

International VIEWPOINT

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years, the Cuban
revolution
faces a
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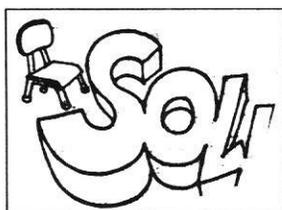
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International VIEWPOINT

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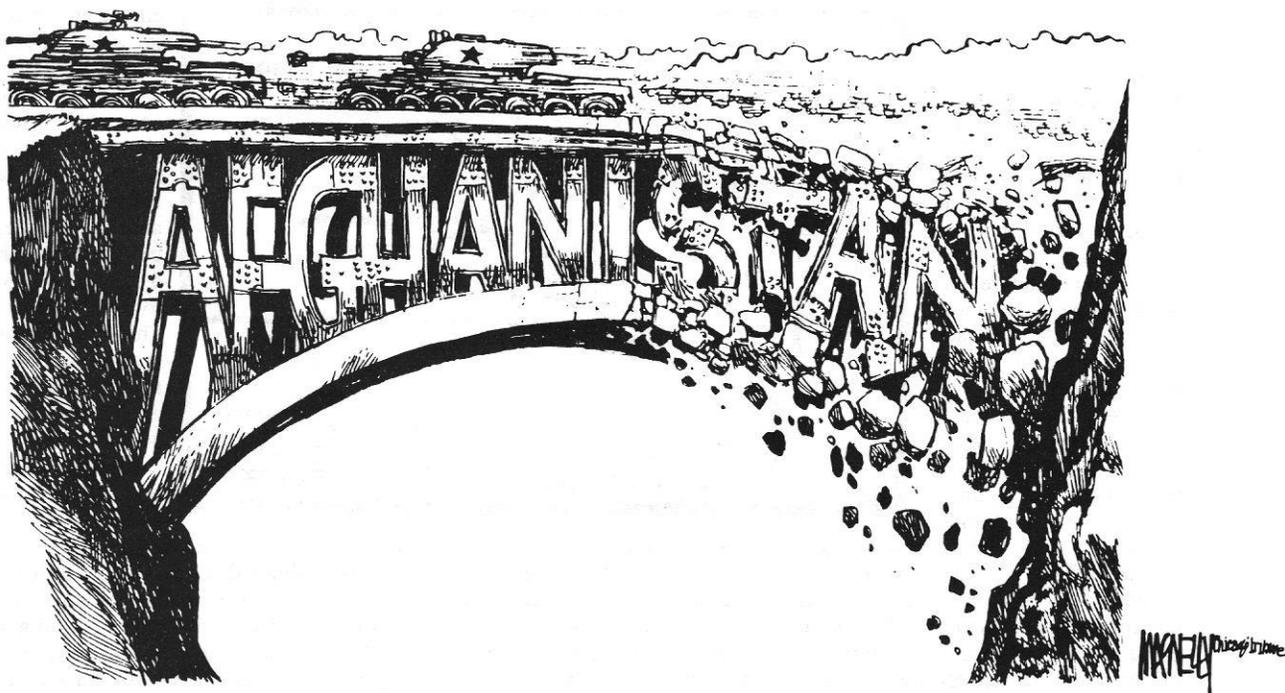
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Prospects after the Soviet military withdrawal

HOW CAN you explain the Soviet bureaucracy's decision to intervene militarily in Afghanistan?

The regime set up by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA¹) after the April 1978 putsch provoked an extension of a counter-revolution, which was in part a continuation of a struggle that developed after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1973. After 1978, the civil war widened considerably. The PDPA regime was accused of being Communist and atheist, and it drew the fire of a reactionary opposition relying on "feudal," tribal and religious bases in one of the most backward societies on earth. As far back as 1979, the future of the PDPA regime seemed very uncertain.

The overthrow of the Kabul regime by the counter-revolution seemed more and more probable, especially since the so-called Islamic revolution had occurred in Iran in February 1979. Fundamentalism had the wind in its sails throughout the region. Suddenly, the fundamentalist tendencies in the Afghan counter-revolution gained strength.

All this pointed to an overthrow of the Kabul regime by a force raising the standard of Islamic fundamentalism and lining up on this basis with Iran. For the Soviet bureaucracy, this was a grave danger. The fact that the regime that might succeed the PDPA was likely to be under fundamentalist domination posed an extremely grave problem for the Soviet bureaucracy — a

SINCE the Soviet soldiers have left Afghanistan, the divisions among the Mujahideen have paralyzed the work of the "Shura."

Despite the the Soviet proposal for a cease-fire and a halt to deliveries of arms by all countries to any of the forces involved, the United States has continued to aid the Afghan resistance.

In the following interview, Salah Jaber sums up the terms of the situation now.

possible extension of this fundamentalist wave into the USSR itself, into the republics inhabited by historically Muslim peoples.

■ Once the intervention was decided on, what policy did the Kremlin follow in Afghanistan?

Panic stricken, the Soviet bureaucracy decided in December 1979 on a massive military intervention. The political corner-

stone of this was setting up a more moderate regime headed by Babrak Karmal to replace that of the hard-line wing of the PDPA, the Khalq faction, which was denounced as ultra-leftist by Moscow. This aspect of things is often forgotten. The idea that the goal of the Soviet intervention was to transform the structures of the country along the East European model was totally out of line with the reality.

Moscow's objective was to stabilize a government subordinate to the USSR but adapted to the backwardness of Afghan society. Among the first measures of the Karmal regime were a retreat on the agrarian reform, political liberalization and a widening of the possibilities for free enterprise, and a rehabilitation of religion. All these measures went against those taken by the hard-line wing of the PDPA.

■ What has been Gorbachev's specific contribution?

Measures favoring liberalization and free enterprise have increased still more under Gorbachev. He could not fail to push in this direction, given his general policy orientation. In 1986, Karmal was replaced by the present president, Najibullah, a champion of the policy of "national reconciliation," which the Kremlin wanted to make a model for Central America, Africa, the Middle East and so on — a universal

1. People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, a petty-bourgeois party with socialist-populist tendencies and a putschist orientation.

model for which Afghanistan was to be the laboratory.

This "national reconciliation" policy involved going still further in liquidating the previous radical measures in the areas of agrarian reform, private enterprise and religion. This has gone so far that the Kabul regime figures as a bourgeois moderate regime less radical than other bourgeois experiments in the region.

Despite such concessions and an attempt by the regime to out-Islam the resistance, which has at times bordered on the grotesque, the search for "national reconciliation" ended in failure. On the one hand, it was rejected by the Mujahideen. On the other, it did not really change the relationship of popular forces throughout the country.

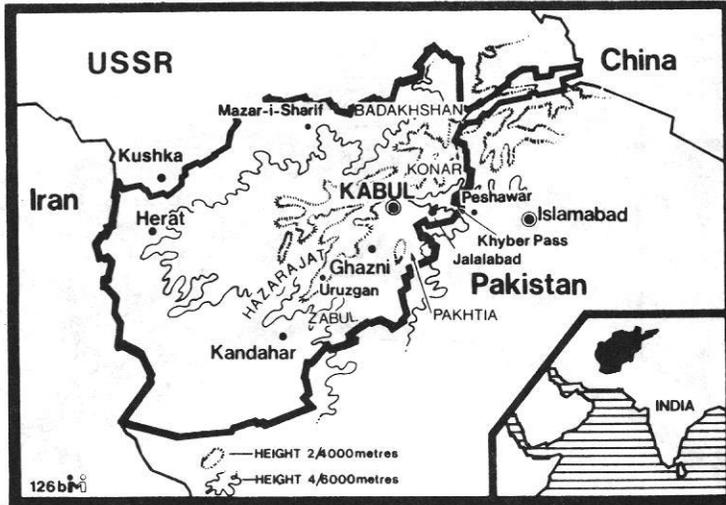
It is true that the liberalization and pro-free enterprise policy made it possible to neutralize certain layers in the cities that had tended to oppose the regime, such as the bazaar merchants. It also facilitated the collaboration with the regime of certain tribal forces, who switched alliances in return for generous aid in arms and money. But this did not really change the overall relationship of forces among the masses.

■ Why did this policy of national reconciliation fail so totally?

Because it is the national question that has played the decisive role in the Afghan war since 1980. The "puppet" character of the regime installed by the Soviet intervention was an almost insurmountable obstacle. This aggravated the original weakness of the regime owing to the bureaucratic dictatorial methods that it used to try to change Afghan society, even though the objective was to change it in a progressive way.

Because of its bureaucratic and dictatorial character, the PDPA regime alienated the masses from the outset, and has been unable to undertake the tasks of changing the society from below, with all that this involves in terms of patient educational work. The result is that the political force, or symbol, that holds by far the greatest popularity in Afghanistan — as confirmed by all the sources — is the former king.

In fact, inasmuch as the society is being returned to a state of things not radically different from the former regime, the masses are turning



toward a figure who represents stability by contrast with the nightmare of a ten-year-long war that has caused massive slaughter and destruction in an already very poor country. The Soviet intervention enabled what was at the start a Vendée-type uprising to assume, after 1979, the aspect of a national resistance movement.

■ Exactly what are the divisions in this "national resistance" movement?

The Soviet intervention produced the opposite of what was intended. Instead of eliminating the counter-revolution, it enabled the reactionary forces to increase their popularity considerably by waving the flag of national resistance to the Soviet invader. On the other hand, as regards the nature of these organizations, what is quite widely pointed up in all the press is their extreme heterogeneity.

On one side, there are eight Shi'ite organizations operating in the minority. On the other are the organizations working

among the large Sunni majority of the population, whose headquarters are in Pakistan. The Islamic Alliance of the Mujahideen includes seven organizations, of which four have Islamic fundamentalist programs and arose under the king, before the republican coup d'état in 1973, and well before the time of the PDPA. These fundamentalist organizations opposed the king, accusing him of being an atheist and in the pay of Moscow.

The other three organizations offer a program of reaction, of restoration, in the strict sense. They are generally called "traditionalist," and aspire to restore the state of affairs that existed under the monarchy. Thus, there are deepgoing differences among these seven organizations. This is why they have been unable to set up any credible united government.

Today, now that the Soviet withdrawal has been completed, what these organizations can propose in the positive sense become the important element, while this was relatively secondary when the objective was ending what was seen as a foreign occupation.

■ Can you be more specific about the nature of foreign intervention by other forces than the Soviet Union?

The fact is that even before the Soviet intervention the counter-revolution was already receiving direct aid, essentially from the United States, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The USSR took this as a pretext, calling it interference in Afghanistan's affairs, to justify its intervention. This obviously



was not a very convincing justification, inasmuch as the massive intervention of Soviet troops was out of all proportion to the aid given to the counter-revolution by the countries mentioned.

What is more, before its massive intervention, the Soviet Union was also providing a large amount of aid and had 5,000 "military advisors" on Afghan soil. World-wide reaction's aid to the Mujahideen increased considerably in the 1980, until, of all the centers of armed counter-revolution in the world, they are getting the largest amount of aid. And this aid is continuing after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

■ What role can the king play in a political solution?

Under Gorbachev, as far back as 1986, advances were made to the king, reflecting an attitude similar to that taken toward Sihanouk in regard to Cambodia, in the framework of the universal "national reconciliation" advocated by Gorbachev. The king has been careful not to make any positive response. He is well aware that the more difficult the position of the Kabul regime becomes, the greater will be his own role if he returned.

It is in his interest to return in a position of strength, as the arbiter in a blocked situation, insoluble for a PDPA unable to govern alone, but also with a counter-revolution too fragmented to be able to create a real central government. The king is emerging more and more as the only alternative to the general fragmentation of the Afghan situation.

■ Will Kabul fall quickly?

Now that the withdrawal has been completed, the question is, What is going to happen? The Western press has been claiming generally, and sometimes in a categorical way, that the Kabul regime is going to collapse — that this is a matter of days or weeks. What is the truth of the matter? First of all, on the Kabul regime's chances for surviving: This regime controls the country's big cities, while in the provinces and on the outskirts of the cities, there are zones controlled by the Mujahideen, where they circulate more or less freely.

On the strictly military level, the relationship of forces does not point to a rapid fall of Kabul, inasmuch as not only are the forces concentrated in Kabul larger than those surrounding the city but Kabul also has heavy weapons, including airplanes and tanks, which the Mujahideen do not have.

Everything will depend on the cohesion of the forces on both sides. If dissension breaks out in the PDPA, or if the infiltration by the Mujahideen is as extensive as Western sources claim, then Kabul will fall. However, it must not be forgotten that an estimated 3 million people are concentrated in Kabul, or about a third of the population living today on Afghan soil. Among these 3 million are 2 million refu-

gees who chose to go to Kabul and not to Pakistan.

Being in the encircled city already represents a choice. Nothing forced these people to go there. Moreover, the PDPA regime, like any state, has a social clientele, tens of thousands of functionaries, people whose fates are bound up with that of the regime. Facing a counter-revolution that gives no quarter, they are fighting with their backs to the wall, and this can be expected to increase their determination.

The Mujahideen are aware of the military relationship of forces, especially since they have very little capacity for uniting their forces in a coordinated offensive. This is why they have chosen to blockade the capital, waiting for it to fall from

within.

In a foreseeable future, a coalition with the king can come to the fore, against the background of "Lebanization" of the country, that is, its division into zones controlled by different forces. And in Afghanistan, there is a more multicolored mosaic of tribes, ethnic groups and religions than there is in Lebanon.

Moreover, even if the Kabul regime fell, the possibility of the Mujahideen agreeing on a single government is very slight. The PDPA could maintain itself in the regions bordering the USSR. Afghanistan is coming apart, in particular because of the withdrawal of Soviet army army, which represented a unifying factor both for the regime and for the opposition forces, for which it was a common enemy. ★

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The extraordinary life of Stompie Mokhetsi

SUSPECTED of complicity in the tragic affair of the Soweto killings, Winnie Mandela has been disgraced even in the eyes of ANC sympathizers. The United Democratic Front (UDF) and the trade-union federation COSATU have publicly dissociated themselves from Winnie Mandela. At the roots of the affair was her personal bodyguard, "Mandela's football team", which has now been dissolved.

A young 14-year-old militant, Stompie Mokhetsi, was assassinated. Mokhetsi was well-known as an outstanding "leader" of Soweto's army of hundreds of young boys, some of whom are under ten years old. Stompie was one of the township youth who played a particularly distinguished role in the troubles of 1985-87. His murder, in a conflict with members of "Mandela's football team", illustrates the present crisis inflicting the mass movement in some parts of South Africa since the period of big mobilizations. Gangs of youth have multiplied in some districts in the grey area between political agitation and delinquency, making the settling of scores only more ambiguous.

So why Winnie Mandela's entourage and why now? The main reason can be found in the social decomposition in some sectors of the townships and the negative political consequences that this

implies for the people's movement. Apartheid therefore remains the backdrop to this crisis. But other elements are superimposed.

First of all, the ANC has generally encouraged the media image created around the wife of its imprisoned leader, Nelson Mandela. This seems to have helped boost Winnie's dangerous autonomy. On the other hand, in the heat of the mass struggles from 1985 to 1987, some militants claiming to belong to the ANC were not loath to get involved in physical intimidation — if not lethal confrontations — with other political currents. It is very difficult later to put a stop to such methods, above all when confusion reigns and the future of the struggle looks uncertain.

So it is not implausible that the assassination of Doctor Abu-Baker Asvat, a national leader of the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO), that took place the same week was also carried out by Stompie Mokhetsi's murderers. Thus gang activity and political sectarianism intersect, all things that do a great deal of harm to the Black South African movement.

We are publishing below an article from the February 17 issue of the *South African Weekly Mail*. Stompie Mokhetsi's life illustrates extremely vividly the scope of the mobilization of young people from 1984-86 and its contradictions when it is distanced from political perspectives.

IN OCTOBER 1987, at the age of 13 and the height of less than four feet, Stompie Mokhetsi didn't think he would live much longer. "They can come and get me at any time," he remarked impassively to Peter Godwin, a British journalist who had tracked him down in Tumahole township. "I'm likely to die in the struggle," he said. "But the struggle will go on."

Stompie's predictions were proved correct in a forensic laboratory in Pretoria this week: a single identifiable fingerprint taken from his badly decomposed body put an end to weeks of speculation about his whereabouts.

Stompie's short life was extraordinary. At the time of the interview in Tumahole, the minuscule activist was arguably the best-known figure in the township. He was

the "little general" to an "Under-14" army of some 1,500 ghetto children. He had just resumed his "command" after spending a year on remand in prison and being acquitted on public violence charges.

