the need to be active in the struggle against the possibility of a global nuclear catastrophe, and even the most diehard militarist forces in the West are forced to reckon with this fact.

The *elimination of the colonial system of imperialism and the emergence of scores of independent countries* is a major historical achievement of the post-October period and a great victory of the national liberation revolutions and movements. In 1919 colonial and semi-colonial countries accounted for 72 per cent of the world's land area and some 70 per cent of its population. Today, the figures are 0.7 and 0.3 per cent respectively. Besides the socialist countries, the sovereign nations whose colonial and semi-colonial status is a thing of the past have spread across some 62 per cent of the Earth's land surface, and their population is 51 per cent of the world total.

Having lost its formerly unchallenged control over most of our planet, imperialism has adopted neocolonialist methods of exploiting the peoples and the natural resources of the developing countries. Credit colonialism has become particularly widespread in recent years, dragging many Asian, African and Latin American countries into a morass of debt. All together they owe their creditors an astronomical sum of about one trillion dollars, and the debt servicing is a growing burden weighing on their still weak economies.

Nevertheless, the imperialists no longer have a free hand. The growing role of the developing countries in world politics and economics is a salient feature of our age. These countries display their resolve to uphold their sovereign right to use their own resources for their own benefit, and they strive for economic independence and for a new international economic order. The assistance and support they receive from the socialist nations is very important in these efforts: unlike the imperialist powers, the socialist countries maintain relations of equality, mutual benefit and respect for each other's national interests with their partners.

The growing prestige of the *non-aligned movement* which comprises most of the developing world is a graphic manifestation of the way the developing countries are consolidating their international positions. The movement has recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of its establishment as an organised entity (the first non-aligned summit conference was held in Belgrade in September 1961). It has expanded considerably over the past two and a half decades.

Here are some figures. The first conference was attended by the leaders of only 25 countries; by the time the eighth conference was held in Harare in September 1986, the movement numbered 101 members (99 countries and two national liberation organisations—the PLO and SWAPO)—almost two-thirds of the world's total number of countries. The geography of the movement has expanded substantially. Up to 1973 it united mostly Asian and African countries; today it includes 50 African, 28 Asian, and 17 Latin American nations, as well as three countries from Europe and one island state from Oceania.

As a result, the slogan of non-alignment, born of the national liberation struggle for independence and full equality, is now embodied in a prestigious international movement that opposes war, aggression, imperialism, colonialism and racism and adds to the potential of peace, reason and goodwill.

The anti-imperialist nature of the non-aligned movement is borne out even in the US State Department analysis of the voting record at the 40th session of the UN

General Assembly. Most UN member-countries, including the participants in the non-aligned movement, cast an average of four out of five votes against the United States (Western Hemisphere countries voting in this way in 76.3 per cent of the cases; the figure for African countries being almost 85 per cent and for Arab countries 87.8 per cent). Significantly, the votes of India, the then president of the non-aligned movement, and Zimbabwe, the current president, were contrary to the United States in 91.1 and 85.4 per cent of the cases respectively.

Therefore facts—and we cite only a general summary—demonstrate that progressive change on the world scene has gained powerful momentum since the October Revolution, which was the most radical turning point in world history and which imparted a new dimension to it.

Prepared by the Working Group of the
WMR Commission on Scientific Information
and Documentation

The Reader Wants to Know . . .

Uganda: Following the Path of Renewal

'The acute internal conflicts which the neocolonialists foment have become a real bane of many newly independent African countries. For many long years, Uganda was torn apart by internecine strife. However, the latest reports indicate that the situation is normalising there. Could *World Marxist Review* cover the events in Uganda in greater detail?'

Mohammed Hassan Ibrahim, Egypt.

WMR has asked Crispus Walter Charles Bazarrabus Kiyonga, Uganda's Minister of Cooperatives and Marketing, to reply to this question. The reply follows.

UGANDA is a small country in Africa with a population of about 15 million people. It was under British colonial rule since the end of the 19th century. The interests of the colonialists were basically to get sources of raw materials and markets for their goods. For a long time they took away coffee, cotton, tea, minerals, including copper, while we in Uganda have really had nothing in return. A few consumer goods perhaps but nothing really to address our poverty. Nothing in the way of capital input so that Uganda could start developing its own industrial base.

In October 1962, Uganda gained political independence from the British. Ugandans took over power. But the politicians who took over power did not address themselves to the fundamental problems of the people. It was just a mere change of people. The white man was replaced by the black man, but we remained an appendage economy of Britain.

In time, contradictions began to emerge. Milton Obote, who was the first Ugandan leader, never addressed himself to the fundamental problems of the people, never made any effort to restructure the economy so that Uganda would no longer be dependent on Britain and other imperialist powers. As a result he became unpopular and started repressing people. In 1964 he ordered the killing of innocent civilians in a small town called Nacolabe and students at a secondary school in Kampala. These actions caused bitter resentment among the masses, and the discontent further increased after 1966 when Obote, who was the prime minister, started a conflict with

the Kabaka (ruler) of Buganda,¹ unseated him and, by a one-man-made constitution, imposed himself on the people as the president.

In 1971 there was a coup in Uganda. It should be stressed that the coup was justified, it was a people's coup. But the British and the Israelis hijacked the victory by imposing on the people their puppet, Idi Amin.

The progressive elements of the country did not accept Amin's coming to power. Forced to emigrate to Tanzania, these people, with the current president Yowery Museveny among them, started their struggle from there. They built a guerrilla army there and they used to come inside and recruit Ugandans. The struggle continued until 1979 when Amin was thrown out of the country with the help of our Tanzanian brothers.

There was a glimmer of hope: perhaps now we were beginning to find our way towards progress. But once again Obote, using a faction of the liberation army, imposed himself through a fraudulent election in 1980. Progressive people once again decided to take up arms under their revolutionary leader Museveny.

