

# International VIEWPOINT

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International  
VIEWPOINT

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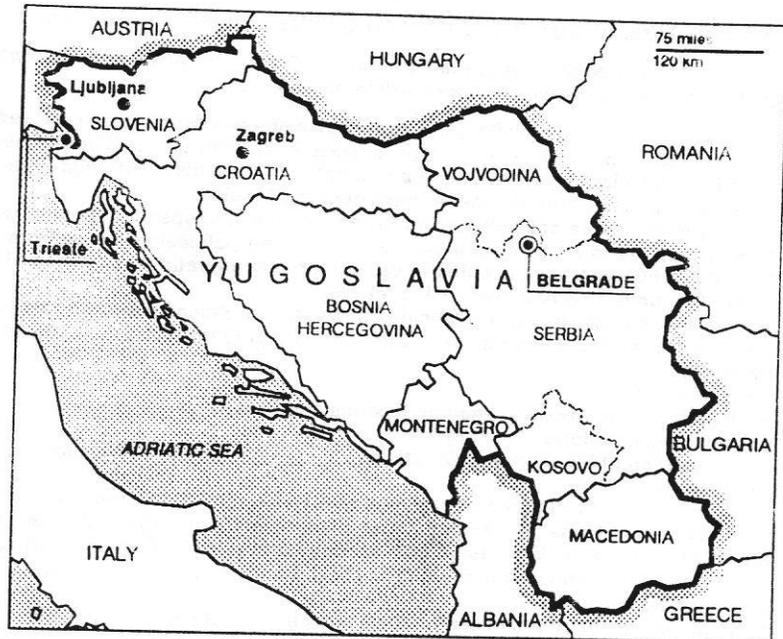
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# Crisis in the Balkans

"THE federation-confederation conflict is irrational" declared Yugoslav prime minister Ante Markovic in *Le Monde* (May 23) during his visit to Paris. "I do not think that it will last long, for economic and social problems will not permit that."

CATHERINE SAMARY



**W**HILE this assessment made some economic sense, it was unrealistic from the political point of view. In any case, the army intervention, far from assisting any possible variant of a redefinition of the Yugoslav union, is a big step towards its break up. It is an aggression against the right of the Yugoslav republics to independence, a right which must be unconditionally defended.

Of the six Yugoslav republics, four — Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina — have expressed their desire for a union of sovereign republics, thus accentuating the dynamic towards a confederal system which has existed since the 1970s. The 1974-76 constitution (the last before Tito's death in 1980) had established the collegial presidency with six representatives from the republics and two from the autonomous provinces within Serbia (Kosovo and Vojvodina).

## Veto rights

Each of these eight representatives enjoyed veto rights, greatly limiting the real powers of the centre and leading to an increased weight of the party/ state apparatuses in each of the republics. The annual rotation of the Federal Presidency amongst the eight functioned automatically until May 15 this year. Then, for the first time, a formal vote and the absence of a majority blocked the nomination of the Croat Stipe Mesic, with Serbia, supported by Montenegro and the votes from the two autonomous provinces, voting down Mesic.

Behind this paralysis lurked Serbia leader Slobodan Milosevic's efforts at recentralization, strengthened by his election last year to the Serbian presidency, with 60% of the vote. His popularity

drew on the clear and strong feeling among Serbs that they had been the main losers from the evolution of the system. Equality of representation regardless of the size of the units evidently meant a relative under-representation of the largest republic, Serbia. Furthermore, Serbia was the only republic where the regime was not sovereign over the whole of its territory, owing to the veto powers of the two provinces. Finally, Serbs are scattered across three republics — outside Serbia they make up about 12% of the population of Croatia and a third of that of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

These states, which were created as parts of the federation with the idea of creating an equality of weight among the republics, have been until now constitutionally defined as multinational states so far as language, alphabet and official religion are concerned. The new Croat constitution of December 1990 did away

with this pluralism and transformed the Serbs in Croatia into a national minority.

The Serbs have protested against this treatment, although they have followed a similar or worse policy towards the Albanians in their own territory. The difference is that the Serbs feel "at home" in Yugoslavia; the scattering of Serbs throughout the federation makes them federalists. However the affirmation of the Serb nation means challenging Yugoslavia's internal frontiers, with the recentralization of Serbia and the annexation of Serb inhabited areas in other republics.

Serbian nationalism also tends to deny the identity of those other nations and nationalities which are ethnically the closest to the Serbs — that is, the Montenegrins, distinguished only by their history; the Macedonians, who were elevated to the status of a nation by Tito's regime; and the Muslims of Bos-

## New frontiers?

TALKS have been taking place between Croat and Serb leaders on the redrawing of the frontiers between their two republics, according to *The Financial Times* of July 10, 1991. Croat president Franjo Tudjman sees this as the way towards the "rational resolution [of] these issues of intra-national Croatia-Serbian relations". Any redrawing of the frontiers would open a whole series of analogous questions, both within Yugoslavia and between that country and its neighbours.

For example: Bulgaria has claims on Macedonia, as does Greece, there is a half million strong Hungarian minority in Vojvodina, and the Kosovo Albanians may well look towards Tirana insofar as the regime there changes.

The Western authorities and their media view such prospects with a mixture of acute anxiety and condescension. They see themselves being inexorably sucked into situations which they cannot control, and which will stretch the institutions of the Old/New World Order, designed to uphold existing borders, not to oversee their modification, to breaking point.

The independent left, which has never been taken in by the fashionable nonsense about the "end of history", can afford a more rational approach, insisting on the need for any such changes to take place on the basis of the fullest internal democracy, respect for the rights of all national groups and without outside interference. New regional confederations can be envisaged to replace the crumbling post-First World War nation states — the notion of a Balkan Federation was in the air in Balkan Communist circles at the end of the Second World War, before being vetoed by Stalin. — C. M. ★

## Recognize independence of Slovenia and Croatia

*THE following statement was issued on July 3, 1991 by Sozialistische Alternative (SOAL), the Austrian section of the Fourth International.*

IN recent days, the Yugoslav People's Army has employed brute force in Slovenia. Tanks, artillery and the airforce have been called in and airports and border posts bombed. Cars which have been used as roadblocks have been flattened. Deaths, injuries and immense material losses have been the result.

\* The independence of Slovenia and Croatia has been suspended, but not withdrawn. It remains to be seen what role economic and political pressure from the USA and the EC, who have decided to defend the bureaucratic dictatorship of the central government, have played in this retreat.

\* Every nation has the right to decide its own fate. If Slovenes and Croats have decided in a democratic fashion in favour of sovereignty for their states, the issue is clear-cut.

\* We demand:

\* An end to the aggression against Slovenia and Croatia.

\* A peaceful solution to the conflict.

\* Recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as sovereign states by the Austrian federal government.

\* While fully supporting the right to national self-determination, we also believe that the creation of small states and nationalism cannot solve the problems of the peoples of Yugoslavia. What is needed are moves towards a free union of sovereign states in the form of a confederation and the organization of society on the basis of workers' power.

\* We oppose all attempts to exploit the events in Yugoslavia as a justification for whipping up militarist hysteria and steps towards strengthening the armed forces in Austria. At the same time, we demand the opening of the borders for people fleeing the fighting or deserting. ★

nia, who since the 1970s have been considered as a people sharing sovereignty in Bosnia with Croats and Serbs. Croat nationalism is equally menacing for the Bosnian Muslims since the Croat president, Franjo Tudjman, considers them to be Croats. Bosnia-Herzegovina, indeed, may well turn out to be the most explosive region in Yugoslavia.

In the immediate sense, it is Slovenia that has taken the initiative, fortified by its ethnic homogeneity, which makes it less fearful of internal ethnic clashes. Its declaration of sovereignty has come into conflict with the explicit support of the European Monetary Fund and Community for the federalism of Ante Markovic's government. The EC thus carries the primary responsibility for the army intervention against the proclamation of independence, born out of the collapse of negotiations.

It was the "liberal" Ante Markovic who initially ordered the army to intervene in Slovenia to defend the integrity of the country's frontiers. It appears that he did not expect serious resistance, and thus hoped to maintain his liberal reputation. The resistance by the Slovene territorial units and the army's own logic have made things turn out otherwise.

The army is increasingly arrogating powers to itself which may go beyond assuring the frontiers to involve a challenge to the newly elected regimes. Furthermore, purges in which Serb officers have been replacing those from other nationalities point in the direction of a change in the character of this army, in which it would lose its "Titoist" features as a multinational, federalist force with a

multi-ethnic leadership under the control of the collegial Yugoslav presidency. These are all factors that have kept the army from responding directly to strong Serbian pressures intended to bring about a state of emergency in Croatia.

The partial community of interests between an army whose privileges are directly tied to the maintenance of the Yugoslav state and Slobodan Milosevic does not mean that they have identical aims. Milosevic has responded to the affirmation of the other state/nations by an affirmation of the Serb state/nation, even if this means exploding the federation. This is one of the reasons for the army's reserved attitude to Milosevic in recent months. The defeat inflicted on the army in the first battle in Slovenia will push the army high command into raising the stakes throughout the country.

Everything now depends on the breadth of political and social resistance to the military and on its own internal divisions. The pro-independence and anti-militarist movement in Slovenia is strong; and the same is true in Serbia despite the armed bands on the far right. The student movement last march came out against the civil war logic implicit in the actions of the Serbian regime. Parents of conscripts have invaded the Serbian parliament to demand the withdrawal of their children engaged in this dirty war. Tito's Yugoslavia is no more. A new union can only arise on the basis of full respect for the independence of the communities concerned and in opposition to any intervention by the army. ★

## The abdication of the democrats

THE arrest of Ali Belhadj, revered tribune of the rebellious youth of the poorest neighbourhoods of Algiers, and Abassi Madani, the spokesman and president of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), on June 30, 1991, left Algeria's fundamentalists in disarray.

These quasi-mythical figures, who threatened holy war and dealt with the regime as an equal force, could in fact, it seemed, be arrested by mere mortals in police uniforms, without the heavens falling on president Chadli.

Exhausted by their dispersed and poorly supported attacks in Algiers, shaken by the public denunciation of Abassi as a "danger for Islam and the country" during a retelevized interview with members of the Majlis al-Chura<sup>1</sup>, isolated from a public that now wants nothing more than a return to calm, the fundamentalists have been unable to respond.

The appeals for holy war were followed only by small and militarily ineffective demonstrations in a few areas. The best prepared elements were put out of action by raids and arrests.

CHAWKI SALHI



**S**INCE October 1990, in agreement with the general secretary of the ruling National Liberation Front (NLF), Mehri, Abdelaziz Belkhadem, the new president of the People's National Assembly (APN), has been trying to restore coherence to the ruling party and reduce the impact of the FIS. Since autumn 1990 disappointment has become evident among the FIS' electorate, since the Islamic local councils, which had promised to provide housing, work and marriage for the young, had failed to deliver.

The new deputies, who had once dealt with problems in front of everybody in the mosques, have retreated behind the town-hall railings, in the manner of their predecessors. The only evident difference is that those who are getting whatever housing or other benefits exist have beards. The FIS has been slow to react, leading a campaign against the financial strangulation of the town-halls by the central state and supporting the demands of those who have yet to be rehoused after the 1989 earthquake. However, they have not been able to regain the confidence of disillusioned voters. Indeed, a new fundamentalist organization, Hamas, has begun to nibble away at the FIS' more moderate wing.

The Gulf war gave the FIS a new opportunity to appear at the head of the rebellious masses, despite the complications due to its relations with Saudi Arabia. However, its militarist rhetoric, which had strong appeal amongst the youth, has only led to the arming of bands dedicated to the "holy war", not to fighting George Bush.

Then the complete success of the March 12-13 general strike to protest against the cost of living, called by the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA), which was virulently opposed by the FIS and the Islamic Workers Union (SIT), contributed to a further decline in the fundamentalists'

credibility. Believing the time was ripe, Chadli decided to gamble and, having passed the necessary electoral laws, on April 3, announced elections for June 27.

During Ramadan (which this year began in mid-April), fundamentalist gangs led by Takfir Oual Hidjra (one of the most radical Islamic groups) attacked theatres and gatherings of young women. At the same time the FIS took up a more fundamental issue through its "Islamic markets", free from taxes, financed by the town halls and set up by supporters who brought down prices.

### Fraudulent electoral system

However the FLN prime minister, Hamrouche, had his answer ready, using a completely fraudulent electoral system to undermine the fundamentalists' hopes.

The number of voters per seat varied from 2,000 to 100,000, depending on whether the FLN or FIS had been supported previously, the south and far east of the country being favoured to the detriment of the cities. Supposing that the voting scores remained the same as on June 12, 1990, the FLN would have gained 198 to 320 deputies with 17% of the vote, the FIS 135 to 265 deputies with 34%. This voting system would effectively cut down the representation of all the parties except the FLN; thus the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS) would be reduced to its stronghold in Kabylia and the centre, its other votes wasted. This meant that the FLN would appear as the only place for anti-FIS votes to go in the second round, bringing two thirds of the electorate behind its candidates.

The FIS could not accept its coming defeat in the June 27 elections. It demanded the repeal of the electoral laws and the holding of the anticipated presidential election, with Abassi raising the tempera-

ture by threatening a general strike if these demands were not met.

There was little chance of this strike being a success, given the FIS' embarrassment over the UGTA general strike in March, and given the widespread feeling that the party conflict offered nothing. The regime therefore tried to push the FIS into carrying out its threats. The call for the strike on May 25 thus appeared as a blunder committed by Abassi under pressure.