The Under-14s, he explained, were formed in 1985 — when he was ten — because "the other groups were all talk and no action. We formed an army to protect the people from harassment." His youngest foot-soldier was eight. "We're braver than the adults," he said.

The child army fought physical battles with the municipal police — "Green Beans" — and right-wing vigilantes called the "A-Team".

When the Tumahole town hall was burnt down in 1987 it was rumoured to have been torched by the Under-14s in protest against the town councillors' refusal to allow the



Stompie Mokhetsi (DR)

hall to be used by the local civic association.

Many of his comrades affectionately called him *Tompsona*, a Zulu/Xhosa diminutive for the Afrikaans diminutive, Stompie. He'd inherited the nickname "Stompie" because of the apparent contradiction between his slight physique and overpowering presence. A stompie, in this sense, is a hard, unyielding thing.

"What is the direction, comrades?"

Friends — most of whom doubled as admirers, if not disciples — tell of him forever discussing politics. "What is the direction, comrade?" was said to be his catchphrase.

His personality touched many people beyond his immediate comrades. Professor Mervin Shear, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Witwatersrand, recalls being so struck by Stompie that he invited him to lunch.

The pocket-sized activist addressed a mass meeting at Wits in 1987: he entered the hall and mounted the stage carrying a businesslike black briefcase. Some felt he was emulating the Rev. Allan Boesak, whom he admired. Shear said after the meeting he saw Stompie "enthraling a large group of students who gathered round to hear his oratory. Students stood around with their mouths wide open" as the boy recited chunks of the Freedom Charter.

It was "one of those sensitive days" on campus, said Shear, and he was concerned that some people who were not "well-disposed towards Stompie" would take advantage of his presence. The vice-chancellor therefore invited Stompie to

lunch, along with Tiego Mosenke, ex-president of the Azanian Student's Organization, who translated between them when communication faltered.

Shear told the *Weekly Mail* he was amazed by the young character who related his experiences in detention. Shear was "very saddened" to see Stompie's picture in newspapers once he had disappeared.

He had been living in the Orlando Methodist Church sanctuary, set up for children whose home environments were devastated by the prolonged State of Emergency and widespread repression and violence in the townships.

Youngest detainee under the State of Emergency

At the age of 11 he'd been the youngest State of Emergency detainee in the country. His twelfth birthday was celebrated in a cell. After his release, it was rumoured Stompie had gone into hiding in Johannesburg. He'd already been expelled from school in Tumahole — his headmistress called the police when he tried to be readmitted.

While speaking to the London *Sunday Times* in 1987, he said he was worried about his education, and borrowed books from other children when he had a break from politicking.

Those who knew him while he lived in Johannesburg said he told them that while in detention, he was driven to agree to spy for the police. Yet, they say, he was later reunited with his "comrades", and was accepted back.

An ex-colleague in Johannesburg said the youngster could not only recite the Freedom Charter by heart, but also chunks of writing by Karl Marx. "He was a genius. For someone of his age he was very advanced. He had such an amazing understanding of the political situation in South Africa. We used to have political discussions. But it is not only the discussions I remember. No-one did the *toyi-toyi* [Zulu dance] like Stompie did."

Stompie is said to have hated watching television, and preferred discussion with his companions. Activists remember his sense of humour. He was considered a master at political jokes. "He could make a grim situation look like a picnic," said one.

On Christmas Eve last year, members of the Federation of Transvaal Women took food to the children at the Methodist Church sanctuary, and saw Stompie. One asked him whether he would go home to Tumahole for Christmas. Stompie declined: he feared "the system would harass him if he went home".

His mother told the *Weekly Mail* Stompie had been an active campaigner against the 1988 October municipal elections. Before his death he faced various charges under the Emergency Regulations in the Parys' Magistrates' Court.

He had visited his home, according to his

mother, on December 1 last year. She told the *Weekly Mail* that he had given her the only money he had at the time, a R5 note and some cents. He had also told his mother he was "happy at the home".

Stompie was a close friend of another child who died in the political turmoil of the 1980s — Sicelo Dhlomo. According to Dhlomo's mother, the boys had a special salute they used to greet each other. They slapped each other's palms, wrists and fists whenever they met. "They would sit in the kitchen and discuss political issues all day," she said. She has a wistful phrase for

the tragedy that, like her own son, befell Stompie. "He had a stompie of a life," she said.

The British reporter who spent time with Stompie in 1987 said there was "more to his personality than politics". He recalls his last memory of Stompie: "Sitting reading the newspapers at the table of township cafe, his feet not long enough to reach the floor, the child in him suddenly re-emerged. Asked what he wanted more than anything right now, his answer was "...a BMX bike, some new clothes that fit and something to eat." ★

Corporate Canada: workers are the ones who suffer

DURING the recent debate over the Mulroney/Reagan "free trade" deal, many Canadian nationalist voices were raised in protest against the supposed threat to Canada's sovereignty. Revolutionary socialists asked: whose sovereignty? Workers', or their Canadian bosses?

BARRY WEISLEDER

WE ARGUED that the real issue was the bosses' hidden agenda of social expenditure cutbacks, privatization and de-regulation of the economy in the interests of private profit.

A recent Statistics Canada report reveals that the sovereignty of Canadian big business was never in doubt. To the contrary, Canadian capital has safeguarded and even enhanced its sovereignty rather well, thank you very much. Since the mid-1970s, foreign ownership of the Canadian economy has declined steadily. In 1986, outside investors owned 23.6% of non-financial corporations, down 13% from the 1971 peak. Their share of profits fell 11%, down to 36%.

The Canadian corporate elite can, in part, thank former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Through the late 1970s and early 1980s his Liberal federal government's economic nationalist policies not only strengthened Canadian corporate control over the domestic economy. It stimulated an empire-building binge abroad — all at the expense of working class taxpayers and consumers. With more resources at their disposal, Canadian capitalists bought up US retail businesses, banks and real estate,

and also expanded their exploitative operations throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Canada, as a member of the exclusive G-7 club of imperialist countries, enters into the new trade deal with the US from a position of strength relative to twenty years ago.

Restructuring the North American economy

Canadian bankers may complain about proposed new laws that would permit domestic competition from US financial institutions, like American Express, but this did not prevent them from bankrolling the Conservative's re-election campaign. While Tory continentalism will undoubtedly disadvantage some sectors of Canadian capital, the biggest enterprises are big enough to benefit from greater access to the US market. (Naturally, they also appreciate the accompanying stepped-up attacks on the rights of labour in Canada.)

The trade deal will not transform Canada from a secondary imperialist power into a neo-colony. It will, however, accelerate the restructuring of the North American econo-

my — and the losers will be workers on both sides of the border. Already workers are being forced increasingly into low-wage, part-time jobs with few, if any, benefits and poor, unsafe working conditions. Plants will be freer to “run away” to lower wage, anti-union regions within and beyond the North American trade bloc.

Canadian capital is getting ready for the new era of North American protectionism. It is preparing to battle competitors in a market increasingly dominated by huge transnational firms with a global reach. The question is, how can Bay Street best use its considerable resources to achieve its objectives? Shaken by the stock market crash of October 19, 1987, big business is loath to invest in new plant and equipment. Instead, big capital moves to swallow up its smaller competitors in an insatiable drive towards monopoly control.

There is no shortage of very recent examples. When Molson and Carling O’Keefe breweries merged on January 18, they created a joint venture with a stranglehold on 53% of Canada’s beer market and sales of over C\$2.3 billion. When PWA, owner of Canadian Airlines International, bought Wardair for C\$241 million, the number of national airlines was reduced to two. Other important takeovers have been carried out recently by Imperial Oil, the Canada Malt- ing Co., and Royal Trustco.

Of course, the commercial media is less concerned with the inevitable result for

working people of such a wave of mergers and takeovers — namely, higher prices and interest rates, and thousands of jobs lost to corporate rationalization.

Mergers and takeovers cross borders in both directions. But Canadian capital is particularly well positioned to act now because it is so incredibly concentrated. In fact, Canada has the highest level of aggregate corporate concentration among Western industrialized countries. Although there are about 350,000 corporations in Canada, the top 25 control 35% of the business assets in the country, up from 30% in 1976. Their share of profits went up too, from 24% to 30%. Canada’s 100 largest non-financial corporations controlled 55% of the country’s business assets in 1986. By comparison, in Japan the top 100 control less than 25%; in the USA the figure is 28%.

Choosing sides is a dangerous diversion

Not surprisingly, the increase in corporate concentration over the past decade has coincided with a sharp rise in the number of large takeovers. In 1982 there were only two corporate acquisitions in excess of C\$100 million. Every year the number increased until 1987, when there were 47; last year there were 46 takeovers exceeding C\$100 million.

Pro-capitalist economists and academics say this is good because it will help Canadian corporations to compete internationally. But this will not be of any help to workers and the unemployed, here or abroad. As workers, our livelihood, our safety, our old-age security count for nothing on the financial ledger. Corporations are loyal only to one rule — the rule of maximizing profits.

Corporate concentration means anti-democratic concentration of decision-making authority in the hands of fewer and fewer businessmen whose gaze is fixed on the “bottom line”. The potential for economic error and waste, and the abuse of the rights and needs of humanity, grows exponentially with greater corporate concentration.

The big business media love to criticize “socialism” for being horribly bureaucratic, wasteful and tyrannical. Naturally, they don’t bother to explain that the usual objects of their criticism, social democratic-led capitalist governments or totalitarian Stalinist regimes, have little to do with real socialism. The truth is that capitalism is the system most guilty of tyranny and waste, not to mention that capitalism constitutes a threat to the very survival of the planet due to its profit-driven militarism and environmental destructiveness.

Choosing sides between “our” capitalists and those in the USA or elsewhere (an unfortunate preoccupation of liberals, social democrats and Canadian nationalists generally) is, at best, a dangerous diversion. ★

Debate on the national question in the USSR

THE PROBLEMS posed in the USSR and the way they are perceived must be clarified as much as possible “from within.” The article by Boris Kagarlitski in *International Viewpoint* 157 on February 20, contributes the point of view of a leader of the Moscow Socialist Initiative Club to a necessary debate.

Precisely because he is a militant known for his class and internationalist standpoint, it is important to discuss certain aspects of his assessment. In doing so, I do not claim to have ready-made answers to the difficulties that have been encountered. But let us at least try to begin the debate.

IN THIS article, I want to raise only one point. There is no equality between nations and languages in the USSR. Kagarlitski calls for such an equality. But he does so without taking into account the different status Russian enjoys from the outset by comparison with all the other languages. He therefore poses the problems faced by the Russian minorities outside the RFSSR as symmetrical with those of all the other nationalities and languages.



The lack of symmetry in fact indicates rather a different treatment of such problems, depending on whether they concern dominant nationalities and languages or dominated nationalities and languages.

Russian, as is well known, has been a vehicle of Stalinist domination. It remains, in particular in the army, an instrument of bureaucratic centralism. But it is well to avoid any simplistic approach.

Great Russian chauvinism suited Stalin

For one thing, for the bureaucracy it is its privileges and therefore its political power that are essential. The means are not very important. In this respect, pragmatism is the rule. While Great Russian chauvinism indeed "fitted in" with the oppressive centralism aspects of the rise of Stalinism, a recognition of centrifugal national tensions was and will be able to force the bureaucracy to seek national (or even nationalist) intermediaries to consolidate its own power. The most corrupt sort of Brezhnevite "national" bureaucracy dominated Kazakhstan and still dominates Ukraine.

Moreover, Russian domination does not mean that the Russian population is favored. It is not necessarily favored as regards the options of planned development. Also, it has "shared" in Stalinist repression and oppression with others, even been among the worst hit.

The impact of the Great Russian nationalist and anti-Semite organization Pamyat and its renowned "village" writers, such as Valentin Rasputin, reflects in a reactionary way the diffuse feelings of a population that was originally peasant en masse and religious in its culture and which was subjected brutally to forced collectivization and bureaucratic repression of the church. This population interprets its own oppression as a "Russian question."

Boris Kagarlitski is also right to say in the interview published in *International Viewpoint* (issues 151 and 152, November 14 and 28, 1988), that the Russians outside Russia are far from having always and everywhere been dominant. It is also true that the Russian immigrant workers in Estonia are unskilled workers and that they make up in fact the majority of the working class in this republic's big plants. That they are not responsible for this state of affairs.

Nor is the policy of Russification entirely (and perhaps not even primarily) the reason for it. The attraction of a republic more developed than Russia (offering a better living standard and better jobs) is sufficient to explain this tendency. Bureaucratic centralism facilitated this process by financing the hiring and housing of these workers in a planned way.

However, it remains no less true that Russian dominates in the Union and sometimes even in the regions. Therefore, even

Independent Lithuania! Independent Latvia! Independent Estonia!
— "And what if we organized a referendum?"
— "That's not funny, Rocarov!"



independently of a deliberate policy of Russification, the automatic processes favor Russian over all other languages, even if they have equal rights. Concretely, since Russian is a socio-economic vehicle facilitating mobility from one republic to another, a free choice of language impels people to learn Russian.

Taking the historical context into account

In his article, Kagarlitski uses an argument, "equal civil and cultural rights," which the English speakers also use in Quebec, basing themselves on (individual) freedom of choice and the right (which every individual is supposed to have to be the equal of any other) to use "his or her" language. Individual rights here collide with protection of threatened communities.

The English-speaking minority in Quebec is dominant in Canada, as the Russian minority in Estonia is dominant centrally (and may already be or become a majority in certain regions of Estonia or Latvia). It cannot be treated in the same way in general as "real" minorities. In brief, there is a need for specific protection against the strength of Russian.

This question obviously combines with the political crimes of the Stalinist past. The forced assimilation of the Baltic republics into the USSR requires a special recognition of the national feelings that are expressed in them. The role of the left in Russia, in particular, unquestionably is first of all to explain this past to the Russian working class in Estonia and get it to recognize the need for respecting the priority of the Estonian language within the republic and the right to self-determination of the Estonians.

Of course, reciprocally, the Estonians have every interest in winning the working class in their republic and in the USSR in general to their cause, if only to establish a relationship of forces against the bureau-

cracy. The present context of *glasnost* favors the spread of anti-bureaucratic struggle through the Union and to other East European countries. But this also requires that it be linked indissolubly with social questions and democratic, political and national demands.

This is why Kagarlitski is right to worry about social dimension of the program of the Estonian Front (but the problem arises everywhere) and about the struggle for a redefinition in general of the relations between the nationalities in the USSR; and, I would add, among so-called socialist countries.

Bureaucratic manipulation can exploit the national feelings of different nationalities in order to divide and rule. There can be no laxity toward this. In this respect also, Kagarlitski's article is useful. On the other hand, the point of view of the (Russian) working class should not be reflected by treating profoundly unequal national realities in a symmetrical way.

Right of veto for the republics

All this does not say what would be a better democratic form of links between nationalities and how a class point of view should be combined with national ones within a democratic Soviet federation. A right of veto for the republics over questions concerning them, accompanied by forms of real popular control over "national" representatives would undoubtedly be a means of establishing confidence. (Majority votes can be eminently oppressive when national questions are involved.)

It is up to those directly concerned themselves to decide whether it is useless or not to fight within the Union. But acceptance of unity with dominant nations necessarily involves the latter giving concessions and full recognition of the identity and rights of nationalities that have been dominated. ★

Debate over negotiations between Solidarnosc and the regime

AFTER SEVEN YEARS of repression and attacks on Solidarnosc, the regime's announcement that the union might be legalized — backed up by the beginning of discussions with its best known leaders and followed by the proposal of granting the opposition up to 40% of the seats in a future Polish parliament — could be interpreted as a major victory for the Polish workers.

The breach had in fact already been opened by the numerous Solidarnosc organizing committees that began appearing timidly in 1987 and then gathered momentum after the May and August strikes last year (despite the persistence of certain forms of repression).

Even so, the possibility now for organizing openly is a major gain.

CYRIL SMUGA

NONETHELESS, as *Tygodnik Mazowsze*¹ correctly notes, "When Lech Walesa signed the Gdansk accords 101 months ago, all Poland was aware of the importance of this development. Today, Solidarnosc is going to regain the right to a legal existence, but this is not being accompanied by the former euphoria and hopes."

The Walesa leadership's semi-official journal explained this situation in the following way: "The government has been forced to accept Solidarnosc, not because of a great uprising but due to pressure from the economic situation, the collapse of the system, the years of mass resistance, and by the strikes that took place several months ago — what is more in only around twenty enterprises and not in hundreds. This Solidarnosc, whose right to exist has been granted and not seized, does not have the taste of victory."