We were in a weak position, the war was started by just 27 armed people who got their arms by attacking army barracks. The Obote government at the time was very strong militarily: it had a regular army of about 20,000 and Tanzanian troops were still in Uganda on Obote's side. Because of our military weakness the only option was to use the approach of the protracted people's war. We had to organise the population; let them concretely understand why the fight was being waged and what methods we were using against the repressive regime. People needed to be convinced that as long as they were ready to oppose this regime, there was nothing that could defeat them.

Secretly, our people were organised politically and then militarily and started attacking small units, like police stations, armoured units on the move. The revolution gradually spread to other parts of the country. By clarifying the issues to the population we exposed Obote's contradictions. We strengthened ourselves militarily by capturing enemy arms. Because of Obote's forces being hit so hard and being very well exposed, on the 27th of July 1985 the Obote regime just collapsed.

Tito Okello and his soldiers then came on the scene. He was in the same camp with Obote, and they had quarrelled only on tribal issues. Obote comes from the tribe called Lango and Okello from the tribe called Acholi. The latter felt that they were being imposed upon and demanded certain positions in the government which Obote did not give them. Because we had weakened Obote, he could not maintain his hold on the Acholi troops. When the regime collapsed, these forces came to the fore.

We knew that we had covered just part of the way to final victory. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) is a really national democratic movement. We are interested in the unity of the people of Uganda. So, although we had no illusions about Okello's people, we agreed to negotiate a ceasefire with them. We thought perhaps now they had seen sense, they had realised they were on the wrong side and were ready to take a correct line. We did not want to deny them that opportunity. We hoped that that would first of all help us to maximise the unity of the people and minimise losses. An armed struggle always involves human losses.

But, despite protracted negotiations and our concessions, these brothers of ours did not see our point, either through ignorance or being misled by some outside forces. They thought they were very strong and could rely on outside powers to defeat us. So, they preferred to rely on people who were in Amin's army, against whom they had fought in 1979. They thought that having mobilised them on their side they could resist our pressure.

Our popular army struggled on and on the 26th of January we threw the Okello men out of Kampala and in about one month we completely defeated them. The whole country is now under the firm control of the National Resistance Movement, which has the backing of the popular forces of the National Resistance Army. This is

briefly what we have gone through and where we are.

The main problem facing the people of Uganda can be summed up in one word—underdevelopment. We are a poor, underdeveloped country. Poor not in the sense of lacking resources. We have very good land, a very good climate, plenty of water, plenty of forest and fairly strong people and plenty of minerals—oil, gold, iron ore, etc. So, from the point of view of resources we are a very rich country.

All these years we have been struggling against neocolonialism and its puppets. But now we have had a revolution which must address itself to the fundamental problems of the Ugandan people.

We want to restructure our economy, so that in the final analysis we have an economy which can run fairly independently and be able to absorb any outside economic pressures. Its base will be provided by agriculture. But we also want to build an industrial base which should be integrated with the agriculture. We want to have industry which produces inputs into agriculture which, in turn, would produce raw materials for industry. When we get industries to produce fertilizers, tractors and other products, that would be a firm base for us to take off from, and then get all other sectors of the economy integrated.

I can give a small example of how we can, with correct planning and leadership, integrate our agriculture with, say, tourism. Tourists, when they come to our country, want to have their tastes and needs attended to. They need good food, comfortable hotels and good services. But unless we are thoughtful and rush to buy these things abroad with the little currency we have, you may find that you have spent more money on tourists than the money the tourists have brought in, which would be self-defeating. However, if our agriculture—and industry—are properly developed, we can produce all these things locally—food, bedsheets, etc. And we would retain most of the money that the tourists bring to this country.

This is one way to integrate the economy and make it less dependent on the outside. It is not just a matter of tourism, of course. Our own people need all these things. They, too, need to be properly fed. So our agriculture and animal husbandry should reach a level where we could provide our people with enough food and of proper quality.

Upon assuming power we have found that even the poor economy that the British had left us was in bad shape. Our people were poor, and in some places did not have enough to eat. Many were killed and had left orphans and widows. Others had fled from their native villages. So we were faced with the challenge of rehabilitating the economy. But any rehabilitation should be carried out with an eye to the kind of economy we want to have. We'll put back only those things that would be in line with the type of economy that we subsequently want to have in our country.

We are going to follow the mixed economy principle. The government will play a role in the economy and the private sector will be able to participate too. Our aim is to multiply the national wealth and we must find the best combination of means to bring this about. In order to be able to guide, the government must take control of the key sectors of the economy, such as banking, finances, power production, big industries, etc. Then private investors, Ugandans and foreigners, can come and seek to create wealth for Uganda in other fields.

We have, as an emergency measure, to rehabilitate the displaced people and to solve the problem of our nomads in the north-eastern part of Uganda. They live by capturing cattle from others and from one another and migrate with their cows. Their warlike nature is a menace to themselves because while capturing cows they often kill people, their fellow-Ugandans. But they are our people and we think we should address ourselves to their problem by drawing up plans that would enable them to settle.

We have set up a cabinet subcommittee to deal with this problem. Basically, we

need to make water available in that area. For example, by digging valley tanks to collect rainfall or even water from big rivers. Then these tanks would attract nomadic herders to get water for their cows. Because there will be water, grass will be available. These people will therefore want to stay there to graze their cows. Once they are settled, they can be involved in positive changes.

Our people must be organised and mobilised and must be made to understand what the problems are and what is the best way to attack them. Right now we are forming people's committees all over the country. These committees are a forum where people will have an opportunity to discuss these basic issues and how they want to work, if they want to work together, in a co-operative movement, or individually, whom they want to serve the village executive committee—and to express what they want to have—a bridge, a school or a dispensary.

Through these committees people will be recommended to go to the army, to the police or any other of the national services. Because they are the people best placed to know who is a good character and who is a bad one. In our country these armies have been praetorian—they were personal armies of a succession of rulers who hoped to keep in power by manipulating people. But we want to have a base which is democratic, because only then you can have sustained development.