The initial results were indeed derisory: of 15,000 workers at the Industrial Vehicles Complex (CVI) at Huiba, 100 went on strike; three out of 500 in the chemical works and so on. Individual militants, at best groups of dozens, walked off the job to general indifference, with the possible exception of the oil fields where a more significant proportion of the workforce joined the strike. The Islamic markets shut, as did the FIS controlled town halls, but most shops remained open except in two medium sized towns in the interior, Médéa and Tlemcen.

### Democracy on campuses

There was some ferment on the campuses, but a healthy reaction of solidarity against the repression was combined with insistence on a vote on the strike by general assemblies, which ended in the isolation of the few hundred FIS marchers. The demonstrations were very small, although the regime talked up the numbers, wanting to show the FIS' impotence on the television.

The FIS then decided to change its tactics and concentrate on evening marches. Hamrouche met FIS leaders to grant them permission to meet in four places in Algiers, with the aim of increasing the tension and rallying voters around the FLN.

However by this time the popular mood was beginning to change; the abandonment by the democratic and revolutionary parties of any serious challenge to the dictatorship — the former on account of their electoral preoccupations, the latter owing to their material weakness — rendered them irrelevant at this moment. A few tear gas canisters and the youth began to reconsider, and when, on the night of June 2, the police attempted to clear the squares, some of the youth reacted and the movement changed its dimensions and nature; the state of emergency was announced.

In the run up to June 27, Hamrouche had carried out a sort of coup d'état within the regime, shutting up the parties and journals (such as the Democratic Cultural Assembly (RCD), the liberals and the *Nouvel Hebdo*) close to the president, and eliminating all the currents from the FLN lists. As long as this seemed to be working, Chadli kept his peace. On June 4, when Hamrouche still considered the situ-

1. The FIS' leading body. It has lost around 20 of its 35 members — about ten are in prison and another four in a state of open dissidence.

ation controllable, his opponents demanded a state of emergency. And indeed, Italian lenders had just suspended a credit of \$7bn owing to the prevailing instability, while the International Monetary Fund was among the first to support the state of emergency.

Hamrouche's resignation, on the grounds that he did not want to be "a man of two policies" (in reality he did not want to sacrifice his ambitions by being made a scapegoat for the repression) gave the impression that the regime was in panic. It seemed as if a poorly followed strike call had in fact overthrown the government, and won presidential elections and a coalition government. These incomprehensible concessions, coming in the wake of the country's being put under military rule, inflated the fundamentalists' power and demoralized everyone else, above all the modernist middle classes, who have come close to panic.

### Fundamentalist arms deals

Very quickly however, the regime acted to erase the impression of disarray, first announcing that the state of emergency was going to continue, and then launching a sally of communiqués and measures against the FIS. Belhadj was accused in an affair involving the French Islamist Didier Roger Guyan, who wanted to take arms and explosives into Algeria; the town halls were instructed to take down their signs saying "Islamic town halls"; the Islamists' Friday meetings in the Mosques have been regularly denounced and threatened by communiqués from the military authorities. However it was not the fundamentalists who were hardest hit by these measures; Belhadj remained at liberty, the town halls put up in the morning the signs taken down by the military in the night; and each Friday, despite the deployment of tanks, the fundamentalist meetings continued with the traditional appeals for holy war.

On the other hand the FFS' meetings had already been banned before the state of emergency, and the Socialist Workers Party (PST — the sympathizing group of the Fourth International in Algeria) was forbidden to hold a meeting at Bejaia, while its offices in Oran were raided after a leaflet distribution and activists in Bejaia were interrogated after a flyposting effort.

There was, furthermore, a religious turn in the official line. Every minister and official has been using and abusing ritual formulas and Koranic verses. The arrests of Belhadj and Abassi were the first sign of the regime really exercising its strength; in the previous phase its policy had had the effect of pushing the undecided towards the strongest, the fundamentalists. This is a pyrrhic victory for the army; by making the fundamentalists appear the only victims of the repression, while in

fact allowing them to demonstrate for a whole period, they have paved the way for a fundamentalist flood tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, when the FLN's liberal reforms are applied and misery and despair grow still further.

The democratic parties are passing one after another through the antechamber of the new head of the government, Ghozali, to whom they pledge allegiance. They accept the indignity of bending the knee to the regime while muttering a few abstract declarations when they are forbidden to demonstrate and subjected to curfew. The PST, the only party to reject this approach, is totally outside the community of parties accepted by Chadli, and is continuing to demand the lifting of the state of emergency.

The democratic parties have ended up supporting this curious "coalition government" which contains only FLN members. They have come together to support this latest of the interminable FLN governments Algeria has had since independence, whose prime minister treats them haughtily, while summoning them to speak in the government's favour and against the FIS. Their attitude to the state of emergency has been hesitant and more often than not they support the use of the tanks.

### The honest army

Thus, on June 19, the anniversary of the day when the army overthrew him, former post-independence president Ben Bella saluted the army: "above the fray and composed of honest men." He timidly demanded that steps be taken towards lifting the state of siege, as has Ait Ahmed of the FFS, who at least had the courage to say it openly. However, besides Ali Yahia's League for the Defence of Human Rights and the PST, nobody has been vigorously demanding the end of the state of emergency.

One exception has been Louiza Hanoun of the Workers Party (PT — linked to the Lambertiste current of Trotskyism), but she has become seriously compromised with the FIS since her visit to Abassi Madani and her support for the FIS strike.

The Party of the Socialist Vanguard (PAGS — the Communist Party) has been calling for the banning of the FIS and thus effectively banning itself from any activity in the popular neighbourhoods.

For the time being, however, the contradictions in the positions of Abassi Madani and the incoherence of his resistance to the state of emergency have affected his credibility. The parents of the victims have not pardoned him for sending their children to the slaughter, while his supporters cannot continue to accept small group actions without rhyme or reason, in the absence of any observable plan. Abassi started off supporting the Ghozali government, even reaffirming this support after the accusation against Belhadj, then, suddenly, he demanded the ending of the

state of emergency, a few days before his own arrest. This came after strikes against the FIS apparatus and the arrest of intermediate cadres, which effectively forestalled any vigorous solidarity actions with the FIS leaders.

In the western media there has been much talk of a military coup. But why should the Algerian military need to carry out such a coup when they have been in power since 1962? The democratic opening conceded after the events of October 1988 will not be reversed, since it is necessary to gain the confidence of the imperialists. Besides, it is much more efficient and stable to govern flexibly than to rule by military decree. The regime would only turn to the latter resort if it thought that the danger was truly mortal. But in fact it was not, despite fears at the outset that FIS militants would be able to destabilize the army rank-and-file and render the repressive forces impotent.

Today, what is on the cards is a more deep going economic opening. "More than half measures", headlined *L'Horizon*, the big evening paper, on July 2, 1991. The limited opening made to foreign companies in July 1990, which permit them to sell in hard currency in exchange for promises of investment, was followed up in February 1991 by total liberalization of foreign trade, at least on paper. In order to meet the obligations to Japanese, French and Italian creditors who are flocking to the Ghozali government, the opening will become more thoroughgoing.

Bankrupt local enterprises, which have been propped up for six months — the time needed to get through the elections — will find themselves in serious difficulties. The opening up of foreign trade will mean the collapse of the textile industry, shoe-making and processing. The government has promised that the opening will not undermine the national industrial base — we will see, though squaring the circle is usually difficult.

### Devaluation of dinar

The deliberate attacks on purchasing power through the administrative devaluation of the dinar by the regime, and through tax reforms that hit the masses, are bringing about an increase in poverty. After the elections we will be looking forward to four million unemployed. Thus, what other possibility does the regime have than to prostrate itself further before imperialism and abandon all the efforts made to industrialize the country?

It would be a mistake, in these circumstances, to imagine that we have seen the last of the fundamentalists. The FIS has been the only genuinely mass party, and a socialist, populist or democratic alternative does not exist. Thus, when the liberal reforms bring forth the inevitable misery, this or another party of despair, whether called the FIS or not, may well take the head of the rebellion of the youth. ★

# Confusion and impotence

**DURING** the last decade, the political struggle in Turkey has been marked by a continuing fight against the avatars of the 1980 military dictatorship. Today all political forces, from the heirs of the dictatorship to its victims on the right and the left, are agreed that the framework fixed by the 1980 regime is obsolete and that the state must be reorganized on a new basis. But everybody also agrees that there is a political impasse.

The resulting picture is one of confusion and impotence. All the opinion polls carried out over the past two years show that no party is capable of winning the elections by itself, and that even the emergence of a strong coalition government is unlikely. It amounts to a crisis of confidence and to despair.

FUAT ORÇUN<sup>1</sup>

**S**INCE its crushing defeat at the municipal elections of 1989 (see *International Viewpoint*, no. 166, June 26, 1989) Turkey's governing party, the ANAP (Party of the Motherland — led by Turgut Özal) has never climbed higher than third place in the surveys on voting intention. But it continues to hold around two thirds of the seats in Parliament, with a level of electoral support estimated at about 15%. The Party of the Just Way (DYP, centre right, led by the former prime minister Suleiman Demirel) is slowly nibbling away at the ANAP electorate.

On the left, the small Party of the Democratic Left (DSP, dissident social democratic, led by former prime minister Bulent Ecevit) is making inroads into the vote of the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP, led by Erdal İnönü, the heirs of the Social Democratic Party which existed before 1980).

According to an opinion poll carried out by the Gallup Institute on May 30, 1991, the DYP had 29% of the votes; the SHP 22%; the DSP 18%; the ANAP 14%; the Islamic Party 8.5%; and the fascist party 5%.

## High number of floating voters

Whereas there is a growing "polarization" between centre left and centre right, the most salient feature is the number of those undecided as to how to vote, which is more than 20%. This high proportion of floating voters has encouraged each of the four parties to attempt to revamp its appearance and better define its identity.

The most desperate case is that of the

ANAP, which has lost all legitimacy in the eyes of the population.

According to the polls, it would even have difficulty getting beyond the electoral threshold of 10% of the votes in the urban centres (the DSP and the SHP are ahead in the cities, and the DYP is only the third party in Istanbul). This shows that all illusions in the ANAP have been vanquished.

Founded three years after the military coup, when the military offensive against "ideologies" was at its height, the ANAP claimed to embody within itself "national unity", bringing together personalities from the four currents present in the pre-coup parliament (liberals, social democrats, Islamists, fascists).

Today, the principal founders of the ANAP recognize that its greatest weakness is its absence of a clearly defined "ideology".

## A reactionary and nebulous entity

The ANAP is in practice a reactionary nebulous entity based on clientelism and the advantages of power. Its electoral base is limited to those newly enriched over the past ten years.

During its last congress on June 15-16, 1991, the ANAP threw out its own chair and prime minister Yildirim Akbulut, replacing him with a former minister of foreign affairs, Mesut Yilmaz.

The victory of the latter has been presented in the press as the victory of the "liberal and moderate" wing of the party against the "Islamic conservatives". In fact, the hard core of the Yilmaz team is essentially composed of former cadres

and sympathizers of the fascist party of Türkes (the sinister "Führer" of the Grey Wolves).

Moreover, the new economic supremo, minister Pakdemir, was considered as an "Islamic conservative" close to Akbulut, until he decided at the last minute to go over to the side of Yilmaz.

Consequently, rather than a change of orientation and strategy, the election of Yilmaz is above all a revamping of image with the sole aim of winning the elections (scheduled for autumn 1992 at the latest), and of preserving Özal's position as head of state.

For the latter remains the true leader of ANAP. As president of the republic, Özal is officially "above parties", but he continues to pull the strings behind the scenes. Özal has become accustomed to ruling as absolute master, with undivided power and without compromise.

He designated his successor and "formed" the government, without leaving any initiative to Akbulut, who became a puppet figure. Under Özal, Byzantinism, corruption and nepotism have attained unequalled heights.

His very ambitious wife, Semra, recently got herself elected president of the biggest local branch of the ANAP, in Istanbul. Semra Özal represents the "modernist-westernist" side of the Özal family, whereas the brothers of Özal represent the Islamic and conservative wing.

## One puppet replaced by another

The discarding of Akbulut is, then, merely the replacement of one puppet by another who is less discredited.

Mesut Yilmaz was elected with the implicit support of Özal and the very militant support of his wife and her children. He has, however, little chance of avoiding the unavoidable; the fate which awaits the ANAP at the next elections.

Moreover, this time, Özal himself seems rather pessimistic about the future of his party; before the congress, he proposed that the son of Adnan Menderes (the charismatic leader of the Turkish right, hung by the military after the putsch of 1960), who is not even a member of ANAP, take the leadership to "try and put things right".

But the best result that he can hope for would be that the ANAP maintains enough deputies to be the junior partner in a coalition which would accept his retention as president of the republic.

Outside of a small layer of nouveaux riches who owe their success to Özal, nobody (not even the big bourgeoisie) is satisfied with the arbitrary policies of a regime which does not even seek a consensus with the principal forces of the sys-

1. The following article outlines the crisis of bourgeois politics in Turkey today. A subsequent article, to be published in the next issue of *IV*, will analyze the state of play within the Turkish workers' movement.