This explanation might seem plausible if, on the eve of the inaugural session of the round table, 12,000 workers, 95% of the workforce, had not begun a sit-in strike in one of Poland's big enterprises, the Belchatow open-pit lignite mine. They were demanding more equitable wages (in opposition to the contract signed by the management and the official union, the OPZZ) and a 30,000 zloty raise for all in order to compensate for the effects of the price rise.

This strike came in the wake of more than 170 strike mobilizations recorded in January 1989, and it was followed by 50 others in the first half of February.

The strike of the Belchatow workers, as well as dozens of others in which the demand for a 30,000-zloty raise for all reappeared like a common theme, clearly resulted from the drop in real wages registered in recent months. Inflation reached

80% in 1988, according to official estimates. It further accelerated at the beginning of this year. It would, therefore, be illusory to accept *Tygodnik Mazowsze's* explanation.²

In fact, there were a whole series of factors that could be expected to discourage the spontaneous development of strike mobilizations: the opening of negotiations and the short-term perspective of legality for the independent union; the fear that the negotiations would fail because of displays of impatience; and finally Lech Walesa's appeal for six weeks of social peace so as not to awaken sleeping dogs.

"More and more people are distrustful"

However, the precondition for such social peace is for the workers en masse to put their trust in the line pursued by their leadership and to wait for an improvement in their situation coming out of the round table. But this is not at all what is happening, and Walesa is quite aware of it.

At the meeting of Solidarnosc's national Executive Commission (KKW) on the eve of the negotiations Walesa stressed: "More and more people are mistrustful. 'Too bad, we don't believe it,' they say. 'In 1980, Walesa trusted them, and what did that lead to? Today it's the same thing.'

"My answer is simple: I don't believe it either. And I say, don't trust this clever fellow Walesa, don't trust the clever people in general. Put your trust in yourself, put your trust in the structures that we are going to build. As the group that has to approach the round table, we are opening up possibilities. We said what we would do, and we are doing it....So, the KKW and Lech Walesa

are going to win, and if the society is not ready, and does not take advantage of what we can manage to do, it will have no one to blame but itself....What matters is that the society seize on everything that will be gained from this round table."³

This rather demagogic declaration was an answer to the questions of some members of the commission about fears aroused among the ranks by the opening of the negotiations themselves. Grazyna Staniszevska, one of the commission members, said: "When I left to come here, they told me, 'don't let them sell out Solidarnosc'."⁴ Such fears were repeated at every level in the following few days during Lech Walesa's rallies in various big cities around the country.

In Lodz on February 22, the crowd even interrupted Walesa on several occasions, shouting the name of Andrzej Slowik, the historical leader of Solidarnosc in the region and a member of the Presidium of the National Commission at the time of the union's first congress in October 1981. Slowik has been pushed aside by the present leadership, and is a well-known opponent of its line.

In fact, going into 1989, Solidarnosc appears more divided than ever. Since the calling off of the strikes in May and again

1. Solidarnosc's main weekly, which follows a line close to the positions of Lech Walesa and Jacek Kuron. No. 279, January 25, 1989.

2. Likewise, it is hard to accept the explanation put forward by some of Walesa's overzealous champions in Solidarnosc, who are trying to present the current strikes as the result of manipulation by the official union confederation, the OPZZ.

3. Quoted in the *Nowohucki Biuletyn Solidarnosci* (the Solidarity bulletin in the Nowa Huta Lenin steel complex outside Cracow) 26, February 7, 1989.

4. *Bulletin d'information du Bureau de coordination de Solidarité à l'étranger* 211, February 22, 1989.

in August 1988, Lech Walesa's decision has been widely criticized. For example, when the decision to halt the mobilization reached Stalowa Wola, one of the bastions of the strike, "there were 5,000 to 6,000 strikers, the strike was growing, people did not want to end it."⁵

In the Gdansk shipyards "it became evident that he [Walesa] called a halt to the strikes without consulting the strikers. Someone asked the question: Is this a bad joke?"⁶ In the Manifest Lipcowy mine in Jastrzebie, the seat of the Inter-enterprise Strike Committee (MKS), "the discussion between Lech, the MKS and the [local] strike committee turned into a stormy altercation.... He called for stopping the strike. 'We are not leaving here,' he was told, 'without guarantees of personal security and without a date being set for negotiations on our demands.'⁷

Gap between leadership and young workers

A gap has opened up between the Solidarnosc leaders committed to seeking compromise, which they consider the only possible solution; and the young workers in the forefront of the fight in the recent strike waves. It was further widened by Lech Walesa's reaction to the announcement of the closing of the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk last November.

A reporter from the clandestine press present described the general assembly held at the time as follows: "Walesa's speech was awaited in a tense atmosphere because he had previously announced his intention to call for starting preparations for a strike. But, to the surprise of a section of the workers, especially the youth, the chair of Solidarnosc said that 'the government has to be given a few days more,' and also that he was 'waiting for the country's reaction.' Then he called on people to disperse."⁸

A strike had just begun at the nearby naval repair yard in solidarity with the workers at the threatened Lenin shipyard. "Walesa admitted that he had not given any information about this, since, along with Szablewski [Solidarnosc chair at the Lenin yard], he had previously called on the strikers to go no further. When he was asked what the strike was about, if it was a 'youth revolt,' he said that it was 'insubordination'."

These tensions were further aggravated during the strikes at the beginning of 1989. In Belchatow, Alojzy Pietrzyk, a Solidarnosc leader participating in the round table "thanks to his rhetorical ability and the workers' fatigue finally managed to get them to agree to an interim payment of 21,000 zlotys, somewhat less than the management had been ready to offer." This was after he had to "answer telephone calls from the Solidarnosc team in Warsaw, worried that the strike had been provoked by party officials keen to torpedo the round

table talks."⁹

After what many saw as treason, the strikers at the Laznia steelworks in Upper Silesia, a region that he represents in the union leadership, along with others, refused to allow him into their plant. So, even before the debates over the round table entered their decisive phase, General Jaruzelski's regime had gained an initial victory. The positions taken by Solidarnosc leaders spread disarray in the mass movement, divided it and helped to disarm it.

In deciding to undertake these negotiations, despite fierce opposition from a not inconsiderable part of the Polish Communist Party's Central Committee and no doubt still more extensive opposition from its intermediate apparatus, the team headed by Premier Mieczyslaw Rakowski and General Jaruzelski are first of all seeking to rebuild a measure of legitimacy for the bureaucratic regime in Poland.

In an article published in the form of an editorial in the weekly *Polityka*¹⁰ just after the decisions adopted by Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee of the PZPR (Polish United Workers' Party, the CP), one of the CC members, Zdzislaw Cackowski, wrote: "We are not safe from social revolt.... Most people... think that the party is necessary



for Poland, but this is more tolerance than active support. And, what is worse, the party does not have the support of great masses of its members, who are tired from difficult experiences, fearful, used to administrative actions and to the idea that power has been given to the party once and for all.... The danger of the party losing power is real....

"Opposition is a fact, and it exists in two forms. One is constructive, constitutional opposition, ready for dialogue. The other is extremist, anti-system opposition. The first is already legal for all practical purposes. The second type of opposition is dangerous. There are two preconditions for accomplishing the necessary task of undermining it — improving the socio-economic situation and collaborating with the constructive opposition.

"This constructive opposition is indispensable in the long run, both for Poland

and for the party. In the short run, it is necessary as a continuing critical alternative to the government."

Thus, legalization of Solidarnosc has been made conditional on a section of its leaders accepting a cynical liberalization project ("40% democratic elections" and the establishment of an all powerful presidency, for which Jaruzelski is a candidate) and the institution of a market-economy reform.

The latter is supposed to open the way for restructuring industry by the closing or sale to foreign capital of a series of enterprises and the development of a private sector. A statute on the functioning of the economy drafted by the government notably puts private and public enterprises on an equal footing as regards taxes and access to producers' goods. It also abolishes restrictions on employment in the private sector, as well as those concerning prior authorization for trading abroad.

In fact, this is only a formal equality. Another law concerning financing of public enterprises provides for their paying large dividends to the state on their capital. They will therefore be subjected to still more onerous taxation than today (65% of capital gains), much higher than the private sector.

Moreover, the economic reform is also designed to meet the exactions of the International Monetary Fund, which, according to Polish finance minister Andrzej Wroblewski, is demanding a 10% cut in the population's living standards.¹¹

Discussion about how far compromise can go

For several months, the Solidarnosc leaders have been discussing how far the compromise can go. In November 1988, Jacek Kuron wrote: "If eliminating the nomenklatura is to mean that these people will lose everything, there is no way to accomplish such democratic changes in a peaceful way. But I think that the question is not, or at least should not be, posed in those terms.

"To be a manager, you need at least a minimum of organizational experience. However, for the moment, only members of the nomenklatura have been able to gain such experience. This is why, contrary to what is generally accepted, I think that a lot of them — in favorable conditions — have good chances for creating private enterprises and private companies, for winning competitions and being elected in the framework of self-management.... Likewise, the top of the nomenklatura can — again in favorable conditions — hold on to a good part of the political power for a long

5. *Tygodnik Mazowski* 282, September 7, 1988.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Tygodnik Mazowski* 270, November 9, 1988.

9. Feature by Christopher Bobinski, *Financial Times*, February 10, 1989.

10. No. 4, January 28, 1989.

11. *Przegląd Wiadomości Agencyjnych* (Warsaw Solidarnosc) 3, January 20, 1989.

time.

"Such favorable conditions will exist if the reforms are carried out with the participation of the PZPR. All this obviously involves a great risk from the standpoint of the nomenklatura. But turning their backs on the reforms and continuing to ruin the country increases the real danger that they will end up losing everything."¹²

Policies created open crisis in the union

Also in November, the KKW declared, shortly after the announcement of the closing of the Gdansk shipyard, "We agree that if a real economic reform were undertaken, it could lead to closing down enterprises. But it is the laws of the market that should decide this, alongside the principles of economic accounting, and not arbitrary political decisions."¹³

The adoption of such positions have provoked an open crisis in the union. One of the leaders of Solidarnosc's Inter-Enterprise Committee in Warsaw wrote: "1) The PZPR has a nomenklatura that knows better. Solidarnosc has a nomenklatura that knows better. 2) The PZPR's nomenklatura has concentrated a political power in its hands that it is jealously guarding. Solidarnosc's nomenklatura has also. 3) The PZPR nomenklatura has a monopoly of information and propaganda. The Solidarnosc nomenklatura is an excellent pupil...."

"The PZPR and the Solidarnosc nomenklaturas know that Poland is heading toward a revolution, and they fear that above all, because this revolution will sweep away both nomenklaturas."¹⁴

For its part, the Working Group of the National Commission of Solidarnosc, made up of about thirty historic leaders of the union pushed to the sidelines by the Walesa wing, demanded again in December that a meeting of the union leadership be called in accordance with Solidarnosc's statutes. Lech Walesa categorically refused.

However, what is new is that in two documents that came out of the NC meeting, Andrzej Gwiazda, the former vice-chair of Solidarnosc, and three leaders from the Lodz region respectively tried to offer an alternative line for leading the union.

In the document proposed by Gwiazda, it says: "Thanks to the support of the US State Department, the policy of an understanding and reform got the upper hand. This policy is entering into a period of success and implementation. This has to be an understanding by means of which the group prepared for compromise — that is, the so-called constructive opposition — will get political concessions in exchange for guaranteeing the system's economic interests.

"This means a commitment from a section of the opposition groups to keep the society from rebelling against the drop in

its standard of living, against increased exploitation. The economic reform, as can already be seen, means turning state enterprises into stock companies formed by organizations and private individuals. Obviously, this will not be done by buying out these assets."

Therefore, he called on Solidarnosc activists to fight for wage increases everywhere, to organize trade-union groups in the stock companies and in the private sector and "not to waste time or money to make a show of participating in religious assemblies."¹⁵

The Lodz leaders, for their part, wrote that "no real union anywhere in the world can accept concessions that would mean: a) a drop in the standard of living of the workers, retirees and others living on pensions...; b) working conditions that threaten the workers' health and lives; c) unemployment as a means of tightening labor discipline; d) lengthening the workday by whatever means and reducing the right to rest; e) dismantling or cutting the system of social security.... We declare that if the union is to remain true to itself, it cannot turn into a political party nor recognize the leading role of any party."

The adoption of such positions, as well as the strike mobilizations, led the national leadership of Solidarnosc to put forward demands at the round table that were previously regarded as excessive, or even utopian. They demanded for example, at least for a transitional period of a year, establishing a sliding scale of wages and reducing the military budget by 20%.

Explaining that "the essential precondition for the success of the accord and carrying out its decisions is a broad acceptance of the concessions that we will have to make," the editors of *Tygodnik Mazowski* (Solidarnosc's central journal) said that "the basic question will be to limit inflation and unemployment" (which the Solidarnosc leadership seems to accept).¹⁶

Voices raised against anti-strike agreement

Likewise, at the January 20-21 meeting of the KKW, voices were raised against accepting an anti-strike agreement. Jacek Kuron said: "It is an aberration to say that there will be no strikes. We can say that we are not going to start them, that they are harmful and even that we are going to hold them back, but that is all. In fact, the pressure for strikes will be enormous."¹⁷

The opposition among the ranks and the voices raised here or there affect the way that leadership around Lech Walesa negotiates and puts forward its point of view. But its general strategy continues to be designed to impose a market economy reform and gain legalization of the union through a deal with the regime.

One of the features of the present situation, moreover, is that the strikes continue to be isolated, even though the demands are

often similar. The lack of coordination in struggles, which has been a tradition of the Polish working class since 1980, shows how weak and fragmented opposition to the KKW remains.

In order to combat this, the Polish Socialist Party—"Democratic Revolution" (PPSRD) took the initiative of organizing a national congress of those opposed to a pact with the regime. It appealed to "all those who want to shape the country's future in a fight for full democracy and sovereignty not through another deal with the ruling elite" to coordinate their activity and support "the new waves of social protest."

Held February 25 in Jastrzebie, this congress was attended by 58 delegates representing the Independent Student Union (NZS), the Fighting Solidarnosc Organization (OSW), the Solidarnosc Inter-Enterprise Workers' Committee, the Peace and Freedom movement (WiP), the Independent Poland Confederation (KPN), as well as Solidarnosc groups from various enterprises in Upper Silesia and Wroclaw. Some 120 other delegates were arrested by the police as they tried to go to the meeting.

Anti-labor model of economic reform

Except for the representatives of the KPN, all the other delegates adopted the following position: "The congress of the anti-system opposition is a political movement whose goal is to abolish the PZPR's monopoly of power and achieve complete political and economic democracy, including free elections. To this end, the opposition activists in the congress see the need for supporting politically and organizationally the social mobilizations that are developing, especially the strikes...."

"In the present situation, there are no political or economic reasons that would justify the attempts to convince the workers to abandon the fight for their interests. The main cause of inflation is not raises in starvation wages but the zealous repayment of the foreign debt through exports. We will support the round table discussions only on condition that they are not used to hold back the workers' protests. The anti-labor model of economic reform adopted by the round table negotiators is unacceptable, and serves only to legitimize and maintain the totalitarian regime of the People's Republic of Poland."¹⁸ ★

12. *Tygodnik Mazowski* 272, November 23, 1988.

13. *Tygodnik Mazowski* 270, November 9, 1988.

14. Article by Edward Mizikowski in *CDN-Glos Wolnego Robotnika* 250, November 28, 1988.

15. These documents were widely commented upon in the underground press. This is something new, because until now a blackout was in force against the positions of the Working Group. They were also reprinted in an official weekly, *Polityka*, No. 2, January 14, 1989.

16. *Tygodnik Mazowski* 279, January 25, 1989.

17. *Ibid.*

18. The text was transmitted by telephone by the Wroclaw regional bureau of the PPS.

The new Polish left

AT THE BEGINNING of this year, *International Viewpoint* reporters met Jozef Pinior of the Polish Socialist Party-Democratic Revolution (PPS-RD). He gave the following description of his party's development.

JOZEF PINIOR

THE FORMATION of the Polish Socialist Party corresponds to a particular moment in the evolution of Polish society and the contradictions maturing within it.

The Stalinists' seizure of power at the outcome of the war had a genuinely revolutionary progressive aspect, reflected by the elimination of capitalist privileges and feudal vestiges, which led to large-scale social mobility. On the other hand, the entire society was immediately placed under the tutelage of the nomenklatura, backed up by a Soviet political and military presence.