So far, we have started very well. Before the National Resistance Movement came to power, people had thought that peace would never come to Uganda. The very first day we took over Kampala there was not a single shot fired; there was complete peace. This had been unheard of in Kampala for many years. But the NRM was not surprised. We knew that we would control the situation. All over the country, people have expressed joy and gratitude to the National Resistance Movement. They were celebrating and thinking about productive work.

Even during the armed struggle we were not just fighting; we were also politically organising, thinking and writing out what we are going to do. We are a serious movement, it was not our goal to bring off just one of the usual coups that we have here in Africa. We fought and we thought. As a result we have a programme we refer to as the 10-point programme. It sets out what we want to do: how to organise people, how to fight corruption introduced by the bankrupt former rulers, how to build the army, what type of economy to set up.

One of the aims of our programme is to achieve social progress. One way to tackle these problems in the conditions of poverty, especially rural poverty, is to organise peasants so that they can work cooperatively. Villagers can decide to farm their land together and sell the crops as a group of people. Organised into consumer cooperatives, they could set up shops which belong to them as a cooperative property. They can also market their produce together. A village which produces a lot of milk will find it more profitable to process it in one place and then sell it at a higher price. One peasant, let alone a poor man, cannot do that.

Even if the peasant is operating on an individual basis, his opportunities greatly increase if he is a member of the cooperative. We have a cooperative bank whose work, like everything else, had been disorganised. But if it functioned normally every peasant, even the poorest one, would have access to credit to expand and improve his production. And he would not even need to go to the bank himself. It could be done through his cooperative society that would take a loan from the bank, buy a tractor and have his acre or two ploughed. After selling the harvest—cotton, maize, beans—he would pay back the money. Then he would produce much more than if he was just scratching the soil with his hoe. And he would get more returns.

We need change. If we just leave people on their own, in the state in which they are, our accession to power will not be justified. They would continue scratching the soil with their hoes individually, making no progress at all.

Now the cooperative movement in Uganda is not very widely developed. You see,

everything in our country had collapsed. But you will find signs of the cooperative movement everywhere, even in the remotest parts of the country. These cooperatives have not been very effective, though, because of poor leadership. Sometimes they are cooperatives only in name being run by a few corrupt individuals as if they were their personal property. Poor peasants deliver their crops there; sometimes they are not paid and are just given useless receipts. They are supposed to elect their officials, but this never happens. However, the cooperative infrastructure exists all over the country; we need to reawaken it and do a bit of restructuring here and there and it will become effective. The cooperative is a very important input in our efforts to try and help people get rid of this terrible scourge of underdevelopment.

Our foreign policy is geared to our task of building a society of strong, proud, developed and enlightened people. We want to continue to be non-aligned, and continue our membership in the non-aligned movement and in such international forums whose principles we share and uphold as the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation.

We condemn the racist regime in South Africa. We think it should resign, so that the people of South Africa can determine their own destiny. We support SWAPO because they are the only legitimate representative of the people of Namibia and we think that Resolution 435 of the UN Security Council concerning that country should be quickly put into effect. Ugandans condemn such puppet organisations as UNITA which are fighting against the progressive regime of Angola.

We demand, I think as a right, that there should be a New International Economic Order. You see, most of our poor countries, including Uganda, are heavily indebted to the imperialists because of an economic system they have set up themselves, which is aimed at keeping us dependent on them, and that is unacceptable to us. In a nutshell, we want to tear ourselves from this dependence, we want to build a national economy, we want to deal with anybody on equal and mutual terms. In trade and other exchanges, we want to be equal partners, and not be cheated as we have been for many years under the imperial masters.

We want to struggle against the arms race, against militarisation of outer space, and for disarmament, first of all nuclear disarmament. That would ward off the threat of war and would also make it possible to release huge sums of money now being wasted on building up arms and international tensions. Disarmament could help direct these resources to assist poor countries. Formerly oppressed people would benefit from this in two ways: there would be no threat to their peaceful life and their efforts to overcome underdevelopment would get a boost.

¹ Buganda was part of the British protectorate of Uganda since 1900 and enjoyed a degree of autonomy after the protectorate was granted independence. The 1967 Constitution proclaimed Uganda a military republic and deprived Buganda of its autonomous status.—*Ed.*

From Our Mailbag

Let Us Reach Out to Each Other

I have been reading your journal for many years and long wanted to write to you, but somehow I could not make up my mind. The motivation for this letter is the Statement by the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov, in which he announced the decision to re-extend the nuclear test moratorium to the end of the year.

This is further convincing evidence of the Soviet Union's sincerity in seeking to avert a nuclear catastrophe and make the world safe. Moscow is backing its words with action and this is, I believe, of the greatest significance, for peace can be won not

by prayer or appeals but by action and tireless effort.

Throughout the past few years I have been taking part in the rallies and demonstrations in Athens calling for peace and disarmament. These are becoming more massive and militant, especially this year. Last May we held a huge rally in Constitution Square. Many tens of thousands of people came by foot from Marathon, Ellinikon, Piraeus, and Elefsis. We were greatly moved by a message of greetings from Romesh Chandra, Chairman of the World Peace Council. It said in part that the Greek people are a constituent of the peace movement that has now spread throughout the world.

In August my whole family and I joined in the mass rally at the foot of the Acropolis on the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, and we took part in the symbolic human chain formed around this rock revered by every Greek. We were shaken emotionally as we listened to Hindeo Sugiyama, who lived through the horror of this criminal act.

This rally coincided with the first anniversary of the unilateral Soviet nuclear test moratorium. Our NATO "allies" from the USA are not only continuing these tests but also escalating the arms race. Had they taken one single step in response and ceased testing people would have breathed a sigh of relief. But, regrettably, that has not happened.

We, ordinary Greeks, are concerned not only for our own lives but also for our long culture, of which the Acropolis is one of the most treasured monuments. In its vicinity are several US military bases. From the Acropolis one can see with the naked eye radar and other military installations and the sinister silhouettes of the ships of the US Sixth Fleet on the smooth waters of the Faliron. All this is making our city and country nuclear hostages. That is why we are demanding the dismantling of these bases of death and their withdrawal from Greece.