### The signs of famine

TURKEY'S urban population was 43% in 1980, and it has climbed to 63% over the past ten years. According to the predictions of the OECD, in 20 years 95% of the population of Turkey will live in the towns on the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts. In other words, the most fertile land from an agricultural point of view will be urbanized.

This rural exodus is not the product of a demand for industrial labourers but of a crisis in the countryside. The principal reason for the acceleration of the rush to the towns resides in the fact that agriculture, supported by the government throughout the first decades of the Republic, has been neglected over the last period. Under the pretext of the passage to a market economy, the agricultural sector has in reality been destroyed by the application of policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

As [former prime minister] Demirel puts it, whereas Turkey was one of the six or seven countries self-sufficient in food, from 1989 onwards, agricultural imports have surpassed exports. In other words, Turkey has become dependent from the point of view of food. Cattle rearing has experienced a great decline, its share of the agricultural sector falling from 40% to 25%. The rate of growth of agricultural income (previously 3.5% on average), fell to 2.5% at the beginning of the 1980s, equalling thus the rate of demographic growth, then fell further to 2% (Professor Gülten Kazgan, "Alarm Signals in Agriculture", *Cumhuriyet*, March 12, 1991).

Liberal policies have flooded the market with imported tropical fruits because of international credits, but the country's capacity for traditional agricultural production has collapsed. The results of this dependency in food are easily imaginable. The poor have been condemned to become vegetarian, but the price increases for fresh vegetables limits their choice to potatoes and cracked wheat! ★

tem.

For some time, the TÜSIAD, the employers' association, has been sounding the alarm and openly expressing its unhappiness. Everybody knows that a crumbling regime cannot take radical measures.

It will be impossible to resist pressure on the wages front, especially in a pre-election period when inflation will not fall below its chronic rate of 70%.

For the moment, only the United States supports Özal. They have not lost hope in the continuation in power of a figure who gave them more than they could have wished for during the war in the Gulf.

In fact, Özal and his clique were already on the way out, but their pro-American policy during the Gulf crisis has enabled them to play for time, at the price of further damage to the social and economic life of the country.

#### Some taboos addressed by regime

Still seeking to gain time, Özal has addressed some of the regime's taboos, notably the famous articles 141-2 and 163 of the Penal Code which forbid political activity on the basis of class or religion. These articles, whose application was already becoming less rigorous, were suppressed stealthily after a lightning vote in parliament.

The same was done with the ban on the use of the Kurdish language. A partial amnesty has also been decreed. But this wave of "liberalization" was accompanied by new repressive measures which will without doubt lead to nostalgia for the old ones.

While the existence of the Kurds has been admitted and the Kurdish language authorized, demands for the national rights of the Kurds will be repressed still more severely than in the past.

Moreover, a new anti-terror law has been adopted. According to this law, those who, although having committed no crime, are members of a "terrorist" organization, or those who commit acts with terrorist goals without being a member of a "terrorist" organization, will receive the same penalties as the authors of organized terrorist acts.

#### A fluid and arbitrary definition

The definition of "terrorist" is totally arbitrary and fluid: "those who hinder the indivisibility of the country and its nation", "those who weaken the authority of the state", "those who wish to change the economic system", and so on. Every citizen is, then, a potential terrorist (*Cumhuriyet*, April 13, 1991).

Informers will be remunerated and the police will be protected in case of

"excesses" (including in cases of torture), since a special authorization from the minister of the interior will henceforth be necessary to pursue such cases in the judicial system.

Moreover, since the introduction of this law, several summary executions have taken place, the police not hesitating to enter the dwellings of presumed "terrorists" to execute them in cold blood.

The amnesty has had some interesting results. Those condemned according to articles 141-142 and 163 have been freed, and others conditionally released.

But, "of the 3,316 political prisoners who were still in prison, 2,857 were of the left, 459 of the right. Some 409 of the rightist prisoners have been released and the rest will be freed within another year.... whereas only 299 leftist detainees have been freed, and the 2,558 others are to be released within five to ten years" (*Milliyet*, June 26, 1991).

The anti-terror law has led to a revival of hunger strikes by detainees and their relatives.

After a period of unmitigated right wing rule that has lasted more than ten years, one might think that the party of the center left, the SHP, would be in a position to win the elections. And indeed, in 1989, the SHP swept nearly all the townhalls in the big cities.

#### Inefficiency of social democratic management

But the inefficiency of social democratic management and allegations of corruption have undermined the SHP's credibility, and it has lost ground to the DSP whose apparatus is, however, still too weak to challenge for power.

Moreover, the SHP is experiencing great difficulty in shedding the moral and political heritage of the Republican Party of the People (CHP), the single and not particularly democratic party of the first decades of the Republic.

Its leadership remains too weak to deal with new developments. The programme of the right wing of the party attempts to outbid that of the orthodox right and is sapping the confidence of the popular electorate.

Even if this opposition is not victorious at the SHP's congress, scheduled for July 6-7, 1991, it could nonetheless obtain a blocking minority which will paralyze the party, already feeble enough.

The SHP also wants to revamp its image, but its search for a new identity will not take it to the left, in line with the dynamic of the social opposition, but to the centre, towards a gentle transition. Even the leaders of Demirel's DYP accuse the social democrats of not fulfilling their role as a left opposition.

As a consequence, the DYP is obliged to partially assume this role, at the risk of alienating its rural and rightist traditional base. It is, then, the DYP, the genuine

"right centrist" party, which takes first place in the polls on voting intentions.

The composition of the future parliament remains undecided. The most probable formula would be a DYP-ANAP coalition, with the blessing of Özal.

A DYP-SHP coalition is not to be ruled out either. Although apparently conflictual, such a coalition would correspond to the aspirations, not only of a part of the bourgeoisie which aspires to a durable social compromise, but also to those of important sectors of the left who hope thus to be able to restructure the state in a more democratic sense. A project for a coalition between the centre right and the center left had moreover fallen through just before the 1980 coup d'état.

The countdown to the elections has begun. Thus, after the total failure of the first two parties founded under the guidance of the military, the Party of Nationalist Democracy and the Populist Party, the third party of the military regime, the ANAP, has in its turn become obliged, if not to disappear, at least to be reduced to a supporting role.

### Recompositions in state apparatus

The inevitable elimination of the ANAP is going to lead to significant recompositions in the state apparatus. It is clear that even the coming to power of the centre right, in the shape of the DYP, will lead to a serious purge. It should not be forgotten that the ANAP arrived in power with a programme of radical reforms. A replacement of the right by another force of the right would be a first in the history of the country.

It is edifying to note that even the DYP is trying to exorcise the phantom of the military dictatorship. Demirel has recently said that it is necessary now "to finish with the current regime, a veritable civilian coup d'état which is the heir of the military regime" (*Milliyet*, June 11, 1991).

The civilian coup d'état referred to is Özal's presence as head of state. One has the impression of having gone round in a historical circle. With one exception; the workers and the popular sectors have suffered some grievous political and economic blows and have lost their instruments of self-defence. ★



## New debates on Philippine left

IT SEEMS that 1991 may be the year when a long awaited debate is finally opened in the left in the Philippines. The evidence is to be found in the January/February issue of *Ang Bayan* ("The People"), a political publication of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)<sup>1</sup>; the appearance of an open review, called, symbolically, *Debate*; in the transformation of the "people's democracy" current into an organized movement and the holding of the fifth congress of the socialist organization, *Bisig*.

This is not the first time that such a debate has started.<sup>2</sup> Important tactical, strategic and organizational questions were raised at the time of the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986. But, while it involved many militants and currents, this debate remained informal and fragmented, if tolerated or even supported for a time by the CP leadership. However, after the Aquino government ordered total war against the guerillas, it stopped. Since then, new questions have been posed both on the national and international level raising the most basic theoretical issues, such as how to understand the crisis of socialism and how to interpret the notion of the vanguard party.

PAUL PETITJEAN

**O**F COURSE, some of these questions had already come up between 1978 and 1986, raised by individuals, the intermediary organizations of the CPP or minority currents in the Philippine left. Now they have appeared in the very leadership of the CPP, as can be seen from the keynote articles in *Ang Bayan*.

Given the importance of the Philippine revolutionary movement, the opening of a new discussion on the contemporary problems of socialism has a significance going beyond the archipelago. *International Viewpoint* is thus presenting this new debate to its readers in the forms in which it is actually taking place.

The editors of *Ang Bayan* have announced a change of policy. In an article entitled: "Ang Bayan in the 1990s: New Thrust, New Vigour, New Ideas," it explains that "in recent years, party members have expressed the need for *AB* to address important theoretical, ideological and organizational issues. These include contributions to theoretical studies on socialism, strategy and tactics, political economy and US imperialism, among others; critiques of various bourgeois and petty bourgeois trends and tendencies in

the Philippine progressive and revolutionary movement; and articles on ideological building and remoulding and organizational principles of the party, such as democratic centralism, collective leadership and collective life. Though these should not be its main content, the paper can play a specific and clearly defined role in the discussion of the above issues."

### A channel for the expression of views

While being "linked with the highest leadership of the party — the Central Committee and its Political Bureau and Executive Committee," *AB* must be used by "other party organs" and "serves as a channel for the expression of views by individual members." The editors emphasize that, "a host of major issues...have come to the fore since 1983 and will

1. *Ang Bayan*, volume XXI no. 11, January-February 1991.

2. Since 1986, *International Viewpoint* has published a number of articles and interviews reflecting and presenting the debates in the Philippine left. They have dealt, notably, with the relations between political and military action, united front policies and democracy. For further details, write to *IV* at 2, rue Richard Lenoir, 93108, Montreuil, France.

become even more the focus of contention and debate within the Philippine revolutionary movement in the 1990s. The party is at the centre of such contention and debate. Wide sections of the party leadership at various levels and substantial parts of the rank-and-file are reexamining, discussing and debating a whole range of issues related to the critique of Philippine society; strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle as a whole and in specific areas; international line and situation; and reform and renewal of the party. The debates are signs of a party capable of appreciating fully and responding vigorously to the changing realities of the times. The expression of different views by all party members who wish to engage themselves should be given the widest latitude."

**Debates should not lead to factionalism**

"At the same time, it must be ensured that the debates do not lead to continuing, fruitless struggle and worse, factional conflicts. There should be adequate and multiple channels within the party wherein the discussions can be properly organized and where the broadest participation can be encouraged. This is necessary not only to serve as a learning process for the entire party but also to lead to their satisfactory and firm resolution. *Ang Bayan* makes itself available as one of these channels...Corollary to this, *AB* commits itself to helping build a more widely based and democratically formed consensus within the party on these issues. [More than ever] it cannot be the work of a few minds, no matter how brilliant. The process itself must be a collective one, imbued with greater democracy and freed from bureaucratic procedures."<sup>3</sup>

The *Ang Bayan's* editors have put their ideas into practise by launching a regular "AB's Socialism Series" introduced with an article "Where to, Socialism?" which sets out the big questions which the column will address.

While reaffirming the validity of the Marxist method, *AB* recognizes that: "the socialist world is unquestionably in deep crisis and turmoil...China is haunted by the nightmare that was the Tiananmen massacre. All over the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, economic stagnation and even decay are the common plight of the working people and the entire populace. But out of this crisis have emerged strong and powerful counter-currents of reform and renewal, even of full-blown revolution in the political, economic, cultural and ideological spheres, all seeking to restore the battered frame of the socialist idea to its original glory [even if] whole sections of the working people, even whole nations, failed by their socialist experiments, may have chosen to take the road back to capitalism....The socialist experiment may have failed at a certain

**The eruption of Pinatubo**

**EARTHQUAKES, floods, cyclones** — the Philippines, and in particular the northern island of Luzon, have recently been struck by one catastrophe after another. The latest is the eruption of a volcano, Pinatubo.

The Philippines are part of the Pacific Ocean's "belt of fire" comprising around 350 active volcanos from New Zealand to Chile. This zone, where an ocean shelf is sliding under a continental shelf, is highly seismic. All the volcanos in this belt are potentially dangerous. However, this did not prevent Westinghouse from building a nuclear power plant at the foot of one of these volcanos in the Bataan peninsula not far from Pinatubo — which reveals something about the sense of responsibility of the politico-industrial lobby that rules us. Fortunately the galloping cost of this undertaking and the "February revolution" in 1986 led the Philippine government to abandon its construction.

Every cloud has a silver lining: the Clark US air base was hard hit by the debris from the eruption, as was to a lesser extent the naval base at Subic Bay.

The future of these huge US military bases now seems to be in doubt, since negotiations between Manila and Washington on this issue have never come to anything.

But the human and social consequences of the eruption are very heavy. Several hundred people have been killed while hundreds of thousands have lost their sources of income and the roofs over their heads. The government is already stating that there will be 600,000 new long term unemployed, while it is by no means certain that the Aeta tribal communities will be able to re-establish themselves on the mountain's slopes. Thousands of buildings have been flattened, including many schools and clinics.

Throughout the affected region, communications have been disorganized and public services paralyzed. Most rice fields within a radius of 20kms around the volcano are buried under a metre of cinders. It is harder to assess the consequences for agriculture in regions further away. However, the blocking of rivers and the destruction of one of the island's last tropical forests may lead to flooding, mud flows and repeated landslides.

Poverty, the absence of an effective system of social security, and administrative indifference and corruption, will, as always, considerably aggravate the consequences of the eruption. The non-governmental organizations of the Philippines are mobilizing to bring direct aid to the most destitute sections of the population.