The anti-capitalist changes were not simply the product of manipulation from above. They corresponded to the aspirations of the Polish masses, aspirations that were expressed notably in the anti-Nazi resistance. Because of this, a section of the society was able to identify with the new system. But, since the regime dismantled the civil society, the traditional divisions between the progressive left and conservative right lost their relevance. In an atomized society, the only means of identification is where you stand toward the existing authority.

Through episodes of working-class activity — in 1956, 1970, 1976 and 1980 — an anti-bureaucratic consciousness took shape. This involved the civil society becoming aware of its existence as such, separate from the state. The high-point of this process of becoming conscious was in 1980, when Solidarnosc appeared. It was a trade union, but also an overall movement of the society against totalitarianism. At that time, the PZPR lost all legitimacy, and came to

WE AGREED
TO HAVE A ROUND
TABLE!!



be seen as a party for exercising power.

With the 1981 coup d'état, the bureaucracy tried to solve the problem by force. But it very quickly became conscious that it was indispensable to use political levers to control the society. The society won two historical successes on the way to achieving its emancipation, which are irreversible without reverting to a repression on the scale of that employed by Stalin.

Classical mechanism of capitalization

It broke the nomenklatura's monopoly over information and organization. Then a new form of public life began to take shape. It became clear that there are different interests within the society in the course of emancipating itself. In this way, the right-left division reappeared within Polish politics, although its new content has not yet been clearly defined.

The leadership of the nomenklatura became aware that it had to make changes in order to render the economy more efficient and preserve its power. In our opinion, they are trying to reinforce their political domination over the means of production by relying on the classical mechanism of capitalization. So, we are seeing a process of bourgeoisification of the nomenklatura.

They want to use capital in its classical form to bolster their power. In this framework, the Polish bureaucracy is putting forward an authoritarian model of social development. In order to be able to succeed, it absolutely needs some legitimacy. The liberalization underway represents an attempt to gain it. From this standpoint, the latest position adopted by the PZPR Central Committee is characteristic. It involves political and trade-union pluralism but not political democracy. It is the schema of an unenlightened monarch granting concessions to the people.

From the point of view of the society, the line of cleavage runs as follows. On the one side are those who call for turning away from the totalitarian system toward a social authoritarian model. On the other are those who are demanding a radical political democracy.

Besides the Catholic hierarchy, a part of the opposition commonly called the "shad-

ow establishment" is willing to legitimize this authoritarian road. This involves Solidarnosc's most influential intellectual advisors and some highly reputed union leaders, such as Walesa, Bujak and Frasnyniuk.

These people think that there is no other solution because of geopolitical limitations, and therefore we should be satisfied with what is possible. What is more, they are convinced that free-enterprise is the most efficient economic model, and therefore are ready to accept its social logic. This group has completely forgotten the self-management alternative that was so clearly expressed during the period when Solidarnosc was legal. From them, it is a utopia.

Another part of the opposition rejects the authoritarian model, and proposes a model of social emancipation from below, of direct democracy. This is where many factory structures of Solidarnosc stand. They aspire to a legal trade-union organization, but not at the price of submission to the regime. It is on this level that the most elementary form of spontaneous self-management consciousness emerges.

Various left currents reappearing in Poland

In this same current is the new left, grouped primarily in our party, the Polish Socialist Party-Democratic Revolution. And here we find also currents reappearing in Polish political life — the anarchists (who demonstrated in October against the intervention in Central America) and the radical pacifists.

Finally, in this current of the opposition, there are also groups that do not define themselves as left but have in common with the left the demand for radical political democracy. This is the case, for example, of Fighting Solidarnosc. From the standpoint of its ideology, it is neither left nor right, and it does not want to define itself. But when you discuss with them what should be done when the nomenklatura shuts down the factories, they answer "an active strike." This shows that, in practice, such groups are our allies.

The birth of the Polish Socialist Party is the result of the awareness of the stakes bound up with the bureaucracy's project. This consciousness has appeared inde-

pendently in various structures of the Polish opposition. In the summer of 1987, some Solidarnosc and WiP structures in Wroclaw came into contact with the group publishing the journal *Robotnik* in Warsaw. It proved that we held a similar assessment of the situation, and we came to the conclusion that it was necessary to begin to build a left alternative for the young generation of the Polish opposition.

We then had a choice. Either to create a left current within Solidarnosc or create a left political structure outside of it. We reached the conclusion that the second choice was better, because no one can have an ideological monopoly in Solidarnosc. The left alternative could not define itself in the trade-union framework. We have not, however, abandoned the arena of trade-union struggle.

We work inside Solidarnosc as union members for a real trade-union struggle, for trade-union structures that are real instruments for defending the workers.

As the PPS-RD, we are not forming an anti-Walesa leadership. This is a process in Solidarnosc itself, in which our members and the proposals they can make have an influence. But it is trade-union and not party members who are taking up this struggle.

So, our idea was clear. It was necessary to create a clearly defined political alternative outside Solidarnosc, and inside to work in the enterprise structures for a union that would be a real tool for defending the workers. Since up until then in Poland there had been no force that clearly defined itself as left, we wanted the platform to be as broad as possible, so that it could include all those who stood on the left, from social democrats to the revolutionary left to anarchists.

A wide-ranging left regroupment

Our aim was to form at the outset a wide-ranging left regroupment. We did not see that such a vague political grouping was artificial, that it would break up under the pressure of divergent interests within it. That was an error.

We had put a lot of hope — which later proved to be only illusions — in what we called “the old left.” This is the group linked to Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik and Jan Jozef Lipski. For a long time, I was very close to Kuron’s positions. For me, he was still the author of the Open Letter to the PZPR [a critique of Stalinism from the left that came out of the experience of the 1950s]. Jan Jozef Lipski’s adherence to the Socialist Party’s project was very important in our eyes. But it very quickly became clear that there were fundamental differences among us.

This emerged at the founding of the PPS in November 1987, in the PPS’s first political statement. In this document, there were passages unacceptable to the Wroclaw

group and to the *Robotnik* group in Warsaw. There was its vague character, the unfortunate statement that Jean-Paul II’s social teaching was closer to us than Marxism, its general nature that gave no indications for the party’s activity.

However, we swallowed our objections, because unity at the outset with all the left seemed more important to us than these differences. We thought that our practice would determine our program. Very quickly, it became evident that Lipski’s practice and ours were going in opposite directions. The moment of truth was the application of a sharp price increase on February 1, 1988.

We responded with an immediate statement saying that the workers had the right at that point to resort to strikes. The rest of the opposition, including Lipski, thought that strikes were not in our interest.

We did not limit ourselves to words but acted to bring about strikes. Then an open conflict broke out between us and the establishment. At this point, Lipski resigned, hurling accusations at us.

Radical current of PPS active in the strikes

The split in the PPS in February 1988 could have sounded the death knell of the attempts to create a political left in Poland. Not only did Lipski and his friends break with us, but in the confusion a certain number of regional socialist groups adopted a wait-and-see position.

They did not understand what was at stake in the debate, and refused to join either party.

The situation could have seemed desperate, but then May came and the strikes. It became clear that the radical current of the PPS was in the plants and in the strikes. It was the factories and the streets once again that determined the situation in Poland. Then we reached the conclusion that it would be healthier to have two socialist parties in Poland, and we wish Lipski’s party success in the arena it has chosen. For us, the mere fact that they use socialist references is important in a society where these have been totally compromised by the Stalinists.

Our ideology and our program have come out of our trade-union, self-management, anti-militarist and counter-cultural activity. In our opinion, the political currents characteristic of Western reality — social democrat, Trotskyist, socialist, anarchist — are in a certain way untranslatable into the language of our reality.

If a real left alternative emerges in the East, it will have to have a new content. It will certainly be impregnated with the left thought present in the West. But, above all, it will have to be the fruit of the experience of the struggles waged here against the regime of the nomenklatura.

In 1988, the PPS-RD was in the forefront of the workers’ struggles. After the strikes,

we did not play at the round table. We organized big street demonstrations in Wroclaw and Warsaw. Of course, we sought unity in action with others, in Wroclaw with Fighting Solidarnosc, in Warsaw with the MRKS (the Inter-Enterprise Workers’ Committee of Solidarnosc). The initiative came from us. The others joined us.

“Our appeals are getting a mass response”

The December 13 demonstrations showed that our appeals to the society are getting a mass response. Some 15,000 people came into the streets in Wroclaw. That is a social force.

Our practice has enabled us to work out a platform, which we have entitled “The Democratic Revolution.” We are perfectly aware of the inadequacy of our references. But we think that it is very important that our program be an open-ended one, that it be able to incorporate our experience as we acquire it. This is why in our party there are programmatic fractions. An example is the Revolutionary Left Current (NLR), which identifies with classical Trotskyism. Another group, the dominant one in the party at the moment, is called the “New Left.” Its bastion is Wroclaw.

Another group — I do not know what to call it — defines itself with respect to the history of pre-war Polish Socialist Party, which was always very left and wrote some outstanding pages in the history of the working-class movement.

The historic leader of this current, Puzak, died in a Stalinist prison, and the old PPS never yielded to Stalinism. The young people who identify with this tradition are very attached to preserving these symbols. But they are not social democrats, because they do not want an understanding with the nomenklatura. In this regard, they have nothing in common with Lipski. Finally, the party includes tendencies that take the counterculture as their point of departure, anarchistic currents and so on.

Today, the PPS-RD is the best implanted of all the socialist groups on a national scale. Our groups are active in the departments of Cracow, Gdansk, Katowice, Lublin, Plock, Przemysl, Szczecin, Warsaw and Wroclaw, where we are the strongest.

If the shadow establishment continues to legitimize the bourgeoisieification of the nomenklatura, sooner or later the Polish society is going to look for an alternative within the opposition. Then the left opposition can be this natural alternative, because all those who refuse to let themselves be fooled are going to revolt both against the nomenklatura and the shadow establishment that legitimates it.

We are working to build such an alternative. Of course, we are still very weak. Most of the society has confidence in Walesa and the bishops. In our camp, above all, are the young workers, the university and high school students. ★

The Polish Socialist Party in the plants

CZESLAW BOROWCZYK is a worker at the Dolmel engineering plant in Wroclaw. He was fired because of his union activity. A national leader of the PPS-RD, he is also spokesperson of the Solidarnosc organizing committee at Dolmel.

JACEK SUCHOROWSKI is a worker at the Hutmen foundry in Wroclaw, where he leads the Solidarnosc committee. He is one of the PPS-RD leaders in the city.

MILKA TYSZKIEWICZ is one of the leaders of the countercultural surrealist movement "Alternative Orange." A national leader of the PPS-RD, she edits the PPS-RD's Wroclaw bulletin, *Nowa Lewica* ("New Left").

WHAT IS the PPS-RD's attitude to Solidarnosc?

CB: We have decided to devote the bulk of our forces to building the Solidarnosc structures in the enterprises. We distribute the factory union bulletins in front of the gates, and we participate in their publication. In Wroclaw, for example, we are involved in building Solidarnosc factory structures at Dolmel, Hutmen, Polar, Hemitex, Pilmel and Hydral.

JS: Today the conflict between the regional and national union leaderships and the factory structures is widening. The leaderships have in fact ceased to operate. They are waiting for the round table. The people on the shopfloor are tired of this waiting. The workers have to tighten their belts, when at every step they run up against waste. The young people are sensitive to this. They aspire to other social choices, other investment choices — for example, a cut in arms spending to expand the building of houses.

They are hostile to the economic reform, because they see what it is leading to in the plants, a drop in the real incomes of the workers and deterioration in production (there are not even tools any more to work!) Striking seems to be the only way out, as long as this process of impoverishing the plants and the workers themselves is not ended. To force through such changes, strikes are necessary, not cold negotiating.

Recently, in our plant, all the clandestine and public structures together protested about wages, appealing to the manager and the Self-Management Council. If the management does not accept our demands, we will begin an action — first a ban on overtime and then a strike.

We know that the Self-Management Council will support us, because the conflict is between the manager and all of the workers. Unfortunately, we also already know that the Solidarnosc regional leadership around Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk will not support us.

■ If the Solidarnosc leaderships accept self-limitation by the union in exchange for its legalization, what attitude will the plant union structures take?

CB: The public union structures will certainly take advantage of this legal framework, even if it is narrow, but without any intention of respecting its limits, in particular as regards the right to strike. What is more, almost everywhere there are parallel union structures, public ones and clandestine ones. The latter will continue to function as they do today, because people remember that above all you cannot show your enemy all your cards.

MT: The self-management structures are operating legally on the basis of a law dating back to 1981, which in fact represented a compromise between the demands of the masses and the projects of the regime at the time. Given the present situation, it is a rather good law. At the beginning of the year, the second national meeting of self-management structures took place in Wroclaw. Some 215 delegates took part. It was entirely devoted to the question of the necessary political reforms. Through trying to manage, they also arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to change the political system. Once Solidarnosc has to accept the constraints of respecting this legality, it will be put in the same situation, and that will not fail to have effects on the con-

sciousness of the rank-and-file activists.

JS: When Walesa signs the accord with the government, Solidarnosc is going to divide between those who are already tired and above all else long for some stabilization, and those — the young people first of all — who will not accept being co-opted. I don't think that the plant unions will accept what goes against their interests.

■ How did it happen that you find yourself in conflict with your former comrades in struggle, like Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk, for example?

CB: For a long time, up till 1987, I was very close to Frasnyniuk. It was at the time of the formation of the public regional leadership (RKW) that our paths parted. I was asked to join it. I thought that a leadership could not be appointed from above, that it had to be made up of plant delegates. When the Dolmel plant organization adopted a different attitude from Walesa's toward the anti-crisis pact, the RKW censored the journal. They transformed the resolution from the clandestine plant committee into total support for Walesa.

So, the plant commission decided to go independent. It is such attitudes that are impelling more and more rank-and-file Solidarnosc activists to demand a new election of the union leaders. This is the only way to preserve unity. After refusing to hold such elections, under various pretexts, some regional leaderships have had to yield.

But in Warsaw and Wroclaw, the establishment has already prepared slates of those who are to be elected and those whose election must be prevented. This is, in a way, a repetition of what we have been experiencing for more than 40 years in Polish political life.

MT: In Warsaw, the union establishment has presented an organizational scheme for electing the union leadership. This proposal limits the plant structures to 50 per cent of the delegates, and distributes the rest to the central structures (press, information, outgoing leadership, and so on), to the Church and even to the Industrial Association, which is a grouping of former oppositionists tempted by the perspective of creating enterprises and accumulating capital, and which thus has nothing in common with trade-unionism. ★



Rajiv Gandhi on the wane

THE DECLINE of Rajiv Gandhi since his unprecedented sweep to power in the 1984 general election after his mother's assassination has been rapid. The most recent example is the defeat of his Congress Party in the elections in the state of Tamil Nadu in the third week of February.

Congress came in a poor third, after the Jayalitha faction of the Tamil regionalist party, the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). (The AIADMK has been split between the factions led respectively by the wife and mistress of the deceased former film-star premier of the state. Jayalitha was the mistress.) The winner was the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam), the party most favorably inclined to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, who represent one of Rajiv's thorniest foreign policy problems.

M. Navid, a leader of the Indian section of the Fourth International, described the changing political situation in India in an interview given to Gerry Foley at the end of 1988, as well as the impact of Rajiv's failure in Sri Lanka.

WHAT ARE the prospects for a change in the Indian political situation?

The decay of the Rajiv regime does not come as a surprise to our organization. We predicted it. We said that the central framework in which you have to look at Indian politics is that there is an endemic crisis of political leadership. Rajiv Gandhi cannot solve it, and no foreseeable successor can either. So, you have a peculiar sort of paradox between an endemic crisis of bourgeois political leadership, but within the framework of an overall durability of the political system. We have been having a series of political crises that have not sharpened to the extent that you see a large-scale social confrontation.

You have to understand that since the decline of the Congress Party in the late 1960s, there has been no adequate replacement for it for the bourgeoisie. So, elections have taken on a sort of plebiscitary character. By that, I mean two things. First, programs are no longer that important for different political parties. There are a number of reasons for this. One is that the electorate has acquired a considerable experience. They know that these different bourgeois parties are not going to be able to

fulfill their particular programs. They've heard it all before.