The Greeks are optimists by nature. This national trait, evolved in the course of centuries, has helped the people to withstand bitter trials and adversities. But a lesson of history is that you cannot get far on optimism. An ancient Greek saying goes: "Athena Pallas is best to those who help themselves." That is why all our working people are speaking out and making every effort to safeguard peace, which is our most priceless patrimony extolled by all writers from Aristophanes to modern poets.

I should like to end my letter with words written by our leading poet Jannis Ritsos in his message to the rally at the Acropolis: "Nations, let us reach out to each other in order to protect the Earth—that gave us birth and on which have been created eternal works of art—with an impregnable wall of peace, understanding, conciliation, and human freedom."

Gergos Papadakis
Athens, Greece

Diary

Ali Yata, General Secretary of the Party of Progress and Socialism in Morocco, visited the *WMR* offices during his stay in Prague. The talk focused on the prospects of cooperation between the PPSM and *World Marxist Review*.

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Comrade Tijani Tayeb Babeqr, Central Committee Secretariat member, Communist Party of the Sudan, has visited the *WMR* editorial office. Speaking at an enlarged session of the Commission on Problems of the National Liberation

Movement in Asian and African Countries, he dealt with the situation in the Sudan and with the Communists' struggle to preserve and consolidate the people's democratic gains. A talk was also held to discuss future cooperation between the CPS and WMR.

the book scene

Passing on the Torch of Internationalism

Philip S. Foner, *May Day. A Short History of the International Workers' Holiday, 1886-1986*, International Publishers, New York, 1986, 184 pp.

"I was told somewhere that May Day, as a workers' celebration and demonstration, originated in the United States. However, I can't seem to find out the origin in any encyclopedia. Many Americans look upon May Day as some importation from Russia." This telling admission was made by the editor of a local periodical in a letter he wrote to the *Daily Worker*, the US communist newspaper, in 1955. Citing this fact on the opening pages of the book under review, the US historian Philip Foner indirectly reminds the reader that an ideological struggle has been going on without let-up over the record of the working class movement and the traditions of international solidarity.

For a full one hundred years, the advocates of capitalism have been trying to make America's working people forget their militant action of May 1886. True, it is now more difficult than in the 1950s for anti-communists and other enemies of the working class movement to trick the masses into accepting an interpretation of history which is silent on the subject of combating exploitation and which presents the socio-economic gains of the working class as benefits 'granted' by the employer. But in today's capitalist society, too, truth has to fight its way to reach people. Hence the value of the book published in the country where May Day originated one hundred years ago.

The book is the result of research done in the United States, the USSR, Mexico, Great Britain, the GDR and Hungary. The reader is offered a broad historical picture of the way a remarkable internationalist tradition spread throughout the world. The rare photographs and posters of past years, the excerpts from newspaper reports and the eyewitness accounts not only illustrate the different stages in the development of international solidarity but also expand one's understanding of the diversity of the forms, methods and ways used by the working people in the struggle for their rights, for peace and social progress.

The author draws profiles of the heroic pioneers of the US labour movement, of those who organised the famous demonstration of Chicago workers for an eight-hour workday, held on May 1, 1886—Albert Parsons, Adolph Fisher, August Spies, George Engel and Louis Lingg. They fell victim to the class revenge of the bourgeoisie. By executing them, the exploiters were warning that they would never

tolerate any infringements on their privileges or allow workers of the world to unite. But this did not stop those who were fighting for a just cause. What August Spies said addressing the court has come true: 'If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labour movement, . . . the movement from which the downtrodden millions, the millions who toil in want and misery expect salvation—if this is your opinion, then hang us! Here you will tread upon a spark, but there and there, behind you and in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out' (p. 35).

Neither the brutality of the US court, nor the reprisals of the tsarist government in Russia, nor Hitler's terrorism nor Cold War provocations succeeded in stopping May Day from sweeping triumphantly across countries and continents. Geographically, Foner's book moves from America's shores to India, from Russia to South Africa, from France to Australia. The experience of class battles, demonstrations and strikes is discussed in quotations from Lenin, Karl Liebknecht, Ho Chi Minh and Nelson Mandela.

The author shows how, despite temporary setbacks, May Day promoted the spirit of the workers' class-rooted solidarity no matter what their political affiliation, views or convictions.

May Day demonstrates the strength of the working class and throws into bold relief the growing potential of peace and social progress. This strength is growing when, in the words of Frederick Engels, workers unite into *one* army, under *one* banner, for the sake of *one* goal. Born under the slogan of an eight-hour workday, this holiday is now identified with the struggle against all forms of social and ethnic oppression, against imperialism and for durable universal peace. The torch of internationalism to which Foner's book is dedicated is being passed on.

Serge Dim

1.5 Million Dollars a Minute

Workers and the Arms Race, International Trade Union Committee for Peace and Disarmament (Dublin Committee), 1986, 57 pp. (also published in French, Russian and Spanish).

'THE arms race is one of the most dangerous realities of our day. Not only does it . . . increase the danger of a new war and of a nuclear catastrophe but also, in a time of peace, exerts a negative impact on the most diverse fields of social life. The arms race particularly affects the sphere of the social and economic interests of the working people. . . ' This passage opens the booklet under review, released by the International Trade Union Committee for Peace and Disarmament, better known as the Dublin Committee, its unofficial name.¹

Workers and the Arms Race, a study written by trade union experts from eight countries, offers an objective analysis of the pernicious way the growing military expenditures affect millions of workers. According to the United Nations, the world's direct military spending has totalled more than 12 trillion dollars over the past 40 years; that is almost three times the amount the two world wars cost. In 1985, the study notes, military activities swallowed up over 800 billion dollars (see p. 6)—some 2.2 billion dollars a day, or more than 1.5 million dollars a minute.