We have received an appeal from one of these organizations. Gifts can be sent to the following addresses:

Stichting Kapatiran, Pinatubo campaign

● Postal transfers: Postgiro 55584, The Hague

● Bank transfers: ABN Bank, The Hague, a/co no. 51.66.86.461, The Netherlands. ★

junction and in certain lands or even have gotten mired in a general crisis like the present one. But this is no argument against its profound humanist and liberative cause.... We are aware that between vision and realities lies a long period of struggle in all spheres of life."

To understand the failures of the struggle for socialism "requires the collective wisdom of all Marxists, whether inside or outside communist and socialist parties and movements. Thus the need for open, wide ranging and continued exchanges and debates among comrades....Central to the debate is the question of how to sum up the various contradictions that underlie the socialist dilemma. Where lies the root of socialism's present crisis?"

The *Ang Bayan* editors explains that there are two points of view on this question (seemingly inside the CPP leadership itself): "one contention is that it is brought about by the gradual though steady and ultimately successful restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe.... The

other contention is that socialism's crisis is primarily caused by what its proponents call the Stalinist distortion [from which] emerged a thoroughly bureaucratized state and party machinery governed by a privileged stratum.... It was an elite, yes, but never a bourgeoisie, for they did not rule for profit and had to function within the strictures of the public ownership of the means of production and socialist superstructure.... The theme of alienation is central to socialist theory and is expected to run through the gamut of debates over socialism's crisis. The proponents of the two contending critiques may converge on certain points but they hold basically divergent views on the sources of alienation that reappeared in socialist society.

**One-party state versus pluralism**

"This theme extends to the issue of the one-party state versus socialist pluralism as well as to the question of whether socialism is inherently authoritarian and totalitarian or not, touching on what place

individual freedoms occupy in socialism's constellation of freedoms."

*Ang Bayan* considers the terms of the Soviet economic debate of the 1920s and what it calls "two basically different approaches... The first was geneticism. Opposing was teleologicism", the first affirming: "the prevalence of economic regularities" and the "role of market forces", the other "envisioning planning as a deliberate program to change the economic structure and maximize growth."

"The teleologists under their convert Stalin won the debate, taking the line of forced-draft industrialization.... How much was the socialist deformation it created, particularly through the forced collectivization of agriculture, is now being subject to scrutiny. With some variations, the dispute was replicated in China between the proponents of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Cultural Revolution, on the one hand, and those of the Reform and Four Modernizations which chart the course of present-day China, on the other hand.

### The national question and internationalism

"Another major issue is the national question and internationalism. Covered here are the nationality problem as viewed according to the Leninist interpretation of the right of nations to self-determination; the relationship of proletarian parties of different countries; the theory and practice of socialist support for national liberation movements. Necessarily, we have to scrutinize Brezhnev's theory of limited sovereignty and socialist division of labour within the socialist commonwealth of nations, the Chinese Communist Party's theory of three worlds, as well as the cause of armed conflicts between socialist countries....

"The last item belongs to the party. This has been the subject of much debate lately as Marxists all over the world explore the meaning and dimensions of the theory of the vanguard party of the proletariat, its linkage to its class base, and the relationship between this party and the state bodies and mass organizations, in fact the whole civil society under a socialist order."

*Ang Bayan* thus presents contradictory positions which are in play in the ongoing discussion. In doing this, it is responding positively to "the spirit, tempo and fast evolving realities of the time."<sup>4</sup> That is to say, to the demands for democracy and political openness which are so evident in contemporary popular movements. In doing so, it reconnects with the original practises of the communist and socialist movements — including in their Leninist form. In those days, public discussion in the press of ideas, analyses and orientations was the normal practice. It was only with the onset of Stalinism that the public expression of disagreement was forbidden

and internal debate was straight-jacketed and reduced to the leading circles.

With the aim of deepening the discussion on the crisis of socialism, *Ang Bayan* refers to two articles; an essay by Joe Slovo, general secretary of the South African Communist Party ("Has Socialism Failed?") published in the same number and the final section of the document "Lead the Masses, Launch the Offensives" published in *Rebolusyon*.<sup>5</sup>

The latter is a formally adopted document, in fact the 22nd Anniversary Statement of the Communist Party of the Philippines (December 26, 1990). But, notes *Ang Bayan*, "although the paper already expresses an official position, the party leadership is open to subject it to further debate within our party. This must be so in the face of widely divergent responses to the paper and the absence until now of a wide-open and organized inner party debate on this matter. The paper is a systematic presentation of the line that the crisis in socialism is the crisis of capitalism restored."<sup>6</sup>

The editors — and the leadership — thus consider that, on this question, a position that divides the party and that has not been properly discussed beforehand, cannot be considered definitive. This is worth underlining for it involves a basic democratic rule which is far from being always respected in the revolutionary left and seems to have caused problems in the CPP itself.

### Internal theoretical organ reappears

The first number of *Rebolusyon*, the party's internal theoretical organ, was published in June 1976. But it stopped appearing a year later after the arrest of several party leaders. Only in 1990 did it come out again. In the editorial of the only number that year, the editors explained that "*Rebolusyon* is resuming publication at a time when the party is calling for ideological as well as political and organizational consolidation.... It also comes at a time when the party is reinvigorating democracy within its ranks in the form of free discussions and principled struggles on all important issues regarding our revolutionary theory and practice.... The Editorial Board calls upon party organs and units as well as individual party members to submit contributions. We also welcome contributions, including reprints, from the

authorities and members of foreign parties."<sup>7</sup>

However the two recent issues contain only leadership texts. The first prints a long declaration by the CPP Central Committee dated December 26, 1989, a directive from the political bureau "to encourage the healthy struggle of ideas within the party and combat wrong attitudes towards it" and a circular entitled "Clarification on our tasks". The second is entirely devoted to the "22nd anniversary statement" mentioned above.

### Possible divergences inside leadership

*Ang Bayan* is thus a much more open publication than *Rebolusyon*. While both are under the authority of the central committee, they have different editorial boards.<sup>8</sup> We will have to await further issues to see how the discussions develop. But, in the meantime, it is impossible to avoid speculation as to whether the contrast reflects divergences inside the leadership on the way to organize debates and internal democracy.

*Debate, Philippine Left Review*, for its part, promises to live up to its name. The provisional editorial board presents a harsh picture of the state of theoretical discussions on the Philippine left, in the editorial in its pilot edition (written before the last edition of *Ang Bayan* was out): "Within the various strands of the Philippine left, there is a growing feeling that the progressive movement has been lagging behind in a most important sphere — theoretical work [in spite of] the richness and variety of [its] experience.... In the NDF, the biggest organized force within the left, theoretical debates have been largely confined within its ranks. Outsiders usually have very little access to what is being debated and to different sides of the debate. Moreover, mass members of the NDF organizations themselves are sometimes unable to participate actively or fully in such debates due to security constraints and various other reasons.

"Few above ground progressive journals exist or have managed to survive, the most prominent being *Kasarinlan*, a quarterly published by the Third World Studies program of the University of the Philippines. The *New Progressive Review* has suspended publication. None of the various parties or groups of the legal left produces a journal of its own.

"The NDF does not have a theoretical

3. *Ang Bayan*, January/February 1991. It is the AB editors themselves who have emphasized the importance of the central committee in relation to the more restricted bodies, the executive committee and political bureau.

The discussion on the "criticism of Philippine society" relates to the official characterization of it as "semi-feudal, semi-colonial".

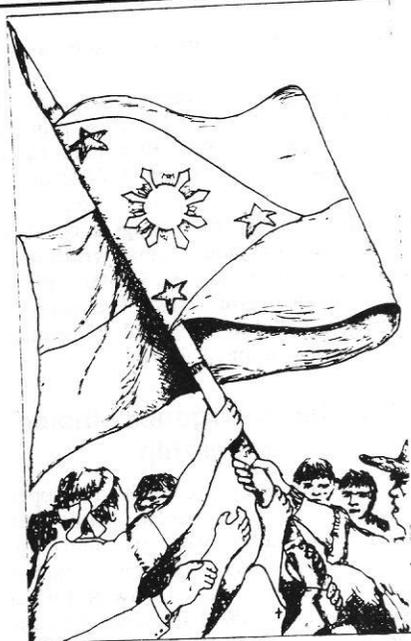
4. *Ang Bayan*, op. cit. "*Ang Bayan* in the 1990s: New Thrust, New Vigor, New Ideas."

5. *Rebolusyon*, no. 1, Series 1991, January-March. "*Rebolusyon*" is the Philippine word for revolution.

6. Op. cit. This refers to the first of the "two contentions" described above, which continues the classic Maoist analysis of a restoration of capitalism in the USSR.

7. *Rebolusyon*, vol. 1, no. 1, January/March 1990, pp. 3-4. This is number 1, thus ignoring the three issues published in the mid-1970s. The following number is also numbered 1. Headaches for librarians!

8. According to the editorial in the 1990 *Rebolusyon*, it is the executive committee — the most exclusive of the leading bodies — that plays the role of editorial committee for this review.



journal. The Communist Party of the Philippines, which is in the NDF, has just revived *Rebolusyon*.

However, the articles in *Rebolusyon*, like the theoretical articles in other CPP and NDF publications, usually already reflect the result of a debate. In 1986, the Manila CPP committee published *Praktika*, which tried to stimulate internal party debate, but this folded up after only two issues.<sup>19</sup>

The provisional editorial board of *Debate*, while first appeared in March 1991 in the Netherlands, is made up of three former political prisoners, jailed under Marcos and identified with the "national democratic" tradition: Eddicio de la Torre (founder of Christians for National Liberation, a former leader of the NDF, and now vice-chair of the Movement for Popular Democracy), Joel Rocamora (a long term exile in the United States, now associate director of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam) and Nathan Quimpo (believed by the military to have written, under the pen name of Marty Villalobos, several important papers discussing the strategy of the revolutionary movement). The review wants to belong to the whole of the left:

"*Debate*, as a journal of the Philippine left, will provide a venue for progressives in the Philippines and abroad to address questions on national liberation, socialism and democracy, and on strategy and tactics. We hope to contribute to a healthier atmosphere of analysis, discussion and debate....*Debate* is orientated toward the broad left."

The editorial notes that the list of contents of the pilot number does not yet reflect what the review wishes to become. In fact, the authors of the published documents are all from the national democratic current.

Thus, the "opening" to the rest of the left remains to be carried through. From now until the appearance of the first regu-

lar number, the editorial committee will open itself up to all the components of the left. Nonetheless the contents of the review are rich and provide ample material for debate.

On questions of strategy, *Debate* reproduces a document from the NDF of the Metro Manila-Rizal region ("Politico-Military Struggle in the Main Urban Center") and a document from the CPP political bureau.<sup>10</sup>

Two articles deal with the Gulf war, one by Jose Maria Sison (founding chairman and main theoretician of the CPP, now in exile in the Netherlands), the other by the NDF in the United States. Joel Rocamora contributes an article on "Third World Revolutionary Projects and the end of the Cold War": "For progressives in the Third World, socialism continues to be an alternative despite its decline as an ideal in the Soviet Union and Europe, East and West. Socialism remains an ideal simply because capitalism has created so much misery.

"It is an ideal that is premised on the negative lessons of 'actually existing socialisms' and is still in the process of creation in popular struggles. Within this diversity of socialist interpretations, there are few certainties. There is already widespread consensus among progressives throughout the world that democracy is an necessary element in radical political change.

"There is also a widely felt need to find ways to create communities which are ecologically viable and remain humanly accessible and non-alienating. There are therefore more than enough shared concerns for sustaining and energizing solidarity.... there may be a real basis for disillusionment with the old progressive paradigms, but there is never any reason for losing hope."<sup>11</sup>

*Debate* also introduces a new topic for consideration with an article by Omar Tupaz "Toward a Strategic View of Peace Negotiations".

### Peace negotiations and overall perspectives

Tupaz considers that the NDF is yet to successfully integrate the question of peace negotiations into its overall perspectives: "Up to February 1986, the concept of negotiations and negotiated political settlement had never really figured in the overall strategy of the Philippine national democratic revolution. [After the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship] the NDF and the CPP were confronted with [this] issue for the immediate tactical period [but] understandably, [they] did not have much opportunity to really study [this] question from a strategic point of view."

This is a stimulating article, which attempts to analyze what is new in the world situation, as well as the lessons of other revolutionary movements. Nonethe-

less, it seems to minimize the difficulties which today confront organizations involved in prolonged armed struggle and engaged in peace negotiations at a time when their diplomatic and material support has been considerably reduced.

Jose Maria Sison, in two articles written in May 1991, returns to the history of peace negotiations in the Philippines from colonial times until the 1990s.

He seems, in fact, to be replying to Tupaz' criticisms: "Contrary to the claim of certain quarters, the NDF and the revolutionary forces through their documents and practice have made clear that they have a consistent strategy for the peace process and that they do not view the process as a mere tactical ploy."

Sison, for his part, does not appear to believe that the evolution of the national and world situation requires significant modifications of the strategy of prolonged revolutionary war pursued by the CPP.<sup>12</sup>

The role of elections has also been discussed in the Philippines since 1978-86. The approach of the general elections in 1992 has returned this question to the centre of the preoccupations of the militant left.