Another reason is that any political party that comes to power at the center has to appeal to a broad spectrum of people, ranging from the core minorities — that is to say the Untouchables, the Muslims — right through to the middle castes, and the rich farmers or the agrarian bourgeoisie, who occupy a very important position. Now the agrarian bourgeoisie are different from the industrial bourgeoisie in the sense that although their economic weight is declining relatively speaking, their political and social weight is increasing. They have one capacity that the industrial bourgeoisie does not have. They have the capacity to mobilize mass scale support. The aspiring agrarian bourgeoisie is a mass category in India. That is one of the reasons why they are so effective at the level of the states.

So, because at the central level you have to appeal to this kind of central bloc, you cannot by definition have a program that appeals only to a particular bloc. You have to find a program that is multi-caste, multi-class in appeal, regional in appeal.

■ That means that the political contest is essentially between per-

sonalities?

Today, if you like, the two principal rivals for bourgeois political leadership are Rajiv Gandhi and his former finance minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, who is the head of a new political formation called the Janata Dal, or the People's Party [different from the Janata Party]. What is interesting about this case is that it is the person who makes the party. It's not the party who threw up the leader. It was V.P. Singh who was central to the formation of this party, just as once upon a time it was Indira Gandhi and then Rajiv Gandhi who were central.

If you look at all the general elections since 1971 — this is really since 1969 when Mrs Gandhi split the Congress Party — every one has been a single-issue referendum. In 1971, the election was won by Mrs Gandhi on the slogan "Garibi hatao," which means remove poverty. The 1977 election was won by the Janata party on the principle "Emergency hatao, Indira hatao!" — "End the emergency, remove Indira." The 1980 election was won on the principle "Janata hatao!" — "Remove the Janata party." The 1984 election was won by Rajiv Gandhi on the slogan "Desh bhaao!" or "Save the country!" in the wake of Mrs Gandhi's assassination.

This is because it is only at the level of a single issue or a personality that that the bourgeois parties can offer what appears to be a meaningful choice. Similarly the next election will probably follow the same pattern, and the likely issue, on which Rajiv Gandhi can lose, is "Corruption hatao!"

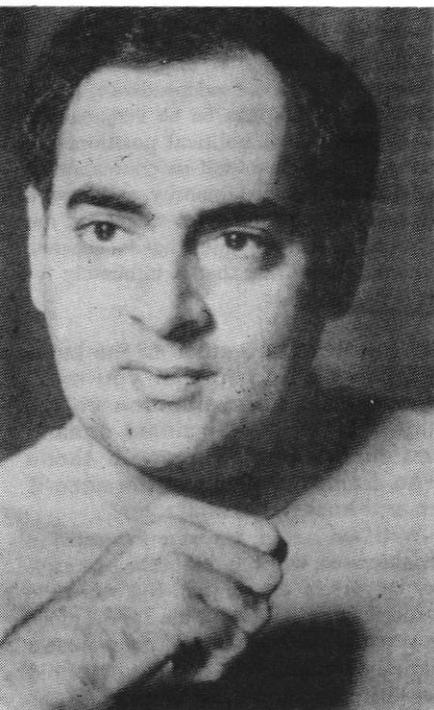
In June of this year, there were important by-elections. V.P. Singh himself ran in the Allabad constituency. Despite the immense resources poured in by the Congress party, he defeated the Congress candidate by an overwhelming margin, by 100,000 votes.

■ With power traded back and forth between programmatically almost indistinguishable parties, you probably get big swings, with every election.

Since 1971, we have had wave elections. This is not like the British type of two-party system, in which the real electoral contest is over the marginals. There you have two political parties with stable political programs, relatively stable social bases of support; and the contest for coming to power is really a struggle for what are called the marginal constituencies.

■ What is the role of the regionalist parties and the parties that have a regional base, like the left parties?

At the state level, program counts for more; stability of social base also counts for more. At the center it is different. But the very strength that enables the CPM to rule in Bengal, or bourgeois parties in other states disqualifies them from being able to seek power at the center. The experience of Janata party in power showed the inherent instability of a coalition of regional parties, especially if one of those parties represents



Indian and Sri Lankan presidents, Rajiv Gandhi (left) and Jayawardene (DR)



the agrarian bourgeoisie.

The reason is that the agrarian bourgeoisie is increasingly a crystalized caste with very clear class interests, and in this kind of coalition it is going to press very strongly for its interests. And that is going to create tensions that will break up the coalition. That is why any leader, if he is going to be a successful leader on an all-India scale, cannot be a peasant leader. He cannot be identified too directly with the agrarian bourgeoisie. The only such prime minister India has had, and he was a prime minister for a very short period of time, was Charan Singh.

On the other hand, the rise of regional parties to power at the state level has enhanced and strengthened the political system as a whole. After the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the Congress Party declined, the endemic crisis of bourgeois political stability would have been much sharper if it had not been possible for regional bourgeois oppositions to enjoy power at the state level.

■ Have you seen new parties coming out of mass social struggles, say out of the Bombay textile workers' strike?

There was the Workers' Front set up by Datta Samant, the leader of the Bombay textile strike. It ran in the 1984 elections, really only in the state of Maharashtra. This slate was a clear expression of working-class discontent and anger. The Rajiv wave swept the whole country, and of the five constituencies in Bombay the only one that held out was in fact the constituency that returned Datta Samant. But since then this party has had no success. This is largely because Datta Samant has no program beyond that of reformism. Insofar as he is prepared to make alliances with the bourgeois opposition parties, he is certainly not

maintaining any kind of class independence.

So, the workers have realized that he is not much of a real alternative. So, there's only one way for such a party to go, and that is down. He'll probably be swept away by the V.P. Singh wave. If workers feel there's going to be an alternative to Rajiv, it'll be Singh.

■ Is there no political organization coming out of struggles?

Interestingly, you have sections of the Maoist left, which have emerged out of struggles in the most backward parts of India, particularly Bihar. They have organizations that have a mass base among landless laborers. One such group is the IPF (Indian Peoples' Front), it is a broad organization with a Maoist party behind it. The IPF has become bigger and bigger in Bihar. It has definitely led very militant struggles of the landless laborers. But as it has become bigger, it has succumbed to a certain extent to the temptation to get involved in electoralism, and to make unprincipled multi-class alliances.

■ How successful has Rajiv been in achieving his foreign policy objectives?

His rise to power was paralleled by a greater self-assertion on the part of India, a greater readiness of India to play the role that it sees for itself. The Indian government's key bourgeois advisors all see India as becoming a major power in the world arena. They see this as being preordained by India's natural resources, size and pre-eminence in the region. We have seen two important examples of this recently, the Indo-Sri Lankan accord and the sending of Indian forces to suppress the coup in the Maldivian islands.

The Indian involvement in Sri Lanka was a very important turn, as well as a remarkable one. Shortly beforehand, the Indian government had been warning the Sri Lankan government that it would not tolerate its attempt to impose a military solution on the Tamils, on the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. In fact, when the Jayawardene government carried out a blockade of Jaffna [the heart of Tamil territory], you had airlifting and airdropping of supplies by the Indian government. Then suddenly, in the space of one and a half months, as Premadasa, a minister in the Jayawardene government put it so accurately, the protectors of the LTTE became their hunters.

The accord itself was flawed in many ways, it was fatally flawed because the Indians were so hasty to draw it up that they did not bother to involve any of the representatives of the Tamil groups, even those Tamil groups that would have

jumped at the call of the Indian government. So, you had an Indo-Sri Lanka accord to decide the fate of the Tamils, in which the representatives of the Tamil groups were completely excluded. This itself was bad enough, but the clauses were something like a marriage contract with divorce written into it. It talked in terms of a merger of the Eastern and Northern regions, but subject to a referendum of the people there, ignoring the fact that over a large period of time you have had Sinhalese colonization and displacement of Tamils from that region, so that in any event a referendum that took place would be very unlikely to ratify such a merger.

However, in our opinion the most important part of the accord was the letter appended to it, which was later incorporated. In our opinion it was this that explained the India's turnaround from the protector to the hunter of the LTTE. It committed Sri Lanka not to engage in military alliances with any third power which the Indians did not approve of.

■ It amounts to a protectorate.

I think that the most accurate characterization of this would be to say that it was a partial Monroe Doctrine, a sort of bargain. For this big gain at the foreign policy level, the Indians would take the responsibility for crushing the LTTE. The whole thing has collapsed because the Indians have not been able to bring the LTTE to heel.

■ You think that it is clear that they have failed?

They have failed, and they know it. They bit off more than they could chew. Beyond a certain scale, it is very difficult to crush insurgency. The Indo-Sri Lankan thing would fall into "low-intensity insurgency," which can drag on and on. Now, the Americans are engaged in low-intensity warfare

all over the place. They have the resources to keep it up. But India does not, beset as it is by tremendous pressures both in the Punjab and by all sorts of other difficulties on the economic and social-domestic fronts.

This was India's first exercise in taking on a foreign insurgency. For the first time, the Indian government was called to act as a kind of guarantor of civic peace in a third country. So, on one level it was a big step forward in India's regional foreign policy ambitions. On the other hand, it has met with a very severe defeat. India wants a way out. It's looking for a way out. If it just pulls out, it's too much of a loss of face. At the same time, because the Indians have not been able to keep up their end of the bargain, the clamor and the opposition within Sri Lanka, within the Colombo government and among the Sinhala masses for ending the Sri Lanka accord has also increased. At the same time, if the Indians cannot finish off the LTTE, certainly the Sri Lankan government can't do it.

■ **What attitude do you think should be taken toward the Tamil movement in Sri Lanka?**

The principled position to take on this issue is very clear, and that is that the Indian government must be pressurized to give every kind of support to the LTTE to prevent the genocide of Tamils by the Colombo government. Now, one does not have to have any brief for the LTTE. The LTTE has sometimes been characterized in certain circles as a Marxist organization. This is not correct. There are really no Marxist organizations among the various resistance movements in Sri Lanka. They are radical nationalists. To some extent, the brutality of the repression creates a kind of counter-brutality of the resistance also. We have seen that in the case of Kampuchea with the Khmer Rouge.

It's important to recognize that before the Jayawardene government embarked upon the military solution — which was in 1986 — the political force that enjoyed the most popularity among the Tamils was not the LTTE but the TULF, the moderate bourgeois political formation. But after 1986, it was the LTTE, whatever its failings, that was in the vanguard of the resistance. And it is precisely because of this that it has earned the loyalty and support of a large base.

So, whatever the criticisms of the Khmer Rouge or others like them, the last thing to do is call for the decimation of this political force, which is at the forefront of the defense of the Tamils — whatever its political failings, which you should of course criticize when they are taking place. Even in an extreme case, like the Khmer Rouge, it would have been crazy to call for the decimation of the Khmer Rouge when the Americans were still bombing the Kampuchians and oppressing them.

It had some support from the opposition party in Tamil Nadu, the DMK. But that support has been reduced somewhat. After the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, the DMK could not openly take a stand against the accord, and say that India should get out. No political party in India does this, apart from sections of the far left. The CPI and the CPM, the big reformist parties, have also endorsed the Indian action. But now, because it has turned out to be something of a quagmire for India, they are beginning to add their voices to the growing chorus for the Indians getting out.

There have been sources of support at the material level to the LTTE. There is no doubt about that. But I think that much bigger sources of support would probably be forthcoming from the Tamil community outside of Sri Lanka, in Europe and elsewhere.

■ **Is the resistance of the Tigers important as a symbol for the Tamil people in the diaspora and in India?**

In the diaspora, yes. Definitely. But while the Indian Tamils would be more unhappy about what is going on in Sri Lanka, they are not unhappy enough to actively support the LTTE. Their attitudes are a complex thing. Refugee groups from Sri Lanka in Tamil Nadu also alienated sections of the Tamil population, because of the special support they were given and so on.

There is sympathy, definitely sympathy on the part of Indian Tamils for the plight of Sri Lankan Tamils. But that sympathy does not take the form of an endorsement of Tamil Eelam [a Tamil state on the island of Ceylon] by Indian Tamils. In fact, it is not entirely clear what the LTTE themselves mean by Tamil Eelam. Sometimes they talk about a very substantial kind of autonomy in which they would be

the dominant force but within the framework of the union of Sri Lanka, and sometimes they talk about independence. That's why I think one has to be very careful about one's own political position. We respect the right to self-determination of the Tamil oppressed minority, and leave it at that, without ourselves spelling it out and saying that they must have a separate nation. I think that that is ultimately for them to decide.

■ **This letter appended to the Indo-Sri Lankan accord that you mentioned, with its prohibition of foreign bases. Is that aimed against the Americans? There are those who claim that it gives the accord an anti-imperialist character.**

Well, the Americans were interested in Trincomalee, which is one of the best natural harbors in that region. But when the Indians made it clear to the Jayawardene government that they would not tolerate a military solution by Colombo, what did Jayawardene do? I have no doubt that he had to turn to the West, and to the US. Even before, there were indications of support by the Israeli Mossad. Jayawardene had to turn to the US and say, "Can you help me?" And the Americans replied clearly "No."

And what is very interesting is that even though the Americans have their strategic axis with Pakistan, they still came out clearly in support of the accord, applauded India for signing it and sending the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force], and also applauded India's role in crushing the coup attempt in the Maldives. In a sense, what's happened is that the Americans have come to the conclusion that in these problems, it is the Indian government that is going to have to play the role of gendarme.

I don't believe that Jayawardene could have decided to go in for the accord with India unless it became clear to him that he could not get support from the US, and therefore he had no option except to bring in the Indians, for which he was prepared to make the kind of concession that could get Indian support.

■ **This also raises the question of to what extent India is anti-imperialist.**

Of course it is not, one should not take that claim seriously at all. Its intervention in Sri Lanka is not an indication of anti-imperialism at all. That is the kind of non-sense talked by those who want to give a left cover to the Indian action. That must be completely rejected. This is what we heard from the CPI and the CPM.

■ **Because the Indian government has an alliance with the USSR?**

Yes. But it is awkward for them to say that it is anti-imperialist when the Americans themselves are clapping their hands and telling them what a wonderful job they have done in the Maldives and Sri Lanka. ★



18 ■ **To what extent is the LTTE supported by political forces in India?**



After thirty years, the revolution faces a decisive choice

THE THIRTIETH anniversary of the Cuban revolution was celebrated in January. In the context of a critical economic situation aggravated by the restrictions of Soviet economic aid, this is a time for balance sheets. The consequences of Gorbachev's foreign policy for Cuba, and still more for Nicaragua, are grave for the revolutionary processes in these countries.

JEANNETTE HABEL

SINCE THE beginning of the 1980s, the Cuban revolution has faced a serious economic and financial crisis. This has led Fidel Castro to make a turn in political and economic policy known as "the rectification process of negative tendencies."

On the economic front, the 1980s have been marked by many difficulties:

- The drop in sugar prices and the reduction in sugar production (due to an exceptional drought). These external factors caused a substantial drop in Cuba's income. Because of uncertainties about future production of natural sugar stemming from the development of artificial sweeteners, it is impossible to look forward to increased resources in the medium term, and this has a depressing effect on prospects for economic growth.

- This situation has been worsened by the deteriorating terms of trade with industrialized countries, which have led to a dramatic drop in imports. According to the Cuban National Bank, Cuba lost \$116.72 in hard currency income for each ton of sugar it exported to countries with market economies between the years 1983 and 1985.

- The depreciation of the dollar brought on a rise in the foreign debt in 1985. The rise in interest rates forced the Cuban National Bank to request a renegotiation of the debt in 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987.

- The withdrawal of Western credit after 1981-82 resulted in a temporary halt of the repayments.

- In addition, the repayments on the Soviet debt fell due in 1986, and Soviet subsidies were reduced. The price paid for sugar fell in 1986. The profits from oil exports (thanks to the energy savings made) evaporated with the fall in prices. And

these losses have not been compensated for by an increase in the amount of oil exported. All indications are that Soviet aid has decreased.

Most serious economic crisis for 30 years

This economic conjuncture is very difficult — one of the most serious, if not *the* most serious, for thirty years. And this problem has been compounded by a new international situation. At the beginning of the 1980s, after the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution and the revolutionary upsurge in El Salvador, the Reagan government stepped up preparations for intervention in the region, including in relation to Cuba. This led the Castro government to change completely its defense policy after the 1983 military intervention in Grenada. The appointment of Gorbachev to the leadership of the CPSU in 1985 led to important changes in Soviet-Cuban relations as regards economic aid and international policy.

It was in this context in 1986 that doubts were expressed about the economic policy adopted by the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party in 1975. The System of Leadership and Economic Planning (SDPE) — which emphasized the importance of money-market relations, the need for economic reforms (legalization of private activity, particularly in agriculture), priority to material incentives, and the increasingly hierarchical wage structure — was challenged, and those responsible for implementing these measures were fired. The economic reforms were severely criticized, and legalized private operations were forbidden, particularly the free peas-

ant markets.