Bourgeois ideologists and politicians have worked hard to promote the myth designed to convince the Western world that mounting military production stimulates economic development and scientific and technological progress, and provides a

guarantee against unemployment and crisis. The mythmakers of militarism love to cite the large-scale rearmament programme of the 1930s in Nazi Germany and the mobilisation of economic resources in the United States at the beginning of World War II as historical examples. The current examples they invoke point to the steady prosperity of military-industrial complexes in the biggest imperialist nations despite the general exacerbation of economic problems. In other words, the deadly virus of the arms race, the source of many chronic diseases of bourgeois society, is presented as precisely what the doctor ordered to cure them.

The Dublin Committee study refutes these dishonest inventions with facts and figures demonstrating that, far from ridding capitalist countries of unemployment, crises and slumps, the build-up of military capabilities aggravates economic difficulties. Specific examples convince the reader that the Western nations which spend particularly large sums on armaments lead the world in unemployment. In terms of the number of the jobs created, an amount invested in the civilian sector is much more productive than the same sum channelled into military production with its great capital outlays, special concentration of skilled and well-paying jobs and huge expenditures on research and development.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, every billion dollars spent by the Pentagon in 1980-1985 created 75,700 jobs. The same amount could have resulted in 100,363 jobs in construction, 138,939 jobs in public health or 187,299 jobs in education. West German economists estimate that ten billion marks of state expenditures make it possible to employ up to 180,000 people in the military sphere as against 234,000 to 245,000 in the civilian sector (see pp. 13-14).

Spurred on by the imperialist powers, the arms race is also the source of other potential losses on the capitalist labour market because it aggravates the international situation and hampers the normal development of trade and economic relations among nations. Meanwhile, 'the overall employment created by this international trade between East and West is approximately five million people. The Soviet orders alone guarantee jobs for more than a million people in Western European countries' (ibid.).

The siphoning off of vast resources into arms production causes imbalances in and upsets national economies, wastes raw materials, slows down economic growth, produces inflation, pushes taxes and prices upwards, and, in the final analysis, depresses the workers' living standards.

While tightening the vice of taxes, the bourgeois state is also hacking away with a 'social meat cleaver', ruthlessly cutting or completely eliminating social spending. During the first term of the Reagan administration, 20 of the more important federal aid programmes were cut to 'save' almost 90 billion dollars; today, the guillotine is applied to the salaries and pensions of government employees, child allowances, medical assistance, subsidies to education, etc.—all this to 'release' another 100 billion dollars or so and feed it, via the Pentagon, to the monopolies.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, other NATO countries have completely cancelled more than 40 programmes directly affecting workers' interests. In the 1982-1985 budget of the FRG, military expenditures increased by 5.6 billion marks, while social spending declined by four billion marks (see pp. 18-19). 'Such a method of financing the growing military expenditures largely affects the unemployed, pensioners, the disabled, the sick, and persons entitled to social security assistance . . .' the trade union experts say. 'Thus, the government is reducing social expenditures among those groups of the population which can least defend themselves and which have low incomes' (ibid.).

The dispossession of the poor is occurring against the background of rapid growth in the profits of the arms manufacturers. According to official US statistics, the profits of the companies working for the Pentagon are three times the US industrial

average. Huge overspending and squandering of federal resources is a concomitant of this development. The study cites very convincing facts: Pratt and Whitney got 1,118 dollars for a 22-cent casing for the legs of chairs, and General Dynamics had the Pentagon pay 7,417 dollars for an item one could buy in a shop for three cents. These and other enormous additional outlays cost the US taxpayer 16 billion dollars a year (see p. 21).

The pamphlet deals in detail with the situation in the developing countries whose share in world military spending almost doubled from 7.9 to 14.6 per cent between 1972 and 1984 and whose armies number about 20 million servicemen. The financial burden connected with this weighs particularly heavily on the developing nations: the upkeep of one soldier exceeds the per capita expenditures on education 300-fold, on health care 1,000-fold, and on science 4,000-fold. Add to that the fact that 800 million people did not have enough to eat, 50 million died of hunger every year, 1.5 billion were denied access to medical services and 815 million adults were illiterate in these nations by the mid-1980s, and it throws into bold relief the degree to which the arms race runs counter to the peoples' vital interests.

This is why the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member-states deemed it necessary to stress at its Budapest meeting in June 1986 that 'practical steps on reducing armaments and on disarmament make it possible to release vast material, financial and manpower resources for peaceful, constructive purposes, including the elimination of economic backwardness in many regions of the world'.²

The study notes that in the socialist countries, too, defence expenditures 'represent a substantial factor hampering the solution of major economic problems. . . The attitude of workers to military expenditures in the socialist countries is . . . straightforward: expenditure on arms is looked upon simply as unproductive and forced expenditure' (p. 11).

It is to the credit of the Dublin Committee pamphlet that it does not limit itself to merely listing the negative consequences of the arms race but suggests a viable alternative: 'Cutting defence spending can be the key to reducing unemployment and meeting unmet social needs, provided that resources are successfully converted from defence to civilian production' (p. 30).

Marshalling convincing arguments and citing interesting facts, the pamphlet analyses primarily the socio-economic aspects of the arms race. I would like to add that the build-up of war preparations should also be viewed as an expression of the class struggle waged by imperialist reaction against workers. The architects of the arms race hope that in an atmosphere of militarist hysteria and confrontation, they will be able to prevent socialism from consolidating its stand, shift the weight of the crisis on to the shoulders of workers and block the peoples' striving for social progress and peace. However, as the introduction to the Dublin Committee pamphlet is right to point out, 'given goodwill and mutual understanding, a united international working-class movement is capable of translating theory into positive action and removing the threat of nuclear annihilation'.

Nicholas Barton

¹ Established in Dublin in May 1982 on the initiative of the participants in the World Trade Union Conference on the Socio-Economic Aspects of Disarmament (Paris, December 1981), the Committee is an open forum enabling trade unions of different political orientation to exchange views on the more topical issues of war and peace. Aside from conducting numerous anti-war actions, the Dublin Committee sets up international study groups; one of these prepared the booklet in question.

² *Information Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 15, 1986, p. 7.

From Marshall Plan to 'Star Wars'

Frederick Muscat, Franco Remoro, Richard Mifsud, *Dollar Dominoes*, Book Link, London, 1985, 167 pp.