### Bisig discusses electoral strategy

One of the main documents from the fifth congress of Bisig, meeting on April 14, 1991, was precisely intended to open a serious consideration of this subject: "Bisig is laying the ground for serious long-term participation in the parliamentary arena. It is important for its members and leaders to have a common understanding of the strategic and tactical rationale for this undertaking. The terrain of parliamentary struggle is certainly treacherous and we, like the rest of the Philippine left, are entering it loaded with the burden of inexperience."<sup>13</sup>

At the end of April, Bisig, Pandayan (the left-wing of the social democratic current) and the Movement for Popular Democracy began working out a common electoral platform. The Partido ng Bayan (People's Party), which has a national democratic orientation, has, for its part, just announced that it will present candidates and is discussing its alliance policy, notably in respect to the presidential elections.

The pressing need for unity in a pluralist left continues to be felt. Bisig was formed in 1985-86, bringing together groups and militants from different backgrounds, in a unification process unprecedented on the Philippine left.

The Movement for a Popular Democracy (MPD) was formally founded on March 11, 1991 at its first General Assembly. The historic roots of this current can be traced back to the end of the 1970s when some of its leaders tried to introduce broader notions of unity into the National Democratic Front.<sup>14</sup>

### Rodolfo Salas sentenced to six years

RODOLFO "Rudy" Salas, at the time president of the Communist Party of the Philippines, was arrested on September 29, 1986 in Manila when he came to seek hospital treatment. His wife Josefina and a friend Jose Concepcion were also jailed but were subsequently released on bail. Salas' arrest created a scandal. It happened when talks about a ceasefire between the National Democratic Front (led by the CPP) and the new Aquino government were underway. These talks led to peace negotiations, which, however, collapsed in 1987.

The charges relate essentially to events before the fall of Ferdinand Marcos in February 1986. The new regime was thus signalling that the armed resistance mounted by the CPP and the New People's Army against the dictatorship was criminal.

Nearly five years after his arrest, Rodolfo Salas decided to plead guilty. As he explained in an declaration dated May 14, 1991: "I have opted to plead guilty of rebellion... because I, like millions of our countrymen, cannot expect nor hope for justice under the present government.... The Supreme Court has, in effect, denied me my constitutional right to bail. My lawyers, my family and my witnesses have been subject to harassment and intimidation and three were assassinated" (one of Salas' lawyers, his co-defendant Jose Concepcion and a defence witness were killed in incidents in April 1988 and December 1990). The names of two of his other lawyers have appeared on the death list distributed by armed vigilantes and local officials.

"My conscience is clear. I have not committed any crime against the Philippine people but have devoted the past 22 years in the selfless service of our people and our country. I plead guilty to rebellion and accept years of imprisonment imposed by this government. I will not abandon but will pursue more than ever the struggle for justice in a broader social scope and through more effective ways."

Rodolfo Salas faced a sentence of 12 years in prison. Having pleaded guilty, he has been sentenced to six years and will be released in 1992, taking account of preventive detention. All the charges against Josefina Salas have been dropped.

"I know", remarked Salas in an interview with the *Philippines News and Features (PNF)*, "there will be mixed reactions [from the underground movement]. Many will ask why I made this decision. But when they know the reason they will also say that it is the best under the circumstances." After his liberation, *PNF* notes: "Salas' options include going back to the open mass movement of workers, peasants and students... He will, however think of 'other options' if the military won't allow him to join it. The 'armed struggle', he said is 'still valid' but he stressed that he prefers joining the legal struggle for social change" (*Daily Globe*, May 18, 1991). ★

After 1986, these militants set to work to define the forms of a real "people's power". They got involved in unitary activity and have taken part in building up the cluster of non-governmental organizations. At their general assembly, they also underlined the need to work for the development of a "new internationalism".

The debate is continuing on the relation between the different methods and terrains of struggle (armed and political struggle, rural and urban struggle), on the analysis of Philippine society and on the international situation.

It is of especial importance that *Ang Bayan* has opened up the question of the vanguard party and its relation to civil society. In 1986, notably, many militants challenged the way in which the CPP imposed the line of a boycott of the presidential elections, without taking into account the way in which the mass organizations function.

As in many other countries the conception of the relation between parties and

popular organizations lies at the heart of the divergences on the Philippine left.

Finally, some big questions, largely ignored in the past, have today become pressing. This is, above all the case with the issue of women's oppression. The rapid development of feminist organizations (in particular grouped in the Gabriela coa-

lition) has led the NDF to change its programme, devoting a point to the struggle for the liberation of women.<sup>15</sup> In recent years, also, the Philippine left has begun to recognize the importance of ecological questions.

The stakes in the debates underway should not be under-estimated. *Ang Bayan* strikes an optimistic note. The editors consider that "the call for a mass struggle to overthrow the Aquino regime is ripe." It hopes for "a strategic turn" in the years to come.

### Decisive victory for revolution predicted

"On the agenda of the 1990s is a decisive victory for the people's democratic revolution." However, they do not think that victory is in the bag: "how to bring about that decisive turn in the revolutionary struggle... is a question that has yet to be resolved."<sup>16</sup>

*Ang Bayan* thus describes certain subjective weaknesses as far as political and strategic perspectives are concerned: "if one were to pinpoint one thing greatly lacking... it would be this — a political slogan and platform that would serve as the line of march for the revolutionary forces and the people in facing the current political crisis.

"[They] are needed to provide a unified direction and political shape to the mass struggles... Without it, revolutionary initiatives will remain scattered and unsystematic..."

"What kind of coalition government should be established, which social reforms should take precedence, to what extent should concessions and compromises be made with other political forces, and how the whole program can be realised have yet to be set down."<sup>17</sup>

The whole Philippine left is today confronted with these problems, which, of course, are also faced by militants in other countries. The answers will not be simple, since they touch theoretical, strategic, political and tactical questions. They will only come about through a democratic confrontation of the experiences, elaborations, successes and failures of all the revolutionary currents. ★

9. *Debate, Philippine Left Review*, March 1991, pp. 3-4. To contact *Debate*, write to: Postjweg 77 (2nd floor), 1057 DX Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

10. This document, "Clarification...", is the same as the one published by *Rebolusyon*. It is worth noting that the "politico-military" theses of the regional leadership of Metro Manila-Rizal are different from the "political-military strategy" defended by Marty Villalobos. While they insist on the importance of the urban struggle, they remain in fact more militarist in conception than Villalobos.

11. *Ibid.* pp. 52-53.

12. "The People's Struggle for a Just Peace." Two articles by Jose Maria Sison, International Network for Philippine Studies, June 1991, pp. 45-46 (INPS, Postbus, 1452, 3500 BL Utrecht, The Netherlands).

13. "Outline: Bisig's orientation to parliamentary struggle (second draft)", p. 1. The fifth Bisig congress elected Randolph "Randy" David as chairperson, the union leader "Bong" Malonzo vice-chair and Ronald

Llamas general secretary.

14. This involved the best known NDF cadres, former political prisoners: Horacio "Boy" Morales, former NDF president and now MPD chairperson, and Eddicio de la Torre, former founder of the CNL and vice-chair. Isagani Serrano, also a vice-chair, was engaged in important clandestine work before his arrest. According to Gareth Porter, he was chairman of the National Urban Commission (Porter: "Strategic Debates and Dilemmas in the Philippine Communist Movement", footnote 17, in "The Philippines in a Changing Southeast Asia: Conference Papers", S. Dorr and D. Mitchell ed.).

15. See Joel Rocamora, "The NDF program: 1973-1990 — A textual analysis", paper presented to the European Conference on Philippine Studies, 1991, Amsterdam.

16. *Ang Bayan*, op cit, "Ang Bayan in the 1990s: New Thrust, New Vigor, New Ideas."

17. *Ibid.*: "Why we fell short."

# Declining support for privatization

Introduction by *Cyril Smuga*

ON June 27, 1991 the Polish government made public a new plan for the accelerated privatization of the economy. It proposes the simultaneous privatization of 400 enterprises which account for 25% of gross industrial product and employ 12% of the workforce. It is intended as a first step on the road to the privatization of half of the country's economy over the next three years.

The plan, worked out with the help of the British commercial bank S.G. Warburg & Co. (which will receive a million pounds for the work) envisages that 60% of the capital of these enterprises will be transferred into the hands of several Funds for the Management of National Wealth; the state will continue to hold a 30% share, and 10% will be distributed to the workers. The funds in question will be administered by Polish citizens but their everyday management will be delegated to foreign banks or finance companies.

The new privatization plan, which seeks to open up Polish industry to foreign capital, has been put forward following the semi-defeat of the privatization measures hitherto taken. The sale, in December 1990, of shares in a series of six firms considered amongst the more profitable did not meet with an overwhelming response from Poles. Several of these firms were ultimately privatized only thanks to the purchase of considerable amounts of shares by the state banks. Moreover, since then some of these firms have been on the verge of bankruptcy.

In announcing the new plan, the government of Lech Walesa is taking a big risk. In the last few months, judging both by the development of strike movements and by the opinion polls, there has been a growing disillusionment amongst Polish workers with the choice of capitalist restoration.

How has the attitude of the Polish working class changed in the course of the last few years? Shortly before the announcement of the new government plan, *IV* put this question to two Polish sociologists who have written widely on this subject.

Maria Jarosz teaches at the Institute of Economic Sciences at the Polish Academy of Sciences. She has supervised two recent enquiries into the attitude of workers towards the property transformations in Poland.

Leszek Gilejko teaches at the Department of Sociology and Politics at the Central School of Commerce at Warsaw, and has, over the past ten years, been responsible for several enquiries into the aspirations of workers and their organizations. The interview was conducted by Jan Malewski on June 19, 1991. ★

**P**RIVATIZATION currently occupies an important place in public debate in Poland, although only a very small percentage of enterprises have so far changed their status. You have conducted research on the way different social groups perceive the changes in the status of property. What are the results?

Maria Jarosz: In April and December 1990 we carried out two surveys on the perception by different groups of workers of the changes underway in Poland. The size of the sample — 1,377 replies in April, and 4,428 in December — allows the cross-checking of the replies received and gives the surveys a representative character. We selected some groups of workers who we thought had a determining influence on opinions and behaviour in their workplace; directors at various levels, workers, qualified or otherwise, but in any case not exercising management functions, members of the councils of self-management, of *Solidarnosc* and of the former official trade union (*OPZZ*). Since December 1990, the objective situation has not changed much, except that six enterprises have been privatized. The press has recently claimed that 300 enterprises have already changed status, but this figure should be treated with caution.

Privatization, therefore, only affects a small percentage of enterprises, but nonetheless the effects of these changes are immense, in particular so far as the behaviour and opinions of the workers is concerned.

Numerous indicators allow us to characterize the attitude towards privatization — such as the strikes against it. A significant part of the workforce have come to the conclusion that only a strike will allow them to impose their opinion. The government, which had been considered as something emanating from the workers, is no longer perceived as such. People say, for example "These are our guys; we carried them to posts of responsibility on our shoulders and now they treat us as if we were nothing". The new elites are often described as a "new nomenklatura" or more simply as "them", which is reminiscent of the situation in the preceding years.

■ In your research, a kind of schizophrenia is apparent; on the one hand privatization as a general slogan is widely accepted, but on the other, workers are largely opposed to it in their own workplaces.

Maria Jarosz: In general, people consider that it is not possible to continue as before, and that the property transformations are therefore indispensable. Amongst the possible changes there is one — privatization — which is the preferred choice of the ruling circles and is therefore the most well known. This leads to the acceptance of privatization in general,

as a way of breaking with the past, although it is already possible to see a decline in this acceptance. Between April and December 1990, we observed a tendency to the diminution of the acceptance of this general thesis and I think that if I had the chance to do more research now, the level would be still lower.

This is linked to the development of the recession, which results in lower living standards, and the appearance of poverty and unemployment. But whatever the reason, workers are in general opposed to the perspective of privatization of their own enterprise, even if there are differences among them.

Thus the majority of enterprise directors were favourable to privatization, although they come for the most part from the old nomenklatura.

But even when they were linked to the nomenklatura, they are the first to admit the inefficiency and disfunctioning of the old system. They are then favorable to change, to privatization or to group property. Only a small part of the directors want their enterprise to remain in state hands.

The second group which favours "destatization" consists of the activists and leaders of Solidarnosc (not the members), as well as the members of the councils of self-management. However, the latter were mainly in favour of group property, whereas the former are rather favourable to privatization. On the other hand, the rank and file workers and the militants and leaders of the OPZZ are the most opposed to "destatization" and argue that the status of their enterprises should remain the same, with some minor changes.

It should be noted that between April and December 1990 there was a net increase in the percentage of people favourable to group property; in April, 40% of those questioned were favourable to their enterprise passing into the hands of the workforce; in December, 50% opted for this solution, against 20% who were for the maintenance of nationalization and only 17% in favour of classic privatization.

**■ How do you explain the differences between the enterprise managers and the activists of the OPZZ? It might be thought that, coming from the same mould, they would share the same opinions.**

**Maria Jarosz:** There is a factor of differentiation; the members of the OPZZ feel themselves to be threatened by the effects of privatization, and particularly by unem-



OVŠEMÍC JE MOŽNÉ PŘIJÍT POCTIVĚ K PENĚZŮM. ALE PRO ZAČÁTEK MUSÍTE MÍT NĚJAKÉ NEPOCTIVÉ...

"Of course, it is possible to get money honestly, but to get started it is a good idea to have a little dishonest something" — cartoon by Vladimir Jiranek from Lidové noviny (Prague)

ployment. This is not the case for the directors.