It is undeniable that the implementation of the economic reforms in the framework of the SDPE encouraged the growth of corruption, privileges and social inequalities. Insufficient investment in social services, particularly housing, and the downgrading of the health and education services contributed to undermining social gains. Egalitarianism, which has been the strength of the Cuban revolution, was put in doubt. The process of bureaucratization worsened. In a context of scarcity, privileges increased, thereby undermining collective solidarity against imperialism.

The far-reaching nature of the austerity measures taken to deal with the crisis heightened the risks of a gulf opening between the leadership and the masses. This was particularly the case as the leading team's paternalist and rigidly hierarchical style of leadership ran up against the demands of the better educated newer generations — intellectuals, the university milieu, artistic circles, some radicalized sections of women and especially the youth.

Revitalizing the mass organizations

Castro recognized the danger in this situation. So, with the rectification process, he started an overall economic, political and ideological reorientation, which includes a balance sheet of relations with the Soviet Union since the start of the revolution.

He first sought to revitalize the mass organizations. But the limits of the People's Power bodies must be recognized. They are now more than ever restricted to local and municipal management tasks that make it impossible for them to overcome the disor-

ganization prevailing in the enterprises, a disorganization that is only partly linked to the scarcity caused by the fall in imports.

The trade unions participate in the efforts made to reorganize and rationalize the labor force and increase productivity. They play an active role in exposing management's mistakes and abuses by the managers. But their task above all is, as Fidel said, "to help the managers to manage better" without isolating themselves from the masses.

Critical spirit most developed among youth

The youth organizations face pressure from the new generations. The Communist youth (JC) journal reflects the discussions going on about the content of education, cultural problems, as well as inadequate discussion. This is where the changes are the most noticeable, and the critical spirit the most developed. But the JC's influence in political life remains limited.

However, the fundamental political mechanisms for the exercise of power are not being challenged, although they seem more than ever before to be an obstacle to economic growth and to the consolidation of the revolution.

The conception of a monolithic single party no longer corresponds to the socio-cultural needs of many sectors of Cuban society. The *mando unico* (single command) and the functioning of the leadership team, as well as Fidel's exorbitant power, are arousing irritation. For the first time criticisms are being expressed, even if the legitimacy and the popularity of the Castro leadership are not being called into question.

But in the last year the leadership has taken important political liberalization measures. Many political prisoners have been released (obviously we are not talking about those imprisoned for counter-revolutionary activities, who are also considered as political prisoners by the right-wing press, but about those imprisoned for crimes of opinion, for things they wrote that were regarded as "enemy propaganda"); the Penal Code has been changed in the direction of decriminalizing minor infractions and, on the other hand, laws against corruption have been strengthened. The press is echoing popular criticism more, but this remains extremely limited. On the other hand there is greater tolerance and openness on the artistic front.

On the ideological level the leadership is involved in an overall rethinking, drawing on past experiences and the problems of transition in the specific conditions of the Cuban revolution. This reflection also includes Nicaragua and the discussion underway in the different Latin American revolutionary organizations over an analysis of the crisis of socialism. The Gorbachev experiment obviously affects this thinking.

The Castro leadership has chosen to take an opposite tack to that of the Soviet Union by essentially opposing market reforms. But its margins for maneuver are limited by the existence of a pro-Gorbachev current within the apparatus. This current is sufficiently strong to have forced Castro to postpone the Third Congress to December 1986 and, in fact, to go around the Party Congress by launching the rectification campaign between two sessions.

The Soviet leadership, which in the past was never able to rely on the support of significant sectors to champion its interests, has a chance for the first time of getting a favorable response, even when economic aid has been reduced and differences in international policy are showing up clearly.

As for foreign debt, the Gorbachev leadership came out for repayment by third world countries just as Castro demanded that it be cancelled. With respect to Central America, Moscow has limited its aid for Nicaragua, and arms deliveries have been reduced. In general, the revolutionary process is not one of the main concerns of the Soviet leadership. Cuban influence in the third world, which was an asset for the Soviet bureaucracy, is today of lesser importance.

Turn to Latin American governments

The Castro leadership has reacted by turning even more towards Latin American governments, where it has obtained major diplomatic successes. The isolation imposed by imperialism has been breached.

While support to the revolutionary processes in Central America remains complete, there has been a noticeable change in policy towards the continent. The confusion between positions taken by the party and state diplomacy gives rise to an approach fraught with ambiguities — such as Castro's visit to Mexico for Salinas de Gortari's inauguration, which legitimated the PRI's electoral fraud (see IV 157). And the anti-imperialist potential of the Latin American bourgeoisies is often overestimated.

The withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola should facilitate such diplomatic rapprochements. Nevertheless, without new revolutionary victories in Latin America that would bring about a change in the political relationship of forces in the short term, the Cuban revolution cannot hope to find a solution to the serious economic difficulties it faces from the bourgeois Latin American governments. So once again it will have to compromise with the Soviet leadership.

But this time the Cuban revolution is in a particularly dangerous situation:

- The present economic difficulties are serious and there is no short-term solution, as Castro himself recognizes.

- Neither integration into Comecon [Soviet-led trade bloc] nor specializing in sug-

ar production have produced a more balanced economic development. On the contrary, dependence on the Soviet Union has been increased.

- Within Cuba the phenomena of corruption have worsened, and the process of bureaucratization has prospered in the shadow of the market reforms.

- In Central America, the revolutionary process is continuing, but at the price of serious difficulties in Nicaragua and of a heroic war in El Salvador at terrible human cost.

Traditionally, the Castro leadership has maintained a balance between supporting the masses and national liberation struggles, on the one hand, and its integration into Comecon and its links with the USSR, on the other. This balance is achieved through a paternalistic relationship with the masses, in the framework of a single party subordinated to Castro's personal initiatives.

Today the Castro group is torn. One choice it has is to follow the Gorbachev line and speed up the reforms. But this would create disaffection among the masses and would severely weaken the Cuban revolution, with nothing in return and without any future guarantee from the USSR. On the other hand, it could pursue a more egalitarian orientation, increasing social services but on the basis of voluntarism and exemplarism. But this would not be enough to resolve the serious economic problems, even if it could temporarily reunite the masses behind Fidel. This would not keep the discontented (layers deprived of advantages such the private peasants, certain sections of the apparatus, indeed a certain layer of intellectuals) from being susceptible to Gorbachev-type arguments along the lines that economic liberalism equals political democratization.

Political and social democracy

In these conditions, the only way to ensure that the economic crisis does not lead to a major political crisis lies in implementing political and social democracy, as opposed to the single party and appeals to voluntarism. This is the only way of stimulating the workers' "economic consciousness."

The political zigzags and the repeated economic failures can in time provoke skepticism and wear away the confidence of the masses. The charismatic leadership of Fidel Castro cannot replace organized mass democracy.

Considering the dangers that hang over the revolution we must support everything that goes in the direction of a more egalitarian social course, of a struggle against bureaucracy and privileges, of independent expression by the masses and freedom of political discussion, as well as of aid to the development of other revolutionary movements in Latin America. ★

Cuba's rectification process

ANNOUNCED in 1986 between sessions of the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, the "rectification process" has entered a new stage.

JEANNETTE HABEL

AFTER the initial fiery speeches, marked by virulent criticisms of the economic market reforms and capitalist mechanisms and by the ending of private activities, came a phase of reorganization and rationalization of labor.

The Cuban leadership is seeking a middle ground, one that avoids both the pitfalls of bureaucratic planning and the quicksands of market reforms. The accent is being put on economic development, in particular industrial development: "This is not the time to consider consumerism, we have to think about development, which will permit consumption on a more solid, stable basis later on," Castro reaffirmed in the December 11, 1988, issue of *Granma*.

Absolute priority is being given to investments, particularly those that will generate hard currency, or save it. Although all of the ramifications of the rectification have not yet been made clear, some major indications of the policy pursued do exist.

First, the rectification has tended, in this context, to reduce the importance of the material incentives that were introduced under the System of Leadership and Economic Planning (SDPE). Then, in order to exceed the plan, the manager would set working targets at an artificial level. Bonuses were often higher than wages. But, for all that, production did not increase.

From now on, people will have to work harder, while often earning less. So it is hardly surprising that, as a *Granma* commentator stressed, "perhaps the most difficult aspect of the rectification is trying to convince workers whose wages were too high, owing to outdated norms or wrong criteria, to give them up." (September 18, 1988.)

Second, the workforce is being rationalized and reorganized. The numbers of administrative staff are being cut, but reduction of workers in production is occurring in a more general way, and could affect 30% to 40% of the workforce.

"Put the best people in charge"

Excess workers from one factory are re-employed elsewhere, possibly in the micro-brigades, subject to the condition that they accept the job they are offered. This is not being accomplished without conflicts, particularly among younger people who are more aware of the qualifications they have acquired, qualifications that are often higher than needed for the jobs they are offered.¹

Third, to combat absenteeism and lack of discipline at the workplace, as well as in-

stability and the excessive mobility of some workers, smaller work teams are being put into place, and furnished with tools and raw materials. In the micro-brigades or the "workers' contingents" made up of multi-skilled vanguard workers, the slogan is "Put the best people in charge."

Planning mechanisms to be simplified

Monitoring productivity is easier. It is done by the workers, who themselves organize their production, work out their plans, manage their accounts and wages. Saving resources and increasing production can sometimes result in large bonuses in the form of higher wages or housing allotments for example, to all except those workers who have not "earned" it. These advantages, in wages or in kind, are distributed under the auspices and supervision of the Cuban CP.

Fourth, the planning mechanisms are going to be simplified, and a certain economic decentralization is underway.² Administrative structures between production and distribution will either be eliminated or modified.

The ministry of basic industry in Cuba, which is responsible for many sectors of production, has announced a reform intended to "de-bureaucratize" its structures. The administrative personnel in the central offices will be cut by 60%, and most of the decision-making power will be shifted from bureaucratic organs into the hands of the factory management.³

Finally, the autonomy of enterprises could be strengthened, given the Comecon reform. In its forty-third extraordinary session in October 1987, this body defined some special programs concerning cooperation between the European Comecon countries and Cuba and Vietnam. Above all, from then on, organization of economic relations could take place at three levels: inter-state, inter-sector, or between the factories themselves: "Direct economic links between enterprises should become the major lever, assuring the success of spe-

cialization and co-production."⁴

It is hard to believe that this will not have repercussions on the Cuban economy, which, like it or not, will have to adjust to direct dealings with newly autonomous Soviet firms that are unlikely to accept financial losses in their exchanges with Cuba.

After criticizing mixed firms, Fidel Castro has just announced that such enterprises would be developed not only in the tourist industry but in other export sectors as well in order to take advantage of the technology, raw materials, and openings provided by investors. But these measures, like their consequences in terms of growing wage differentials, threaten to conflict with the egalitarian themes pushed by Fidel in his speeches of recent months.

For example, the contracts drawn up with Spanish businessmen for building and running hotels and restaurants authorize the hiring and firing of workers on the basis of their on-the-job record.⁵ Fidel's strategy seems to be a combination of improving the planning system, based on decentralization and greater autonomy, and a growing reliance on voluntarism. This mixture of measures seems to be being reflected on the political level by a kind of ideological radicalism, going hand in hand with a greater pragmatism on the economic one.⁶

"Colossal bureaucratic incompetence"

In fact, according to this assumption, the Castroist leadership has worked out an economic approach more compatible with the Soviet outlook than it might first appear, while taking into account the differences in the levels of development of the two countries. The appeal for volunteer work and references to Che can be used by one section of the apparatus to coat the austerity pill so the workers will swallow it, without challenging the "colossal bureaucratic incompetence" (in the words of the writer Gabriel García Márquez) that is one of the root causes of the current crisis.

The difficulties of daily life, the worsening of working conditions or of public transportation caused by the reduction of imports, and especially the lack of spare parts, have had their effect on the level of

1. According to Suarez Vega, a member of the Central Committee. *Die Zeit*, October 28, 1988.

2. Peter Gey, *Crisis of reform in socialist economies*, Westview Press, 1987.

3. *Granma*, November 27, 1988.

4. *Nouvelle revue internationale*, V. Medvedev, "La coopération socialiste," p.44.

5. *International Herald Tribune*, January 12, 1989.

6. H. Brezinski, "Cuba's economic ties with the Soviet Union and the CMEA in the mid-eighties," August 1988.

mass mobilization. Discontent is evident. The official statements themselves reflect the problems in the distribution of basic necessities.

Lines outside of stores start forming at dawn. The elimination of free peasant markets got rid of the source of huge private gain for peasants, but that did not solve the problems of supply. Public transport is even more run-down. Repairs are more difficult than ever, and breakdowns more frequent. Speculation is growing, and there have been police operations and raids against speculators that have gotten big play in the Cuban press.

Indiscipline and social malaise persist

A more worrying phenomenon is that examples of work "indiscipline" are multiplying. The adoption of the economic reform in 1975 and its application over ten years were supposed to increase workers' motivation and discipline. Now the number of cases of alleged work indiscipline has gone from 9,988 in 1975 to 25,572 in 1985.⁷ These involve all sorts of infractions, including violations of collective arrangements between administrators, worker intermediaries, and so on about subjects ranging from wages to targets and working conditions.

The putting into practice of the rectification process in 1986 had as one notable goal to change this situation, for which the SDPE and its accompanying inequalities and corruption were held responsible. However, even if, according to the Political Bureau of the CCP, "some exemplary workers' collectives performed veritable productive exploits," this same leading body states that "instances of worker indiscipline and social malaise persist, some anti-social elements are trying to challenge order and discipline."⁸ On December 11, 1988, Fidel Castro once again pointed to "social rowdiness and delinquency, negative manifestations which have reached an alarming level over the last few months."

The alarm signal was pulled in November, with an unprecedented incident — a fire in the Havana central telephone exchange that paralyzed all telephone lines in the capital. According to *Granma*, this was sabotage by one of the telephone operators, who deliberately set fire to the installation "to get back at the administration, from which she had received written censure on two occasions for leaving her post."⁹ The fact that this story was published in the international edition of the paper shows the gravity of the situation.

Social malaise and workers' unease at growing difficulties on the job and in daily life are pointed up clearly here, and it is doubtless not coincidental that on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the revolution, only two months after this incident, the minister of labor and social security decided "to rehabilitate workers who had

been punished by disciplinary notices in their files"¹⁰ (punishments for indiscipline at work can range from entering a written citation in a file to being fired.)

The rehabilitation applied to those workers who had received censure but subsequently maintained a positive attitude at work, the condemnation nevertheless remaining in files. The sabotage of the central telephone exchange by a woman who had been cited twice for leaving her post (no one knows why she left it) certainly led to this decision by the minister of labor. Even though this is a limited measure, it testifies to the care the authorities are taking, in these hard times, not to increase disciplinary measures against workers, who are often faced problems in the organization of their production.

The social contradictions inherent in the ambiguities of the rectification today were shown up after the third meeting, led by Fidel Castro, of productive and service industries in Havana, in mid-1988. This gathering focused the rectification on the problem of costs, of profitability of firms, on the organization of labor and on wages — in other words, on the need to raise the productivity of labor.

Who will pay for the crisis?

For the first time, the Cuban government recognized an unemployment level of 6%, instead of 3.4% in 1981.¹¹ Of course, the Castroist leadership did not try to cover up the severity of the economic crisis and its enduring character, which were confirmed once again during the last National Assembly of People's Power: "the situation in 1986 did not improve in 1987, but got worse, and it has worsened still more in 1988. In the years to come, economic investments must have absolute priority, particularly those which will either save or bring in hard currency."

How will the masses respond in these hard times? Who will pay for the crisis? What is the social goal of the rectification? Many questions are still open. The Cuban masses' potential for mobilization may still be great enough to resist scarcity and the wearing effects of daily life. But this is on condition that the sacrifices are shared equally.

This means pursuing the rectification in the socially egalitarian direction originally proclaimed, through reducing privileges, a serious anti-bureaucratic struggle in the political arena, and democratization of political life, not only for the leading groups but for all of the masses.