THE 'domino principle' has come to be regarded as a stock phrase in Western political parlance. It is used to describe a close interdependence of events. In titling their book on US European policy *Dollar Dominoes*, the progressive Maltese political writers referred to the succession of far-reaching repercussions of West Europe's fascination with the 'miraculous power' of greenbacks.

Shortly after World War II the US came forth with a programme to rehabilitate Europe, the Marshall Plan, named after the then Secretary of State, which its propaganda was at pains to portray as an act of selfless concern for the Old World. The authors drew on historical documents of that period, specifically diplomatic correspondence, to unmask the rationale behind the postwar policy of US imperialism, which committed itself to aggression and expansion, spurning the sovereignty and independence of other nations, among them some who hastened to mortgage their future lured by the dollar bait (see p. 42).

In the admission of Wall Street financiers themselves, the Marshall Plan was 'good business' for them—giving West Europeans US dollars with which to pay for US imports. Characteristically, the aid recipients were not allowed to use it to develop economic relations with the USSR and the East European countries which had opted for socialist change. The overseas philanthropists cared nothing for the enormous destruction and serious economic troubles wrought by the war in that part of the globe. There was a clear political edge to the US moves to 'rehabilitate Europe'. '... The main objective behind Marshall Aid dollars was invariably that of dividing the continent into a "free" west and an "unfree" east, thus creating the former from the latter' (p. 97).

US moneybags who had piled up billions of dollars in arms manufacture were most eager for the political tensions to continue, for a lasting peace would have lost them a sizeable portion of their profits. The military industrial complex 'today . . . is made up of more than four thousand munitions factories, producing a whole range of weaponry ranging from simple bullets to the highly sophisticated and complex nuclear arms and space weapons' (p. 33), the authors point out, and it has a major vested interest in Western partners doing the bidding of Washington's imperial ambitions.

US financial and economic policy in Europe after 1945 was a prelude to knocking together an imperialist military bloc. As the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation came into being in 1949, the 'programme for European rehabilitation' was stopped several months after. Washington offered its allies to join a programme for mutual military assistance.

The authors supply evidence to show how a cunning policy to split Europe on an anti-communist and anti-Soviet basis was being framed and carried out under the cover of 'noble intentions'. It is stressed that 'it was the intention of the United States, right after the war, to impede the development of the economy of Eastern Europe and to attempt to create as much political instability as possible across the eastern borders of the "iron curtain" for the explicit purpose of making easier the task which the Pentagon military strategists had in hand at that time and which concerned the actual invasion of the Soviet Union . . . as a final and permanent solution in the endeavour to destroy communism' (p. 63).

The Pentagon and the State Department delighted in having the monopoly of atomic weapons and were hastily planning targets for bombing raids. Typically, the intelligence agencies proposed to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that a first blow be struck at

the Soviet Union even if the 'enemy' acquired an industrial and scientific potential to guard itself against an attack. Operation 'Charioteer' called for dropping as many as 130 atomic bombs on 70 Soviet cities over the first month of war, including eight bombs on Moscow and seven on Leningrad. When the US nuclear monopoly had been ended, Washington came up with the notorious 'Dropshot' project, which envisioned joint operations 'of all arms' by the US and its NATO allies against the USSR (see pp. 114-125).

The defeat of the democratic forces in Greece, incitement of dissent within the world trade union movement, aid to anti-communist organisations in France, Italy and other countries, and aggressive designs in the Mediterranean—such was the ominous background of the 'US mission' in Europe.

The book also sheds light on the history of Washington's interference in the internal affairs of European states and the brazen activities of its spying agencies. To illustrate, operation 'Demagnetise' staged by the CIA on instructions from the Pentagon called for the infiltration and recruitment in the 'allied' nations of agents and informers to help check the growth of Communist Party influence (see p. 127). Remarkably, collaborating with the US intelligence in the FRG, for example, were 7,300 people, among them 4,000 military persons, four former ministers, three ambassadors and 19 other high-placed diplomats, and 23 newsmen. 'One of the major achievements of the Central Intelligence Agency in Western Europe was the formation of local secret service organisations and intelligence agencies which owed more allegiance to the American administration than to their own governments' (pp. 128-129).

As for attempts by NATO states to follow their own interests, the history of the postwar period shows that the US State Department was never too eager to comply—'special relations' with Washington often swiftly turned into 'special dependence'.

Inter-imperialist contradictions in the period after the war were fairly acute, according to the authors. Neither class affinity of capitalists in various countries, nor their interest to pool forces, nor their military, economic or political integration could remove these contradictions. The economic, financial and technological edge the US once had over its European competitors is now being severely challenged. Governments in some West European countries, social democratic and liberal parties and the broad public increasingly wonder whether US policy is compatible with West Europeans' idea of their own security and whether the US was not going too far in its claims to 'leadership'.

Now that US strategists are luring NATO countries into their "star wars" project with promises of fabulous technological advantage, this reminder of the experience of the postwar years sounds a stern warning. This is clearly the chief idea one gets from reading the book.

Georg Lenker

The Impotence of Italian Justice

30 anni di scandali (Thirty Years of Scandals), Editoriale l'Espresso, Rome, 1985, 113 pp.

The biggest trial of Sicilian mafia mobsters in Italian history has been under way in Palermo since February this year, more and more details of the mafia's criminal activities testifying to the intimate ties between the accused and certain political and financial quarters in the country. Italy's democratic press had good reason to point out that many high-placed patrons of the underground gangster syndicate were

missing from the dock.

Some of them are described in this book, brought out by the influential radical weekly *l'Espresso*, which includes editorial articles published between 1955 and 1985. The reader, the preface says, will find here a gallery of individuals who had been held up as near models of public morality, while 'these far-from-faded photographs will give him an idea of the face of Italy which continues to produce such "heroes" ' (No. 11-12). The materials in the collection shed light on the underlying fabric of some major swindles and, taken together, add up to a telling picture of the moral degradation of the capitalist society, in which official ideology and morality seek to give crooks an 'aura of sanctity', and in which politics has been turned into a lucrative business.