**Leszek Gilejko:** Our research amongst trade union leaders revealed that an overwhelming majority of OPZZ leaders were for the preservation of the state enterprises. There is without doubt a political motivation for this, founded on the hope that values profoundly anchored in the society are going to reappear, which will allow them to gain a certain influence. It is, in my opinion, one of the reasons for the difference in attitude between the directors and the militants of the OPZZ.

**Maria Jarosz:** One aspect merits emphasis: privatization, as it is being carried out today, is perceived by the workers as a phenomenon which is imposed on them. No account is taken of their aspirations, the government acts as if it was none of their business — which explains their growing opposition.

**■ How can one explain the evolution of opinion in the course of the past decade, from the massive support for self-management in 1981 to the apparent support for capitalist restoration in 1989-1990?**

**Leszek Gilejko:** The results of our research through the 1980s confirm those of the team of Maria Jarosz. We observed a growing consciousness of the inefficiency of the existing economic system and the necessity, not of reforming it, but of replacing it by another; this was particularly noticeable amongst the workers. Independently of any judgement we could have on the old regime and its willingness to reform, it is clear, at least starting from 1983 when the rigors of the state of emergency were relaxed, that this regime was seeking to introduce certain

elements of the reform proposals which appeared in 1980-81.

It then became clear that this regime and the structures on which it rested were incapable of realizing change, of ending the crisis and opening the road to a progressive dynamic. I think that this is another factor which explains the growing popularity of the theme of "destatization" and privatization in the course of the past decade and up to the beginning of 1991.

**■ Now, it seems that a change has taken place. Your collaborator Juliusz Gardawski recently explained that, for the workers, the slogan of the construction of capitalism means quite simply opening the road to those who wish to enrich themselves and that workers are convinced that those who seek to gain political influence do so to enrich themselves.**

**Leszek Gilejko:** The modification of the property relations in Poland has three aspects. Firstly, there is a clear preference on the part of the new authorities for privatization; even if, in certain cases, there is a preference for shareholding — that is the diffusion of property — private property is what it adds up to. Secondly, these changes have been made in a period of profound recession, which has produced immense political, social and economic upheavals. Finally — and this is very important — the factor which has always been synonymous with progress in Poland, namely the influence of the base and of the fundamental social groups on the changes underway, has been blocked by the policy of the government.

The latter has decided to act high handedly and sometimes even more brutally

than in the past, in particular as far as the modification of property relations is concerned. And finally — as Maria Jarosz has already noted — we now see the appearance of a new “them and us” distinction in which the new regime is perceived as exterior, as “them”. It amounts to a change of great importance, confirmed by all the research carried out today. The workers perceive the new rulers, including the trade union leaders, as another social sphere, as “them”.

We have recently conducted research amongst the leaders of Solidarnosc, at the central level and in the workplaces, which shows this conflict — typical in the old trade unions, between the members and the leaders — appearing today inside a movement which had until recently preserved numerous elements of spontaneity and activity originating from below. This same conflict between the central leadership and the base structures, let it be said in passing, exists also inside the OPZZ.

**Maria Jarosz:** The principal problem of privatization in Poland now greatly resembles the process of nationalization in the 1940s. Privatization is being introduced by decree, from on high, as was the case with the nationalizations. In both cases, the opinion of the workers has been ignored.

My research concerns the workers in the nationalized enterprises — which comprises 80% of wage earners. One cannot ignore the opinion of so many people and yet that is what the government has done. Today people say that only the directors count and that the opinions of the workers have little importance.

This engenders very dangerous social consequences, a very great gap between the hopes of the workers and reality. People believed that privatization would bring well-being and freedom. It appears today that this privatization from above brings only pauperization, unemployment and poverty for most people.

The people are therefore turning away from the leaders who they had considered as theirs and from the ideas with which they had identified.

**Leszek Gilejko:** I want to underline two other important questions. Beyond the fact that we are confronted today with the need for a new social contract — this problem is increasingly raised in Poland — it is plain that the main social groups and their organizations need to develop programmes reflecting their profound aspirations.

The current crisis in Solidarnosc is not reducible to the single dichotomy which exists between, on the one hand, its nature as a reformist movement and, on the other, the fact that it is also an organization for the defence of the workers, a trade union. The leaders of Solidarnosc have a tendency to say; “We have the responsibility for change and therefore we must sacrifice our trade union interests on the altar of what is more important”. The

problem is not one of sacrificing anything but, on the contrary, having a programme which allows the linking of the interests and aspirations of the base with the process of reforms, in new conditions.

■ **Very recently, Lech Walesa proposed to the Diet that the government be authorized to carry out the transformations by decree. Outside a few rare personalities — like Karol Modzelewski or Josef Piniór — the leaders of Solidarnosc have adopted a wait and see attitude towards this government. How do you think the workers will react?**

**Leszek Gilejko:** Our recent research showed that there is a potential of support for such measures, and even a growing potential.

**Maria Jarosz:** In particular amongst the workers...

■ **Does this potential support reflect the illusion that at last someone will restore order in the name of the workers?**

**Leszek Gilejko:** Yes. This phenomenon has always existed in Poland, in the 1970s and in the course of the last decade. Half of the people pronounced themselves in favour of a “reestablishment of order” — independently of knowing who would do it, even if the people we asked preferred that it was not done through the old nomenklatura. The other half, on the contrary, favoured a democratic and self-managed solution, seeking to construct a new order.

■ **What changes are going on inside the Polish trade union movement in relation to the current transition? The two union federations — Solidarnosc and the OPZZ — have swapped places in the past couple of years.**

**The OPZZ, born out of the dictatorial regime, has been pushed into opposition. Solidarnosc, on the other hand, feels itself invested with a mission to introduce reforms.**

**Leszek Gilejko:** There are two groups in the OPZZ leadership. One seeks to define itself as an opposition — which does not mean that it will call for the building of barricades! — in the name of the defence of a political concept. The other, on the contrary, seeks to occupy a more trade unionist role, closer to the daily aspirations of the workers.

One notes an apparent division inside Solidarnosc, between a more political current — tending to defend the government for ideological reasons — and a more pragmatic, trade unionist, current, susceptible to pressure from the base. This conflict is, without doubt, clearer in Solidarnosc. But the fault lines between an ideological current and a pragmatic trade unionist current exist at the top of

both federations.

■ **What about the situation in the workplaces? Is the split between the OPZZ and Solidarnosc, provoked by the state of emergency, in the process of disappearing? Is cooperation between the two trade unions possible today?**

**Leszek Gilejko:** Cooperation is developing in certain situations, like during a strike or in a pre-strike period. But the past still weighs heavily. Our survey amongst the trade union activists revealed that the Solidarnosc militants very largely identify their trade union with the interests of the workers and the OPZZ with those of the old nomenklatura. The Solidarnosc militants still remember the repression they suffered, with the active support or at least the acquiescence of those of the OPZZ. The refusal of the OPZZ to accept the legalization of Solidarnosc until the last minute has also created problems.

However, today the rank and file militants of the OPZZ are less aggressive towards Solidarnosc than their equivalents in Solidarnosc are towards them.

**Maria Jarosz:** My research last December revealed an interesting phenomenon. Members of the OPZZ have a tendency to identify themselves with Solidarnosc and recognize the progressive role of the rival trade union; its struggle for freedom, against the nomenklatura, and so on. But they still have a negative judgement on the government. Moreover, on the concrete questions — privatization, its rhythms, modes and so on — the workers have, whatever their adherence, the same position as the OPZZ militants. One could speak then of a phenomenon of rupture between the Solidarnosc militants and their base. In the last few months, this has begun to change, for Solidarnosc has made a turn towards more strictly trade unionist preoccupations.

■ **Very briefly, what are the main findings that your research has revealed?**

**Maria Jarosz:** Privatization had been considered by society as one of the means of breaking with the so-called Communist past, which was rejected. But privatization was not perceived as a goal in itself, but as a means. The objective sought was not only freedom, but also bread, the possibility of self-realization, and finally equality or at least equality of opportunity. In the current government discourse, on the contrary, privatization appears as an end in itself. And that discourse has not been accepted.

What the people accept, on the contrary, is plurality of choice — including privatization — in relation to the concrete situations in the different enterprises. They reject having one single choice imposed on them from on high, as in the past.

**Leszek Gilejko:** I am in agreement with that assessment. ★

# The last congress of Democrazia Proletaria

THE eighth and final congress of the Italian far left organization Democrazia Proletaria (DP), held on June 6-9, 1991, ended by adopting a motion, proposed by the outgoing leadership, calling for the dissolution of the organization into the Movement for Communist Refoundation (MRC), born out of a split in the former Italian Communist Party (PCI) in February. 196 delegates voted for the motion, four voted against and there were 37 abstentions.<sup>1</sup>

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**H**OWEVER, the pre-congress discussion revealed considerable reservations, and even some hostility, to the dissolution proposal.

At first, many militants were highly critical of the leadership's proposal; some were not convinced that DP no longer had a role to play, while a larger number were critical of the forms and rhythms of the fusion process, that is, the immediate dissolution at the end of the congress and entry into the MRC on an individual basis.<sup>2</sup>

These reactions were also to be found amongst the leadership<sup>3</sup>, particularly from militants in the mass movements, whose intervention often takes place along very different lines to those of the former PCI militants who are now members of the MRC. It is likely that some of these ex-DP militants are not going to join in the refoundation process.

During the debate the differences crystallized into different positions.<sup>4</sup> The text from the leadership majority attempted an analysis of the international situation — characterized by the crisis of the bureaucratic societies and the short and medium term consequences of the Gulf war — and of the Italian situation, marked by government manoeuvres aimed at changing the constitution and installing a "Second Republic".

This resolution also took up some of DP's conceptions, outlining perspectives for the workers movement and the mass movements in the 1990s, and indicating the reasons for the fusion in the light of the refoundation process. A second position, defended in the congress by one of the 30 delegates from Milan federation, rejected the coming together and proposed the continuation of DP. The third position, in favour of a federation between DP and the MRC, was put forward by representatives from the Molise region.

Apart from these two small minority cur-

rents, the convergence plan was very widely supported, as were the modalities defined by the MRC. But there were other differences on important points: a minority on the leadership considered the majority text's treatment of the developments in the Soviet Union inadequate, and its assessment of Gorbachevism wrong, since the text suggested that the self-reform of the bureaucracy was possible. Livio Maitan proposed an amendment on this subject.

But the most controversial point concerned the final heading of the leadership's text on "the reasons for the refoundation". Some considered that this diluted DP's identity, particularly when it stated that there already existed a large measure of convergence between the positions of the MRC and those of DP.

## Debate on convergence

An amendment presented by Elettra Deiana, a member of the outgoing secretariat, proposed the replacement of much of this section of the text, insisting that there was insufficient evidence of the existence of such a convergence. In fact, the very nature of the MRC and the existence of different currents inside it has meant that the MRC has not yet defined

its programme, even if it has found itself in the same camp as DP in the anti-Gulf war mobilizations, in opposition to the authoritarian tendencies in the Second Republic project and in the internal struggles in the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL).<sup>5</sup>

According to this amendment, it was necessary to emphasize that DP had to bring all its traditions to bear on the current phase of the refoundation process. The majority of the leadership rejected this amendment, with 18 against and 13 for. Of these 13, eight were from former members of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR — Italian section of the Fourth International before its entry into DP in 1989), while the other five were from different social movements and belonged to the Christian milieu in DP. The agreement of these two currents on this point can be explained by their shared conviction that it was necessary for DP to make a real input into the fusion and emphasize the pluralism of the new party in formation.

All these differences had found expression in the provincial congresses, where the amendments proposed by Maitan and Deiana found an audience. In some federations, indeed, including Rome and Turin, they won majority support. The debate was thus resumed at the national congress, at which there were 257 delegates<sup>6</sup>, together with many guests and delegations, from the MRC and the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS — the former Communist Party) among others.

## Pessimistic perspectives

The author of the introductory report, Luigi Vinci, a member of the outgoing secretariat, gave a schematic resumé of the main themes in the leadership's text, and added a note of pessimism on the perspectives — saying for example that "the 1990s may turn out to be much more difficult than the 1980s, which were already very bad." He emphasized the existence of a "unity of political intentions and strategic perspectives" with the MRC. He not only rejected Elettra Deiana's amendment, but accused those who opposed the idea of entry into the MRC, even without the "necessary convergence", as amount-

1. See *International Viewpoint* nos. 203, April 1, 1991, and 209, June 24, 1991.

2. During the preliminary discussions with DP, the MRC representatives outlined two possibilities: either a dissolution by DP at the end of its congress and individual membership of MRC or the maintenance of DP until the foundation of the new party, and a fusion then.

In this case, DP would not have been in a position to directly influence the MRC's process of organizational and political self-definition. This is the main reason why the first choice was adopted.

3. Two members of the national leadership, Nadia Casadei, a feminist militant involved in the social movements, and Giorgio Cortellessa, a university teacher who had done a lot of work for the DP on environmental questions, announced that they would not become members of the MRC.

4. This text was passed with 20 votes for and 13 abstentions. The December 1990 congress elected a 60-strong leadership, but many did not participate in leadership meetings.

5. The debate before the CGIL congress which is to take place in October 1991 has been marked by the presence of a class struggle opposition current in which DP trade unionists participate. This current won 45% of the vote in the Fiat Mirafiori plant in Turin.

6. Including the 60 members of the outgoing national leadership, who, according to a rather dubious rule, had the right to speak and vote at the congress.