For the moment, no one knows where the rectification is heading. Launched as a campaign against "the technocrats and new capitalists," it has continued with measures for increasing labor productivity. And who knows what the next stage will be? As one Cuban journalist has pointed out, the rectification process "has its supporters and its

enemies. The first group are trying to put on the brakes, and the second want to go full speed ahead...Cubans are used to blaming mistakes on the managers, and managers on functionaries. It is easier to see the mote in your neighbor's eye than the beam in your own."¹²

This commentary makes its point well. Conceived as a "strategic counter-offensive," the rectification policy masks contradictory social interests. The administrators are in favor of more autonomy for firms, from which they are the primary gainers. It is obvious that in ruling circles, a mute struggle is going on to strip Fidel's line of its content, by trying to use voluntarism, moral impulses, as well as appeals for revolutionary consciousness and ideological motivation to put across draconian measures designed to increase workers' productivity.

Along with these ambiguities, we have to note also the economic decisions made concerning the establishment of mixed enterprises by West Germany and Cuba in the food industry, as well as the industrial cooperation projects that may also be financed by the European Community. True, the mines, sugar industry, and public services will not be affected, as Castro has said.¹³ But the mere fact that these mixed economy investments are increasing, including in the export sector, shows the extent to which things have changed compared to the June 1987 positions, and to the restrictions then placed on mixed firms.

Castro's opposition, expressed on many occasions, has thus been outflanked. Is this because of the gravity of the economic crisis? Or, as one commentator stressed, "because some of his collaborators have been converted to the advantages of capitalism and the market economy?"¹⁴ Or is it under pressure from the USSR and the Comecon reform? In any case, such measures can only engender new contradictions.

Contradictions of increased tourism

Tourism can bring in hard currency, and is doing so. But it is also aggravating the tensions inasmuch as the contrast between austerity in Cuba and the luxury available to visitors is already arousing protests from the population. The mixed enterprises can make the export of Cuban goods easier, but the particular conditions of the workers employed there go against the egalitarian goals of the rectification.

In the Cuban context, the choice of ideological motivation, of an appeal to mass consciousness and to mass mobilization is still possible. But to be of any use, it has to

7. *Trabajadores* (magazine of the CTC), July 5, 1986.

8. Statement of the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party, *Granma*, October 2, 1988.

9. *Granma*, December 11, 1988.

10. *Granma*, January 8, 1989.

11. *Latin American Weekly Report*, January 19, 1989.

12. *Granma*, September 18, 1988.

13. *Granma*, January 1, 1989.

14. *Le Monde*, January 3, 1989.

involve new powers of control and decision making for the masses. This presupposes a break with the monopoly of political power held by the Cuban Communist Party, power concentrated in the hands of one leader and his associates. It means that the slogan "put the best in charge,"¹⁵ applied locally in the micro-brigades, also has to be implemented nationally to put an end to bureaucratic waste and ineptitude, the biggest obstacle to increased productivity.

Avoiding workers' self-management

In stating that "the secret of productivity lies in discipline and technology...the rational and efficient use of materials and manpower" and that it is possible "to do better than the capitalists if you are capable of leading people — that is the secret — with revolutionary methods" (January 29, 1989), Fidel Castro has risked convicting himself and the team surrounding him of the lack of such capacity. Either that, or he is trying to challenge the non-revolutionary methods of those who are in command of the state apparatus and the economy and take his distance from them.

In criticizing alternately the masses and the apparatus, depending on the occasion, Fidel Castro manages to preserve his role as an arbitrator. But his credibility is being worn away by this balancing act.

The Castroist leadership's attempt to avoid both *glasnost* and workers' self-management cannot succeed. One way or another, it will be necessary to make a choice, both domestically and internationally. But the room for maneuver is very small. Will the initial objectives of the rectification — to consolidate the mass mobilization on an egalitarian basis — be maintained?

Gorbachev wants Cuba to fall in line with his policies of negotiation with American imperialism and to accept an economic policy of true prices and austerity, leaving the USSR a lighter burden of aid. Bush encourages this pressure, in which he sees a way to divide the social base of the regime.

Castro himself is speeding up his rap-



Will socialist or capitalism win out?

“ I READ many international dispatches, and a lot of capitalist press agencies are trying to portray us as utopians or idealists. I do not deny that we have been idealists at certain times. We have all been idealists, and I would even say that we have been that in the best sense of the term. We recognized at a certain moment that we committed idealist errors. But we have suffered from bungling — in rectifying one error we have fallen into another.

They are trying to sow confusion by saying that we are departing from the socialist formula. I say here categorically that we have no intention of departing from the socialist formula defined a long time ago of 'from all according to their capacities to all according to their needs' — that is, that distribution is effected in accordance with the quality and quantity that each person contributes to the society.

In this stage of our revolution, we cannot depart from this formula. The question is how to interpret it. We cannot always apply the principle of giving to all in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work. If we see a worker's child in school, we do not look at the quantity of labor provided by its father nor at what that contributes to society, because one of the concerns of the state is to give children the best possible education...

We find ourselves facing a great historical challenge: What will triumph? Who will win the game? The egoistic, chaotic, inhuman capitalist system; or socialism, a more rational, more fraternal, more human system? That is the challenge that has to be taken up by Cuban youth and the Cuban people, by the youth and peoples of the socialist countries.

Naturally, that requires from all of us, especially the new generation, a special effort at improvement.

We have to see very clearly the task that awaits us in the battle that we are waging today to perfect socialism in our country. The objective of this fight — and that is perhaps the greatest challenge — is to perfect socialism without resorting to capitalist mechanisms and the capitalist style, without playing at capitalism. This is what we are working on in the framework of the rectification process.

I said a few days ago that the results of this process were visible. We have seen examples and I will mention one — the building teams. We have seen the public works built by these teams in various provinces. And the principles applied in these workers' collectives have nothing to do with capitalist stimuli. I am sure that this sort of collective exists nowhere else.

This shows what human beings can do, what they are capable of doing when confidence is placed in them, when you do not start from the idea that human beings are animals who move forward because they are hit with clubs or have carrots dangled in front of their noses.”

Fidel Castro, Granma (French edition), January 29, 1989

provements with Latin-American governments and trying to negotiate — with the benefit of the Angola accords — a rapprochement with the United States. But this policy also implies a concession. You have to respect the club rules if you want to join, or as one Latin-American diplomat said: "Cuba can't play football using baseball's rules."¹⁶ In other words, to join the club, you have to fit in — end all aid to foreign revolutionaries, tighten your belt at home and modernize an inefficient system (as Spanish premier Felipe González put it).¹⁷

Gorbachev has a similar line: Cuba must choose, either to go it alone and take the consequences, or play the game with the other so-called socialist countries and reform its economy.

Caught in this vise of contradictions, the Cuban revolution can still — unlike the other countries in Eastern Europe — rely

on mass mobilization. That is, it can as long as it understands that the lack of motivation on the job (apart from the limited vanguard sectors, organized in the building teams or the micro-brigades) is the consequence, in the final analysis, of a lack of political motivation. With such corruption and bureaucratic waste, why should the population work harder for results that will still be undone by bureaucratic ineptness?

Voluntarism and revolutionary consciousness can only be effective if they are accompanied by a real power to organize, control and manage for the workers themselves. For the future of the Cuban revolution, this decisive choice is more and more urgent. ★

15. *Bohemia*, October 21, 1988.

16. *El País*, January 2, 1989.

17. *Ibid.*

AROUND
THE
WORLD



MEXICO

Step up solidarity for García

A MEMBER of the Mexican section of the Fourth International, José Ramón García, kidnapped on December 16, is still missing (see IV 157). His comrades believe that he is still alive but not being released because his captors fear that he will reveal compromising facts about the police and the government. Therefore, it is important to continue and extend the campaign to force the para-police gangsters to let him go.

On February 25, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers' Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International) organized a forum on the case in the town of Cuautla, in the state of Morelos, where José Ramón lived and where he was a candidate in the March 1988 municipal elections. It was a notable success, as was reported in the Mexican daily *Jornada* of February 27.

Some 2,500 people participated, of whom 250 represented trade unions, community organizations, universities and other institutions. The forum was chaired by Rosario Ibarra, Ifigenia Martínez and Ana Santander, who demanded the reappearance of José Ramón, the release of all political prisoners, an end to all measures of repression and respect for human rights. Delegations came from Puebla, the Valley of Mexico, Morelos, Chiapas [in the far south], Guerrero and San Luis Potosí. In all, 82 organizations and 50 peasant communities were represented.

José Ramón's companion told the forum that he was the "first missing person" under the new government of Salinas de Gortari. "He has been kidnapped and held for 72 days, he has 'disappeared' because he fought as a democratic candidate, supporting Rosario Ibarra [the PRT's presidential candidate] and in solidarity with Cárdenas [the main opposition candidate]."

A day of international protest will be held on April 15.

Appeals for José Ramón's release and protests can be sent to the following addresses:

- Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Palacio Nacional, Mexico DF;
- Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, Secretario de Gobernación, Bucareli 99, Mexico DF;
- Antonio Riva Palacio López, Gobernador, Palacio de Gobernación, Cuernavaca, Morelos.

Copies and other information on international solidarity initiatives should be sent to *International Viewpoint*. ★

SRI LANKA

UNP makes electoral history

THE FOLLOWING report on the recent Sri Lanka general elections is from the February 26 issue of *Clarity*, a magazine published in Bombay:

The ruling United National Party [UNP] has won an absolute majority, winning 125 out of 225 seats in the general parliamentary elections held last week.

While the dominant opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) ended second with 67 seats, the Eelam Revolutionary Organization (EROS), known to be close the LTTE, [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] took the third position with 13.

Though the TULF [Tamil United Liberation Front, the old parliamentary nationalist formation, now including four parties] won 10 seats, the TULF itself was virtually rejected by the island's Tamils. All its leaders, including party general secretary A. Amirthalingam, failed to make it into parliament.

The second largest opposition group after the SLFP in the new parliament will be the minority group from the Tamil north-eastern province.

Besides EROS and the TULF, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress — another minority group — has won four seats in the province.

The UNP created electoral history in the island by being the only party to be returned to power in two consecutive general elections. Until now, the islanders had consistently changed the government at every general election.

However, the party's majority would be considerably smaller in the new parliament than in the dissolved Houses in which it had 140 out of 167 seats, having won a landslide victory in the 1977 general election.

Besides the UNP and the SLFP, the Mahajana Eksath Permanuna (MEP, a left-wing split off from the SLFP) and the leftist United Socialist Alliance won three seats each in the central and southern parts of the island, while all other parties drew a blank. [For a discussion of these parties, see the interview with Bala Tampoe in IV 143, June 13, 1988.]

The traditional left parties, including the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, have suffered a near total collapse.

Most of the preferential votes cast by the voters for this group went to two of the three militant groups that fought the election under the TULF symbol — the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO).

The third group, the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) failed to make it to parliament. ★

End the State of Emergency!

THE STATEMENT below was adopted unanimously on October 24, 1988, by the biennial congress of the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU):

This Twentieth Delegates' Conference of the CMU considers that the UNP [United National Party] Government bears the prime responsibility for the armed violence that is prevalent not only in the North and East, but also in the South and other parts of Sri Lanka today. This situation has developed under the State of Emergency that the UNP Government has imposed and maintained continuously for over six years, following the postponement of the general election that should have been held in 1982 under the Constitution established by the UNP Government itself in 1978.

Under Emergency rule, the working people, the student population and the rest of the people of this country have been subjected to the suppression and restriction of basic democratic rights and to state terrorism. In addition, certain political parties have been proscribed. Even a genuine trade union, like the Public Service United Nurses' Union, was proscribed, when the nurses went on strike in April 1986. The proscription was lifted only because the nurses courageously continued their strike, and following national and international trade-union protests.

Thousands of people have been deprived of their liberty, even for years, under Emergency regulations and/or the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Large numbers have been tortured and many of them have been killed in custody. Only a small proportion of those taken into custody have been charged with offences and brought before the courts.

Thousands of people have been killed in police and military operations against the groups of youths who took to arms against the State forces, in the struggle for a separate state (Tamil Eelam) in the North and East. Massacres have also taken place in reprisals for their attacks on the armed forces.

A similar situation has been developing in the South, especially after the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was signed on July 29, 1987, and Indian armed forces were brought into the North and East, to secure

the surrender of arms by the rebel groups, under the Agreement. The situation in the South has been attributed to the resort to armed violence and political terrorism on the part of a "military wing" of the JVP, this year. Whether the armed violence is to be attributed to a section of the JVP alone, or whether other forces are involved in or responsible for this violence, it is difficult to say.

Despite the efforts of the Indian Army for a whole year, the armed group known as the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) has not yet laid down its arms, and it continues to exercise considerable influence amongst the civilian population in the North and East.

In these circumstances, this Delegates' Conference is of view that the UNP Government cannot restore peace in this country, and that it may resort more and more, to the use of the police and the armed forces to maintain its rule.

On the other hand, this Delegates' Conference does not consider the replacement of Mr. J.R. Jayawardene as president and/or the replacement of the UNP Government by some other government, through a presidential election and/or general election, will provide the people of this country with a way out of the present crisis. Neither the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, nor any combination of parties that are likely to participate in a presidential or general election, can be expected to restore peaceful and democratic conditions in this country, having regard to their political and class character and record.

Nevertheless, this CMU Delegates' Conference considers that, right now, the wishes of millions of people in this country to be rid of UNP rule, under a State of Emergency, with a long-out-dated and utterly unrepresentative majority in parliament, should be permitted immediate expression through a general election. As a step towards the restoration of peaceful and

democratic conditions in this country, in the state of unrest and violence that now prevails, this Delegates' Conference of the CMU accordingly calls for:

- The ending of the State of Emergency and the dissolution of the parliament immediately;

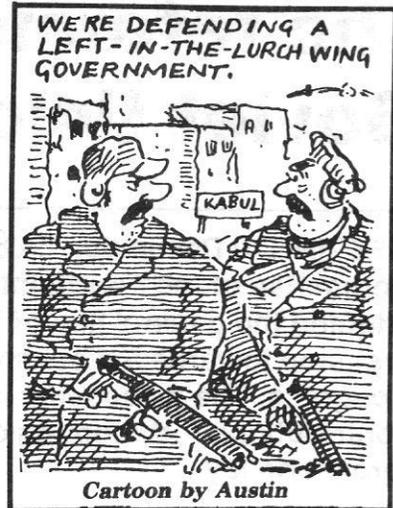
- The holding of a general election, and not a presidential election, to elect a new parliament that should change the present reactionary Constitution immediately after its election, to get rid of the provisions for a president vested with the entire Executive Power of the state.

(The CMU carried out a successful token general strike in support of these two demands on October 27, 1988.)

This Delegates' Conference makes this call now, recognizing the difficulty for the working class, in its present politically divided and largely unorganized state, to bring about the restoration of peaceful and democratic conditions through mass action led by the working class, and to prevent a military dictatorship or a state of anarchy arising out of the present situation.

This Delegates' Conference, therefore considers that it is essential for the Union to strive to strengthen, extend and unify the organized forces of the working class to face up to this situation effectively. With this end in view, this Twentieth Delegates' Conference resolves that the Union should, in the first place, educate its own ranks, and organize the thousands of other workers who can be organized in the Union. It should also join with trade union and other organizations that are willing to campaign for the restoration of the democratic rights of the people and the protection of human rights, on the basis of which alone can there be peace and justice for our people.

In the furtherance of these objectives, this Conference recognizes the urgent necessity of the working class for an "independent and democratic political organization of its own," as was recognized



by the Eighteenth Delegates' Conference of the Union in November 1984. This Conference also considers that the Workers' Party of Ceylon that was inaugurated on December 9, 1984, pursuant to a resolution adopted by the Eighteenth Delegates' Conference, can serve as the foundation for the building of such an organization.