It is a difficult and sometimes mortally dangerous task to catch red-handed the 'greedy assessors and corrupt bureaucrats' and other truly 'Gogolian characters', for corruption, 'uncovered and exposed in recent years by democratic journalists, is not about to yield its positions" (p. 13) and has struck deep roots in the government and political apparatus.

Local judges in Italy are notorious for their procrastination, but they will move with staggering swiftness when their interests are at stake. No sooner had the Supreme Council of the body of magistrates controlling the law-enforcement agencies established the complicity of the public prosecutor's office in Rome in the infamous P-2 lodge conspiracy, than the latter struck back. Criminal proceedings were instituted against the members of the council for wasting government money on 'coffee drunk in session'. The incident has gone down in Italian judicial history as the 'cup-of-coffee case'.

The book highlights the methods used against journalists whose writings irk right-wingers. In a typical incident, General De Lorenzo, one-time chief of army intelligence, and later commander of the Carabinieri, brought a libel suit in 1967 against *l'Espresso* reporters Eugenio Scalfari and Lino Januzzi, who wrote several articles about the masterminds behind the July 14, 1964, conspiracy, which had the objective of staging a reactionary coup.

The book shows how the large-scale financial swindles, illegal operations on the stock exchange, deals involving building contracts and land speculation are intertwined with politics and influence the state-power system. An apt example is the 'Sindona affair' (incidentally, the name has also cropped up at the Palermo trial). He had set up a wide network of dummy financial companies to divest Italians of hundreds of billions of liras and build a fortune for himself. The beneficiaries of the 'banker's' dirty machinations included not only the mafiosi but also politicians who gave him solid backing. There was, for instance, Sindona's joint-stock company in Lichtenstein which he set up to camouflage speculative operations by some prominent Christian Democrats. Some of the proceeds went to fund political campaigns and bribe government officials. Being on the mafia payroll, Sindona established close contacts with the CIA and West European secret services in the hope of enlisting their support for a separatist coup in Sicily.

Italy's right-wing circles tried hard to save the adventurer from punishment. However, under pressure from the country's democratic forces, notably the Italian Communist Party (ICP), the authorities had to arrest that 'businessman of unblemished reputation', as he was billed by the reactionary press. The trial, which established Sindona's complicity in a number of political murders, caused panic among his 'friends'—Western secret agents, mafiosi and fascist-leaning Italian freemasons. The "banker" was sentenced to life imprisonment and was poisoned under mysterious circumstances in early 1986. The murderers have yet to be found.

Another scandal described in the book broke out in 1979 and involved a massive swindle over the supply of oil products, whose proportions will be seen from the fact

that those involved stole an astronomical two trillion liras from the Italian treasury. For several years these wheeler-dealers spent a monthly 200 billion liras or so to pay collaborating state officials. The affair involved hundreds of companies and brought about 500 people into the dock. Among them is General Donato Lo Prete, former chief of staff of the Financial Guard, a special corps set up to combat smuggling and currency swindles, who had escaped to Spain and was recently brought back under guard. Investigation has established that Raffaele Giudice, chief of the Financial Guard, was himself on the payroll of the oil monopolies. 'The fact that the highest echelons of the Financial Guard, among whose duties it is to control and cut short tax evasion, were involved in smuggling operations, makes the scandal even more sinister' (pp. 74-76).

It is clear, the authors say, that underground oil trade on such a scale was only made possible by the involvement of other influential government officials. And they remind readers of the tragic fate of Mino Pecorelli, a journalist who ventured to penetrate into the mysteries of the oil business, and whose murder sparked off the official investigation.

The book also describes the Lockheed affair in the mid-1970s in which the US aircraft company obtained lucrative contracts by paying out about three billion liras in bribes to its Italian clients, among whom were some members of the government (see pp. 68-69). There is also the story of Roberto Calvi, former director of the country's second biggest bank, who had appropriated a huge sum 'on ideological grounds'. He had teamed up with other bankers and reactionary politicians to found a masonic lodge in Monte Carlo for the sale of arms to ultra-right organisations. There are indications that the lodge took part in some major terroristic acts in Italy.

There are many governmental commissions to combat organised crime in Italy. Some are engaged in probing the links between Italian secret services, terrorists and the mafia, others the oil swindles, the circumstances of the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro, leader of the CDP and prominent statesman, etc. Just about every loud scandal leads to the setting up of yet another parliamentary commission to study the details, and identify and punish the culprits. All too often, however, the months and years of investigation produce mountains of paper which suck in the sword of the Italian goddess of justice, who is powerless to break through the clannish defences of the criminal dealers, reactionary politicians, mafiosi and secret services.

More than a hundred years ago Marx wrote: 'There must be something rotten in the very core of a social system which increases its wealth without diminishing its misery, and increases in crimes even more rapidly than in numbers.'¹ The book shows that these words remain just as relevant today.

Alessandro Monti

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 489.

New Books

The Party, the Class, the People, Partizdat, Sofia, 1986, 192 pp. (in Bulgarian).

AUTHORS from the Centre for Party Development, a division of the Academy of Social Sciences under the BCP Central Committee, have written this volume to examine important questions of methodology concerning the unity and cooperation of the Communist Party, the working class and the people in the new political, socio-economic and cultural conditions of developed socialism. The book focuses on the growing role of the party as the architect and organiser of the efforts to build

socialism and communism. In response to the BCP's topical decisions on developing socialist democracy, special attention is paid to the concerted action of the party and the working people in managing individual enterprises, collectives and society as a whole.

G. Z. Sorkin, *The Communist International Fighting Against Militarism and War*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1986, 173 pp. (in Russian).