7. Luigi Vinci joined the PCI at the start of the 1960s and took part in the opposition struggles in the party and youth organization. For some years he was an activist in the Italian section of the Fourth International. He left it in 1968 and became part of the leadership of the far left organization *Avanguardia Operaia*. ♣

ing to a "far left faction". He added, however, that the future party must "discuss at length and discuss everything", "adopt the structures and instruments to allow this" and that "journals and independent associations should flourish" around the future party.

The outgoing leadership put forward a proposal, this time unanimously, which was adopted by the congress, calling for the setting up of a politico-cultural association, which would bring together not only DP members who had entered the MRC but also comrades who had opposed this decision, as well as independent militants and intellectuals.

A former CP militant, Vinci introduced a personal note into his report, declaring: "I cannot hide the fact that it was hard for me to separate at the time from my comrades in the PCI, and that I feel the present movement as a kind of rapprochement with a collective entity from which I had to separate, but to which I have always had the feeling of belonging."

Some of the delegates, who, in their majority, were never in the PCI and gained their political experience in the various far left groups in the 1970s, were unable to share these sentiments. They thus took the reporter's proposals as an attempt to rehabilitate the former PCI and an underestimation of the new left.

### Vigorous debates

The debates at the congress were vigorous. Many reservations were put forward on the ways of carrying out the fusion, sometimes as a reaction to the narrow-minded responses encountered from some MRC representatives at a local level.<sup>8</sup> This was also accompanied by strong emotions aroused by the prospect of the disappearance of an organization whose construction had required much effort, and which had played a real role in the struggles and mobilizations of the past 13 years.

Besides the interventions by those who rejected the fusion outright, there was also a confrontation between positions that had already appeared in the leadership: the majority, the Christian current and that presented by the press as Trotskyist.<sup>9</sup>

The first position was upheld notably by the secretary of the Milan federation — by far the most important — and a number of members of the outgoing secretariat such as Giancarlo Saccoman, Tonino Califano, and Marida Bolognesi, who took up the themes of the leadership text and to some extent of the introductory report. The second was expressed in interventions by Vittorio Agnoletto, a deputy on the Milan provincial council, Francesco Saija, a leader of the Messina federation and a member of the leadership, and the European deputy Eugenio Melandri.

In their text, these militants explained: "As Christians, we feel the need to introduce into the left the theory and practice of a relation between faith and the struggle

for liberation, which cannot be ignored. The presence of believers on the left must henceforth be accepted as a permanent, collective and intrinsic fact.... All action for change must have at its centre — by its effectiveness and its value in itself — non-violence as a real alternative method for the resolution of conflicts.... On this basis, and in this perspective, we declare ourselves interested by a process that will give rise to a new anti-capitalist body, capable of unifying different cultures, beyond any ideological renunciation."<sup>10</sup>

### Rejection of rightist turn

The third position was expressed by a number of speakers, including Deiana, Maitan, Roberto Firenze, Franco Turigliatti and Lidia Cirillo. As the Deiana amendment explains, it is true that DP and the MRC have some positions in common. What is more, nobody should underestimate the fact that, in the present state of the Italian and international workers movement, around 150,000 militants have rejected the direction taken by the former PCI leadership under Achille Occhetto and have declared their resolve to build an anti-capitalist and communist party. This is a sufficient — and necessary — basis for a coming together.

But once this essential point is accepted, why proclaim convergences that do not exist, at least not yet? Why hide the fact that on the central question of revolutionary strategy in an industrialized capitalist country there is a difference between what MRC representatives have been writing and stating — putting forward a reformist and gradualist line — and the Marxist critique of the bourgeois state developed by DP? This problem, and others no less important, must be discussed throughout the refoundation process, then in the new party itself, which must be pluralist, accepting different currents, components and sensibilities, if it is to bring together different experiences and generations.

The MRC was represented at the congress by Ersilia Salvato, a senate deputy, and by its main spokesperson, former union leader Sergio Garavini, who made two interventions in favour of an opening up, addressing himself to the reservations expressed on the coming together and its concrete expression. Salvato, however, made it clear that she did not like the idea of the new party defining itself as plural-

ist, which suggested that it would be a formation divided into crystallized currents and groupings.

Garavini also stated that the new party should not be a "sum of PCI factions and different left formations". This is why adherence has to be individual. He also praised DP which had "persevered in the defence of the political and organizational autonomy of the left". He restated the anti-capitalist and communist choice, the need to recompose the workers' movement and the demand that Italy leave NATO. In the battle against the authoritarian tendencies developing in Italy, according to Garavini, it is necessary to promulgate a type of democracy able to have an impact on the overall social situation and seek the widest unity. From this point of view, it is impossible to go round the problem of the PDS. Finally, Garavini was open about the MRC's problems: "There are plenty of chaotic things going on amongst us, and there are old prejudices to overcome" — while emphasizing the important number of members already won and the "impetus from below" which reminded him of 1945.

The closing speech was made by deputy Giovanni Russo Spena, the former secretary of DP.<sup>11</sup> He recalled this organization's contribution to workers', people's and anti-imperialist struggles and its political and theoretical work, but did not enter into the main controversies. He concluded with these words: "We regret nothing. Facts tell us that right is on our side even more than before.... Our history is not over, because, without liquidating anything, we are going to make our intellectual and political contribution to meeting a larger and more complex challenge. Certainly, we need the MRC, but they too, have need of us."

Before the vote on the convergence text, the congress voted on several amendments; that of Maitan on the USSR was defeated 95 against, 89 for and 28 abstentions; Deiana's also fell, with 154 votes against, 69 for and 30 abstentions; and the Christian amendment was also rejected, with 65 for, 128 against and 36 abstentions. Finally, a 21-person committee was elected to oversee coordination with the MRC<sup>12</sup>, as well as a watchdog committee charged with dealing with the administrative and financial problems related to the dissolution of DP. ★

8. Problems in relations with the MRC arose during the recent elections in Sicily for example. In some parts of the island, it proved impossible to present joint lists.

9. In fact, many of those who supported the Deiana amendment in the provincial congresses and the national congress — and even more of those who supported the Maitan amendment — were not from the former LCR.

10. The Christian current in DP considers the Nicaraguan Sandinistas as exemplary. This involves rather a novel definition of non-violence, since this movement, spent 15 years engaged in many forms of armed struggle and finally overthrew the pro-imperialist dictatorship by an insurrection.

11. During the 1989 congress, DP decided to do away with the post of secretary. The leadership elected at the congress elected an eight-member secretariat.

12. The 21 elected members on this body are: Fabio Alberti (Rome), Antonio Barone (Milan), Marida Bolognesi (Livorno), Tonino Califano (Potenza), Gianni Confalonieri (Milan), Elettra Deiana (Milan), Gianvito Ferrari (Milan), Paolo Ferrero (Turin), Orietta Lunghi (Florence), Livio Maitan (Rome), Vito Nocera (Naples), Franco Olivieri (Genoa), Gianni Paoletti (Bologna), Giulio Russo (Rome), Giovanni Russo Spena (Rome), Giancarlo Saccoman (Milan), Sandro Targetti (Florence), Rosa Tavella (Lamezia), Mauro Tosi (Verona), Franco Turigliatto (Turin) and Luigi Vinci (Milan).

## Crisis in the KKE

A BIG CRISIS has just broken out in the Greek Communist Party (KKE) with the forced or voluntary resignation of nearly half the members of the Politburo and the Central Committee. These resignations are the result of developments over the past year and have come at a time of great internal tension, with accusations and insults flying, and threats of splits in the short term. On one side are the "renewers" and on the other the "conservatives", forming two blocs which started out on almost equal terms.

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and EAR leaders. They hoped to profit from the decline in popularity of the social democratic PASOK party to present themselves as the harbinger of a left force that had been renovated and rendered modern, competent, open to dialogue without class barriers and uninvolved in the scandals that had played a role in the downfall of the PASOK government.<sup>4</sup> The aim was to break up PASOK and influence a wing of it towards regroupment in a future broad party.

The bloc offered the KKE a chance to belie its reputation as the most Stalinist and sectarian of European Communist Parties. It was, above all, an opportunity to stem its electoral decline and to

remobilize disillusioned or critical militants. The make-up of the SYN gave a foretaste of what was to come; besides the KKE and the EAR, there was also a small right wing group and some former PASOK people along with a scattering of independents. This was the time of multi-coloured meetings, when the Stalinist leadership criticized groups of militants who turned out carrying red flags. In pursuit of this line, the KKE leadership expelled many militants and the majority of the youth organization (KNE) who went on to form the NAR (New Assembly of the Left).<sup>4</sup>

### Balking at nothing

The SYN balked at nothing to achieve its ends, which became reduced to its own survival; an objective made still more clear after the elections of April 1990. What the Stalinists had not understood was that collaboration with the right serves only the right. And the workers have not forgiven the SYN for contributing to the defeat of PASOK and the installation in power of Constantin Mitsotakis, one of the politicians loathed by the left for his role in the preparation of the colonels' coup of 1967.<sup>5</sup>

The SYN very soon reaped the rewards

for its operation. As the government struck hard, with rises in prices and charges, privatizations, the "anti-terrorist" law to restrict the press, realignment in support of US policies, and in the absence of big mobilizations (with the exception of the high school students, whose mass mobilization forced the government to retreat in January), signs of discontent multiplied and found a political and trade union expression. The current linked to PASOK improved its position in the professional elections, amid murmurs of disapproval among traditionally right wing professions such as doctors and lawyers, and support for PASOK has increased among students. PASOK is now tipped to win elections if they took place today.

### Getting rid of the right

What seemed possible two years ago — the explosion of PASOK — now seems to have produced the opposite, at least for the time being. For most workers wanting to get rid of the right, PASOK is the party to turn to. The SYN meanwhile is doing practically nothing, when it is not actively blocking struggles, as it did at the time of the teachers' strike in June 1990. It spends most of its time on parliamentary interventions or on speechifying about the need for a great modern left party. This is the background to the campaign of the last few months to try to put some life back into the SYN.

It was over the way to achieve this objective that the crisis erupted. In fact the reason why the crisis has become so serious is that the KKE's survival is at stake. The renewers have an openly reformist position and are ready for all the required adaptations and changes, but they also need the party to follow them, if only to provide the foot soldiers; the conservatives however believe that the party's survival depends on a rapid application of a new coat of red paint, and an affirmation of the ideological purity of the SYN — still seen as an essential tool. Thus despite the tactical differences there are not in fact differences of line; both tendencies start out on the basis of Stalinism, despite the fierce disputes.

Another sign of the tactical differences was the attitude to the Koskotas trial<sup>6</sup>. The

1. These expulsions have been described as totally unacceptable by the renewers, who point out that only the congress can remove an elected CC member from his/her functions.

2. Between the June 1989 legislative elections, when it got 13.6%, and those of November 1989, the SYN lost 20% of its support. The results of the first gave rise to the government of "catharsis" — a coalition between the SYN and the right, while the second ushered in the "ecumenical" government of the right, the SYN and PASOK. The April 1990 elections offered the right the possibility of governing alone, with the SYN's vote falling to 10.3%. However, in all three cases, the total PASOK and the SYN vote was greater than that of the right, and in the first two cases was above 50%. In the local elections of October 1990, PASOK took over in many KKE bastions.

3. The KKE-es — known as the Communist Party

(Interior), was born from a split in the KKE in 1968. It went in a Eurocommunist direction. It still exists and oscillates between common action with the far left and the pole of attraction of the SYN.

4. See IV 182.

5. Very many Greeks over 40 have not forgotten this treason. As to the youth, they had an opportunity during the high school student's movement in January to see that the Greek right did not hesitate to have recourse, not only to the worst police violence, but also to the use of its own goon squads.

6. Koskotas was a crooked businessman, the owner of the Bank of Crete, several journals and the Piraeus football team, who was accused of financing PASOK. His trial, preceded by that of the PASOK leaders, was to have been the big spectacle of this June. However it was suspended almost as soon as it began owing to a Greek lawyers strike.

question was whether to continue with trials of PASOK leaders, including former prime minister Andreas Papandreou, despite the fact that the "trial of the century" turned out a fiasco, with contradictory evidence from the prosecution witnesses. A year ago, the conservatives were lukewarm and the renewers keenly in favour, but now it seems that the positions have been reversed; the most lucid renewers now understand the importance of cooperation with PASOK, while the conservatives want to put forward the KKE as the clean party of the working class.

### Murky finances

In any case, one of the first concrete signs of serious disagreement was the resignation in mid-May of Grigoris Farakos, who had been general secretary until the recent 13th Congress, from the central committee. He walked out denouncing the lack of "openness" in the finances of the KKE, a theme explosively developed by the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, which accused the KKE, via East Berlin, of involvement in the arms trade, and even with breaking the embargo of South Africa. Treading the same troubled ground, a PASOK deputy recently accused the right of favouring enterprises tied to the KKE in the framework of agreements with the Soviet Union.

The theses of the KKE's 13th Congress in February 1991 proclaimed the need to revive the SYN. At the Congress the strength of the two warring factions was more or less equal, with perhaps the conservatives having a slight edge. Using this slim majority, the new general secretary, Aleka Papariga, dotted the "i"s, insisting that the new decisions of the KKE leadership be respected, including one calling for the appointment rather than election of leaders of the SYN and another postponing the broad preparatory meeting for the SYN national conference to the indefinite future. The aim of such measures is above all to restore order in the party, and in particular in its media, which is strongly influenced by the renewers. The conservatives are highly critical of the excessive openness of the radio station *Aristera PM* and the daily paper, *Rizopastis*.