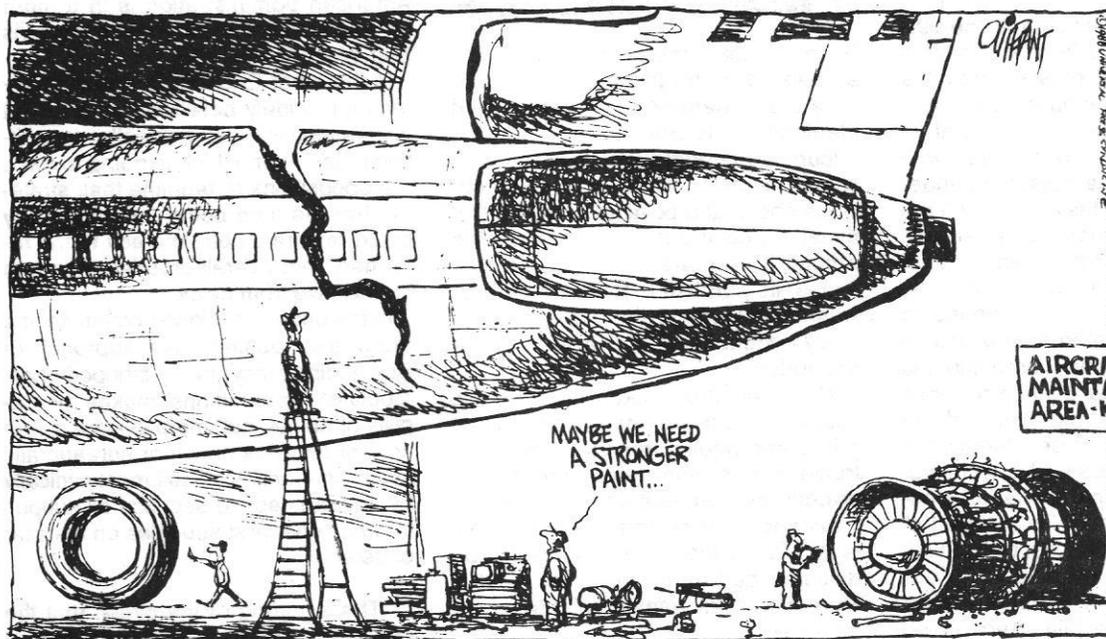
Bala Tampoe (General Secretary, CMU) ★

USSR

Independent press in Lithuania

AN ARTICLE IN *Pravda* on February 22 cast a jaundiced look at the growth of the press of the independent movements in the republic. "The means of information in the hands of Sajudis [the Lithuanian People's Front] and other organizations already include more than 40 publications with an average press run of more than half a million copies.. [The Lithuanian population numbers about 3 million]. They are actively op-

posing the party, publishing whole series of materials that do not so much represent constructive criticism as provocations inspiring hostility to the Communist Party and the Soviet organs." ★



The reforms in the Soviet Union

MEETING in December 1988, the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International discussed and adopted the general line of the following resolution as a first step towards a discussion for the next World Congress. The discussion is continuing, with contributions forthcoming on the national question and foreign policy.

I General framework

1 The current upheavals in the Soviet Union are one of the major events of the second half of the twentieth century: an unprecedented crisis in bureaucratic rule both in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern bloc countries, and in their reciprocal relations; a new expression of the policy of peaceful coexistence, which has had different effects in the dependent countries and transformed the image of the USSR. (Witness, for example, the turnaround in public opinion in the developed capitalist countries.)

2 Obviously, a major element in the crisis that the Soviet Union is experiencing is the cumulative aspect of its economic failures. But what makes it particularly profound is the regime's unprecedented crisis of legitimacy. It is not yet easy to measure the consequences of this.

3 In a climate of discontent, the current upheaval stems from a combination of growing social pressure from the new generation of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia for material, cultural — and indeed moral — well-being, with the realization of the potential danger of leaving things as they are by the top layer of the bureaucratic apparatus. This top layer has not — and cannot have — either a coherent vision of restructuring society, or the means to employ (look at its internal divisions on this last point). For the time being it is resting on a *de facto* alliance between those who want an extension of the market and who consider democracy as harmful, and those who want democracy and view the market as a necessary evil. The latter, in the light of their previous experiences, think that it is the only non-voluntarist (non-bureaucratic) way of fighting against the bureaucracy. While there is no

doubt that the reforms proposed (and even imposed) from above aim to maintain the essential — the (redefined) privileges of a restructured bureaucracy — we also have to understand the dynamic of the movement:

4 In the present crisis situation, the practical effects of the reforms undertaken by Gorbachev are something quite different. For the first time since the 1930s — except during the Second World War — we are seeing the beginnings of a far-reaching mobilization of the Soviet masses.

The first rumblings of this can be seen in the working class, but it is already a fully-fledged reality among the intelligentsia and among certain nationalities. Whatever the short-term outcome of the battles in the Soviet Union, a new situation has been created that rules out a return to the previous status quo.

II What is at stake

1 The failure of the old planning mechanisms, and particularly of administrative incentives (material and ideological), is obvious. Giving producers a material incentive therefore seems the only radical solution. For obvious social and political reasons, this material incentive is mainly seen by the official reformers in its narrowest sense: its purpose is to link "naturally" workers' income to the production actually undertaken and delivered by the enterprise.

Whatever care is taken in expressing this, the logic of the reforms means that prices and wages, freed from administrative control and determined by the effects of competition, will be the means for making this link. From this point of view, the new reform cannot be distinguished from that of the 1960s. Moreover, it will remain to large extent on paper.

2 The resistance to reform combines:

- The opposition of millions of "conservative" small bureaucrats whose position does not make it possible to have the overall views of a Gorbachev, and who have obviously nothing to gain from the slogan "the right man in the right place" but no alternative to put forward.
- The expectations of the bulk of the working class, who can see that material daily life is still as (if not more) difficult, and who are worried about the threats to jobs and of work speed-ups.

3 The present project is differentiated from the reforms of the 1960s by its political dimension. The Gorbachev team has understood that, given the accumulation of obstacles, in order to win they have to both decrease the power of the conservatives in the apparatus and mobilize a certain base. From this stems the importance given at the top to *glasnost*, to certain historical truths, to the self-management slogan — essentially reduced to the election of managers — and the controlled "revitalization" of soviets.

4 Gorbachev's foreign policy is still determined by the principle "what is good for the Kremlin (or seems to be so) is good for the world". What has changed is the scale of the preference. In a hurry to achieve immediate results, Soviet diplomacy has fixed two objectives: first, creating the conditions for a reduction in arms spending; and second, obtaining loans and technology from the West. The withdrawal from Afghanistan — with official statements going so far as to say that a good image for the Soviet Union is more effective in its defence than arms — and the liberalization in the USSR itself are obviously positive points overall: the American administration is in a more unfavourable political position vis-à-vis Star Wars, for example.

In the other Eastern European countries it is widely believed that a Soviet intervention is today politically more difficult than ever, which is going to force the oppositions to redefine their strategy. For the time being the new policy could restore a certain credit to the reformers, but overall broaden the room for initiative from below.

In the under-developed countries, the pragmatic, businesslike approach of Soviet diplomacy, today stripped of all "socialist" formulations, makes the fragility of Soviet "aid" more evident. It is in central America now that bureaucratic cynicism manifests itself most cynically by its readiness to sacrifice all support for anti-imperialist struggles on the altar of détente.

5 The squaring of the circle, that the Gorbachev team is trying to resolve

empirically, is to de-bureaucratize the bureaucracy and to mobilize some of the forces outside it in order to do so while retaining control over the process. To avoid playing the role of sorcerer's apprentice, as Dubcek did, Gorbachev must ensure that the Party is the main instrument for carrying out the restructuring. To achieve this the Party itself must also be restructured and stripped of its "criminal bureaucracy", the mafia. The state based on law aims simultaneously to guarantee — and limit — private initiative to protect the citizens from bureaucratic arbitrariness, but also in return to protect the bureaucrats from "uncontrolled" initiatives.

6 But in the partially chaotic situation existing in the Soviet Union, many of the liberated forces have acquired their own autonomy, and individuals of the nomenklatura or even entire institutions of the Party or the state can — temporarily or not — be thrown into turmoil. To understand the considerable political importance of such divisions does not in any way mean fostering illusions in the reformability of the system — the establishment of a socialist democracy would mean a revolution.

III "Trotskyism"

1 A re-examination of Trotsky's role is now inevitable. This will be a lot more painful for the bureaucracy than that of the other Bolshevik leaders. Behind Trotsky there is the struggle of the Left Opposition and later of the Fourth International, which rules out the excuse that in those difficult times everybody was wrong or had capitulated. The last official line of defence therefore will be to separate the man, who will be cleared of the most grotesque accusations, from his political activity. After having always identified Trotsky and Trotskyism, now the differentiation will be made.

The paradox is even that after having been condemned for his opposition to Stalin, Trotsky is now being re-proached for having had, in practice, the same orientation.

2 The struggle to re-establish the truth about Trotsky is therefore an important political struggle. It touches the very roots of Stalinism, and is a condition for a radical criticism of it. This fight will be undertaken by many Soviet citizens for reasons of moral integrity (rather than agreement with ideas, which are still little known for the time being). Leon Trotsky is the incarnation of the only historical link between the October Revolution and the intransigent struggle against Stalinism.

Also, many of the attacks against Trotsky will no longer emanate so

much from those nostalgic for Stalinism. Rather they will come from those who cannot yet (again for tactical reasons) attack Lenin frontally, will challenge the October Revolution. Increasingly, the defence of one will only be through the defence of the other. This is why the re-examination of the Left Opposition's programme will be a necessary stage for those who want to continue to defend socialism in the USSR.

3 But "Trotskyism" is not mainly the defence of a murdered man or his writings. Through our existence as an active organization we have been able to draw lessons from the history of the workers' movement, and in particular we have followed all the convulsions linked to "de-Stalinization". This is not some eternal truth that we have to reveal in the Soviet Union, but it represents a real capital. We have to get involved in the discussions currently taking place in the USSR both to learn and to contribute — the two are linked.

4 In the light of what we have learned in the past and the experiences that the Soviet workers can learn from today, we must help to find an alternative to the fake choice of botching up the old system versus full speed ahead towards developing the market (or any bizarre combination of the two). We therefore defend the following points:

IV Our role

Perestroika

1 As the impasse of Solidarnosc in Poland has shown, the overall conception of the new society to be built that is put forward by the opposition is a much more burning question than in the capitalist countries where social production is in any case decided by the market. But there is more: the choices that must be made today, aside from their future implications, immediately affect the possibilities of social mobilization.

2 In fact, significant extension of the market in the Soviet Union would imply in practice a colossal rise in prices, work speed-ups, and the threat of unemployment, without any guarantee of a significant improvement in supplies as far as most people are concerned. The cautious experiments in this direction that have been carried out until now offend workers' idea of justice — they are often penalized for upstream production failures for which they have no responsibility.

Inversely, due to market conditions for which they are not responsible either, the producers of finished goods or services can earn incomes that bear no relation to the amount of work they do — in many ways this is a legalization of

already existing combines and speculation. (For example, the very contradictory "success" of the first cooperatives.) The workers cannot feel concerned by such a programme.

This is why *perestroika*, which ceaselessly invokes democracy, introduces authoritarian reforms from above (even if the pretext given for them is the resistance of the bureaucrats lower down). Recent developments have systematically revealed more and more clearly the naivety of identifying the market with democracy.

3 The market as a "natural" cure for bureaucracy is therefore only convincing for those who do not understand the need for a mobilization of the workers — the only force capable of stripping the bureaucracy of power. Despite appearances, it is therefore an abstract answer to the real problems of the anti-bureaucratic struggle at the moment. For more long-term solutions, the Yugoslav experience proves that the market changes the characteristics of the bureaucracy, but does not get rid of it. There the market ended up by emptying self-management of its content.

In the bureaucratized workers' states that have in the main abolished the law of the market, democratic demands quickly take on a revolutionary dynamic: politics and economics are closely linked. One of the hopes of the official reformers is that the extension of market relations will dampen down and atomize conflicts. In short, in the present situation of crisis, the market is more of a life-belt than a threat to the bureaucracy.

4 This opposition to the extension of market relations as the solution to the crisis of the present system of planning should not be identified with any idealization of the Stalinist planning that led to the present waste. Nor is it a pure and simple rejection of the use of market categories and mechanisms — or even of private initiatives, particularly in retail selling and certain services. It should be argued each time in a practical way.

5 An anti-bureaucratic and anti-market approach linked to the central themes of the present reform can be illustrated in three main areas:

● **Employment:** The full employment produced by bureaucratic planning means neither good jobs nor unalienated, responsible and skilled work. To replace this full employment by unemployment is obviously a deterioration in the situation of the workers involved. But, contrary to the statements of the "experts", this does not mean an improvement in the overall productivity and effectiveness of the system.

An approach in solidarity with the

workers implies: i) a judgement about the effectiveness of existing production, which would not be simply local and short term and which would explicitly take into account the direct judgement of the producers and users concerned (the optimal social yield is not the sum of local efficiency measured by profit); ii) the mechanisms of reconversion which ensure another job after retraining, with control by the trade unions and democratic soviets.

● **Ecology:** The protection of the environment — and of the future — imposes forms of social control that mobilize simultaneously the knowledge of the peasants, scientific researchers and the communities. This necessary control is as much opposed to the logic of bureaucracy as it is to that of profit. In the USSR it has an immediate impact on relations between the republics and the centre in terms of taking decisions and controlling choices.

● **Public services:** The free health and education, cheap housing and transport provided by bureaucratic planning do not mean that services are adequate in number and quality. Their distribution is thus carried out on the basis of the privileges of certain functions and/or corruption. The privatization of services would replace (or simply parallel) these former privileges by those, legalized, of money — the minimum provided by the public services would, moreover, remain just as bad quality.

It is possible to oppose this logic: i) by demanding a national discussion on the major priorities of public investment; ii) developing the role of the soviets at different levels and the self-organization of the producers and users concerned — in the first place women who are the first to suffer from the present deplorable state of health and social services. Public control of the quality of services produced and their method of distribution will frontally clash with bureaucratism as well as with an inappropriate and unjust narrow logic of market profitability.

6 In summary, against both the supporters of the market who deck themselves with the virtues of radicalism, and the conservatives who claim to maintain social gains, we counterpose a socialist alternative — which has still not taken hold in the USSR — combining political and economic democracy: electrification plus the power of the soviets.

Glasnost

7 For the first time in decades, political activity has become a mass phenomenon in the USSR. The new conditions created by the reforms, the rapidity of their evolution, and the specificity of the USSR in relation to its Eastern neighbours also means that there have

been accumulated experiences and little time for reflection. This should make us prudent on many political questions, and particularly on tactical ones.

● From past experience, the anti-bureaucratic struggle combines slogans challenging certain existing institutions, for the radical democratization of others, and the creation of forms of self-organization. Joining the battle for the democratization of existing institutions does not in the least imply that one has illusions in achieving this aim. In many cases these institutions will explode, but this can be a necessary stage in consciousness raising.

The need for trade unions that defend the workers will become a burning need with the application of the reforms. The official slogans of democratization of the mass organizations and revitalization of the soviets aim to channel the "movements from below" — but they can also encourage them. The national People's Fronts are a testimony to this.

The democratization of the mass structures necessarily poses the question of a plurality of choice — particularly the plurality of parties and of their function. It would lead to demands for i) a separation of party(ies) and state; ii) the democratization of the CPSU itself whose logic would be its break up; iii) the right to create other political organizations.

● The relations between nationalities is obviously one of the most explosive questions. It is also one of the most complex, where revolutionary Marxist thinking has remained much too general.

Stalinist centralism needed a Russification of the USSR — but in a context of powerful national resistances to such a process, the bureaucracy was also able to base itself on corrupt "national" transmission belts (as Brezhnev did).

We unconditionally support the democratic right of self-determination up to the right of separation — which does not mean that a separatist slogan is actually on the agenda or that it seems appropriate to us. It could become so if

the Soviet framework evolves too slowly in relation to the dynamic of democratization of the republics. The question must be analyzed in its historical and political context, and by reflecting on which slogan best encourages struggles against national and social oppression.

The present reforms are at the moment stimulating a predominant dynamic of autonomy within the Union, at least insofar as the perspectives of democratization seem credible locally and at an-all Union level.

The relations between the Soviet Republics, as well as between the sister countries of Comecon, once again lead to a rejection of the alternatives of bureaucracy or market: the democratic forms of planned relations can rest on accepted solidarity and interdependence. They imply a transparency in relation to common choices and public control by those concerned.

The reciprocal confidence between nationalities implies a critical and honest look back on history — and a renegotiation of the Warsaw Pact. The precondition is obviously the withdrawal of Warsaw Pact troops from Czechoslovakia.

8 The struggle for socialist democracy in the USSR and Eastern Europe will have to go through the development of revolutionary Marxist currents, giving the anti-bureaucratic struggle its full emancipatory character and assuring its political relationship to all those who, in the rest of the world, are struggling against exploitation and oppression.

Thus, these currents could enrich anti-capitalist struggle by their anti-bureaucratic experience, and at the same time they could welcome from outside an international outlook, which is difficult — although indispensable — to create for oneself within the frontiers of the USSR.

They should also link up with their comrades in the so-called people's democracies who are carrying on the same struggle. By their anti-Great Russian position they will help to fight against reactionary nationalist tendencies. ★