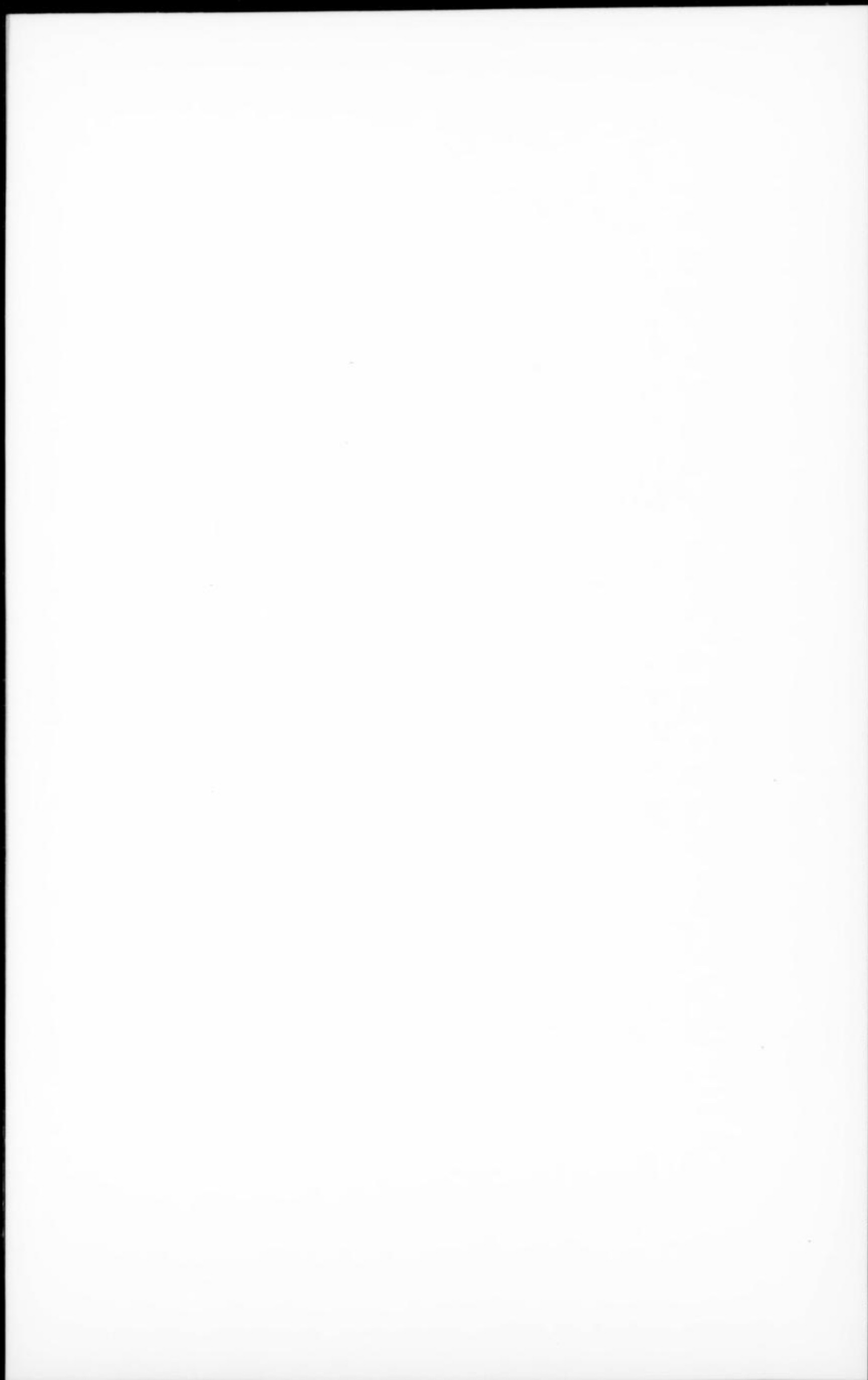
' "FIGHT for peace" must be the *central* slogan of communist parties.' This phrase, which recurred in the documents adopted at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, is the epigraph of the book under review. It deals with the anti-war struggle of the Communist International (1919-1943) and analyses the consistent policy pursued by the Marxist-Leninist parties to establish radically new international relations that would rule out exploitation, coercion and war. The author, who was a Communist International functionary for many years, cites historical facts to demonstrate that the Communists have always worked to deliver mankind from the horrors of imperialist wars, that socialism and peace are indivisible.

Claudia Stich, Manfred Balder, '*Derndruck*'—*ein Sieg der Solidarität. Zur Strategie und Taktik eines Kampfes* ('Derndruck'. A Victory of Solidarity. On the Strategy and Tactics of a Strike), Nachrichten-Verlags-Gesellschaft, Frankfurt on the Main, 1986, 112 pp.

THE authors are trade union activists from the FRG, and their book is about the forms and methods of the struggle the West German working people are waging for their rights. Stich and Balder cite the example of a strike the printing, woodpulp and paper industry workers of the Derndruck Company at Neu-Isenburg, near Frankfurt on the Main, staged from January to April 1985. The authors conclude that a well-organised and vigorous trade union local and the solidarity and support on the part of other unions are essential for a strike to be successful.

Muhammad Salman Ghanem, *Kuwait: An Analysis of a Parasitic Economy*, Institute of Workers' Culture, General Federation of Kuwaiti Industrial and Office Workers, Kuwait, 1986, 209 pp. (in Arabic).

THE years 1982 and 1983 were a turning point in the socio-economic development of this small oil-producing state on the Persian Gulf coast. For the first time since the oil boom, the country encountered crisis phenomena. Proceeding from ample factual evidence, the author, a well-known economist, demonstrates that these developments are not transitory or accidental but that they are a logical consequence of the policy pursued by the ruling quarters, aimed at putting the national economy at the service of the parasitic bourgeoisie and enabling the latter to accumulate huge wealth. Simultaneously, this policy preserves economic underdevelopment and the particularly brutal forms of exploitation of the working people, notably migrant workers. The author arrives at the conclusion that freeing the country's productive forces from the domination of the ruling class so that they would be used for constructive purposes and in the interests of the popular masses is the principal and urgent task.



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World Marxist Review is published by Progress Books,
71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 2P6.
Second class mail registration number 2352.
Printed in Canada.
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