The renewers, headed by Maria Damanaki (who had recently replaced the conservative, Harilaos Florakis, as president of SYN), had to resist this tightening up. The Central Committee majority then responded to this indiscipline by replacing the KKE's representatives on the SYN leadership.

The CC majority continued its attack in the second half of June, with disciplinary measures for infringement of statutes, withdrawal of conservatives from leading bodies of the SYN, calls for boycotts of local aggregates of the SYN and even some attempts at sabotage. Despite this, the SYN has continued to prepare its conference, with the loss of something less

than a half of its militants. Only in one district has it proved impossible for the SYN to hold an aggregate for lack of people.

The purge of the media has also turned out to be a difficult process. Despite sackings and threats against the journalists, the tone of the daily newspaper remains a curious mix.

Attitudes to current events in the Soviet Union are interesting; some are seeking Gorbachev's blessing — Papariga has come back pledging his total support, while the *Aristera FM* representative claimed that Gorbachev had warned the KKE's general secretary. According to this correspondent, Gorbachev had said that "the Bolsheviks paid heavily for the split in 1914" and that it was necessary not only to be concerned about the unity of the party but about the enlargement of that unity.

Current events have shown that the renewers have considerable strength. They are in the majority in the city committees of the three main working class urban centres<sup>7</sup> and include many leaders who are well-known and well thought of by the rank-and-file, such as Logothetis, who was elected mayor of Piraeus in May after a strong united PASOK-SYN campaign, which ousted the former mayor on the first round with 56% of the vote. Many union activists have expressed their intention to take part in the SYN's work, while the normalized KNE (Young Communists), which has been reconstructed more or less from scratch after the expulsions of autumn 1989, has stated that the youth should continue to construct the SYN.

The conservatives are thus in a tight corner, subject to various temptations — a retreat into splendid isolation on the basis of its legitimate majority, informal links with the French and Cuban CPs, an interest in the policy of the Chinese CP and so on. Self-proclamations from a bygone age — "long live the glorious KKE!"; "KKE; people, here is your party!" were to be heard during the information meeting called on June 24 in Athens. The meeting itself showed the impasse into which such a retreat leads. Far from the expected crowds, the meeting was attended mostly by older people. However, what is not yet clear is what line the majority of the worker militants will take. After the June 24 meeting many seemed perplexed and unsure of what to do.

It is also hard to be sure whether the conservatives will pursue their retreat further or will try in one way or another to regain ground in the SYN. They seem to be keep-

ing two irons in the fire: in the run up to an extraordinary congress in the autumn, each has the time to dilute their fervour somewhat. And although the KKE majority has given the order to withdraw from all the SYN's activities, it has also been at pains to express its support for a great coming together of the left and for progress.

Above all, however, it is difficult to foresee the consequences for the Greek left. For the moment the crisis is mainly of concern to the right wing government, since it is likely that PASOK will benefit, and the unions, because they already face a difficult situation and could do without new internal ructions. If there is a split, the KKE may lose its parliamentary fraction, and thus the possibility of making its views known to the public. From every point of view, then, it is PASOK that should be the main beneficiary, despite Papandreou's hypocritical declarations about how regrettable he finds the crisis.

It is, on the other hand, hardly likely that the far left will be strengthened by this crisis; first of all owing to the reformist projects of the two blocs — whatever Papariga's rhetoric about the party of the revolution — and then because of the far left's own weaknesses. The hopes aroused at the start of 1990 with the appearance of the NAR (see IV 182) have not been realized; this organization has remained very timid, and the regroupment of a radical and effective left is a task unaddressed.

Ex-celebrities from the KKE, such as Kostas Kapos (ex-NAR), sing the praises of the Cuban and Vietnamese CPs and declare themselves ready to rejoin the KKE if it gets rid of its "petty bourgeois positions".

### Not only observe

However it is clear that the reformist left in all its guises will remain in an impasse, and it is important for the far left not to rest content with observing the intensifying fighting between bureaucrats, pleasant though this may be. It is necessary to find ways to put forward concrete proposals for united anti-capitalist action; it will be through this that the programmatic questions can be sharply raised.

For, apart from the fate of the bureaucrats, there is also the issue of what perspective can be given to the many thousands of militants who today find themselves in total confusion. ★

7. A declaration of the political bureau in Piraeus city just before the wave of expulsions said: "we believe that the present CC majority, through its decisions and practices, is giving the KKE an unfavourable popular image and is undermining the SYN. The real problem is not, as has been said, 'the attempt to change the nature' of the SYN, but the attempt to get rid of a big current with mass influence in the KKE. The CC's decisions override the decisions of the party's highest body, the Congress. They have, therefore, no legal foundation."

A declaration of the political bureau in Athens on June 20 said: "We call on the CC to take into account the anguish and hopes of thousands of Communists and militants of the left who see the SYN as the only way forward. We insist on the characterization of the SYN arrived at by the congress and on the congress decision that the party should participate to the full in the process of refounding the SYN."

It should be noted that the new secretary of the KKE was not even elected as a congress delegate by the local structure in Athens.

# Moving towards a cease-fire?

ON JUNE 17, 1991, the Salvadoran Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) attacked La Esperanza prison, near to the capital, San Salvador. The guerillas surrounded the building for several hours and broke through the wall; 130 people, both common law and political prisoners, escaped. The attack took place at the very moment when the Salvadoran government and the FMLN were starting a new round of talks in the Mexican city of Queretaro, held under the auspices of the United Nations.

At the start of June, several members of the FMLN's general command toured Europe. In the course of this tour the Belgian organization, Socialisme sans frontières<sup>1</sup> met Joaquin Villalobos, the leader of the Revolutionary People's Army, and a member of the FMLN leadership.<sup>2</sup>

## ERIC TOUSSAINT

“IT WOULD be a mistake to believe that the recent round of negotiations was a failure. The great tension around the negotiating table arises from the fact that these are real negotiations. The army is very nervous, because the issue of a division of territory between the two armies is being discussed in connection with a ceasefire” explained Villalobos.

Insofar as the FMLN controls significant areas<sup>3</sup> and some are close to the capital, the army is attacking with the aim of regaining positions before a ceasefire. Joaquin Villalobos has explained that the FMLN's aim is the complete demilitarization of the country, which cannot be gained in the short term. What is on the cards now is an armed peace, since the current negotiations must succeed. If they fail, the only victors will be the far right, in Villalobos' opinion.

Villalobos gave his view on strategic issues: he believes that the only comparable military experience to that of El Salvador was the Mexican revolution. The victorious Cuban and Nicaraguan experiences lasted only a short time (that is, there was only a short period between the launching of the armed struggle and the taking of power). Several variants of revolutionary war have been tried out by the FMLN in response to changes in tactics on the part of the enemy: an insurrectional movement of armed masses; guerilla warfare; outright confrontations between large forces on both sides, with retreats and offensives and so on.

While in the recent period the FMLN high command has tended to become a

political rather than a military leadership, it remains the case that the Front has a real permanent army under its control, with an officer corps and battle hardened troops. Such a force cannot be disarmed on the basis of political promises; demilitarization must take place on both sides simultaneously. El Salvador will thus first go through a period of armed peace, which may last several years, before leading on to another stage (demilitarization or some other formula). The elections in 1994 will be a key moment.

## UN observers dispatched

The imminent dispatch of a delegation of 150 permanent UN observers (UNOSAL) in charge of checking on the application of the agreements signed in September 1990 at San José in Costa Rica relating to respect for human rights, is considered positive by the FMLN, since its presence will contribute to lessening the pressure of the army on the civilian population. Furthermore, some initial constitutional reforms have been won, concerning notably the organization of elections to the Supreme Court of Justice. Although falling far short of what is needed, they are nonetheless a tangible sign of change.

The FMLN believes that the generals should be sent into retirement, the Minister of National Defence replaced by a civilian, the military personnel responsible for crimes prosecuted and sentenced and changes implemented in military education. “Young military cadres from

the FMLN might become instructors at the military college.”

As a condition for the ceasefire, the 1980 agrarian reform must be guaranteed and all the social changes, including changes in property, carried out in the zones under FMLN control must be legalized. After the ceasefire the FMLN will continue to be in military control of these zones, but it is ready to allow judges and representatives of the central administration in, on condition that the social changes are legalized. As another condition of the ceasefire, the FMLN demands that international aid be allowed for economic and social projects in the regions it controls, without having to go via the government.

## An FMLN police force

Furthermore, the FMLN will recognize a local police, on condition that it is entirely composed of FMLN members. Under the protection of the UN observers, the members of the independent commission on human rights will be able to travel throughout the country to supervise respect for liberties. On the political level, the FMLN, without laying down its arms, will integrate itself into civilian political life while remaining: “a party of the poor which refuses to be a poor party.” The FMLN wants guarantees of financing, and also demands that the popular organizations be given control over one of the three television channels, as well as some radio stations and newspapers.

Socialisme sans frontières asked Joaquin Villalobos about some sensational comments on the subject of Marxism attributed to him that appeared in several North American journals (see *International Viewpoint* no. 206, May 13, 1991). He replied that for him Marxism was a method of analysis and a science and it was necessary to prevent it being turned into a religious dogma. In his view, revolutionaries must use the Marxist method to work out an adequate revolutionary strategy, but in some countries where Marxism had been turned into a religion, the masses, in the course of freeing themselves from authoritarian forms of rule, have been overturning statues of Marx and Lenin.

To avoid this kind of thing, the authoritarian and Stalinist version of Marxism must be rejected. Every revolutionary process is profoundly pluralist in its essence, and any vanguard force that wants to take the lead in such a process must also be pluralist, as was the case with the FMLN. According to Villalobos, it is necessary to reject the doctrine of the single party. ★

1. Socialisme sans frontières is the international solidarity organization of the Belgian Socialist Workers Party (POS/SAP, Belgian section of the Fourth International).

2. See *International Viewpoint*, no. 206, May 13, 1991.

3. This is true notably of the Chalatenango, San Vicente and Morazan regions. The FMLN is also strong in the Usulután and Guazapa regions.



SOUTH AFRICA

**Socialist organization holds conference**

The Workers Organization for Socialist Action (WOSA) held its first national conference May 31-June 2. Attended by over 200 delegates, it marked a significant step forward in the building of an independent socialist organization in South Africa.

Delegates discussed a number of vital issues affecting the broad liberation movement: the current national situation, the call for a constituent assembly and an interim government. Also high up on the agenda was a discussion on the violence presently tearing the townships on the Reef apart.

The discussion on the present balance of forces was marked by a sober assessment of the situation. Delegates noted that the state, by employing a strategy of reform from above while at the same time directing a low intensity war at the black population, had forced the mass movement on to the defensive and the de Klerk regime was thereby seizing the political initiative. The easing of international pressure on the government had also widened its room for manoeuvre.

Conference delegates discussed the political tasks facing WOSA in the context of the defensive position of the working class. A resolution was passed calling for a mass united campaign for a constituent assembly.

One of the most urgent tasks confronting the liberation movement was the building of a patriotic front around the demand of the constituent assembly. Delegates stressed that such a front must be a fighting mass movement built at local, regional and national levels.

A resolution was passed explaining that responsibility for the recent township violence must be firstly directed at the state, which was attempting to destabilize and disorganize working class communities.

The conference noted that only the united response of working class communities can begin to counter this attack; this means building independent, non-sectarian self-defence committees, building peace from below, and avoiding undisciplined and undemocratic actions which could further drive hostel workers into the arms of the Inkatha leadership and other reactionaries. ★

GERMANY

**Kohl's witch-hunt continues**

**22** THE government of Helmut Kohl has decided to make the people of the ex-GDR

pay the price of German unification. Several million workers have lost their jobs, while hundreds of thousands have seen benefits and social services slashed; meanwhile, a witch-hunt has been launched in the universities against the left. Now the German government has decided to freeze the bank accounts of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the principal left formation in the ex-GDR, a move which the European workers' and democratic movement must immediately denounce. We publish below an appeal of the PDS which should be widely circulated and supported.

"The delegates of the congress of the Party of Democratic Socialism address themselves to European public opinion, asking that they support the condemnation of Berufsverbot (professional discrimination) in the ex-GDR, now described as "the new länders".

"We draw the public's attention to the following paradox; although the government of the Federal Republic claims to act in the name of the rights of peoples and democracy, it violates those rights inside Germany. We note that, despite the criticisms raised inside and outside Germany, the policy of the Berufsverbot has been followed now for 19 years, in spite of its condemnation in 1987 as an act incompatible with human rights.

"Through systematic questionnaires and by multiple discriminations at work — above all in the public services — German constitutional law as well as international norms (the final act of the CSCE and convention number 111 of the International Labour Organization) are breached by the German government.

"We appeal to public opinion that it does not allow fundamental human rights to be trampled on in Germany. We call on you to sign this appeal".

Gregor Gysi, PDS, 28 Kleine Alexander Strasse, D1020 Berlin, tel: (30) 822 1945. ★

DENMARK

**Palestinian refugees are threatened with expulsion**

DANISH police are set to expel 300 Palestinian asylum seekers to the Lebanon. Until early 1990, almost all Palestinians fleeing the Lebanon were granted political asylum in Denmark. Now, all applications are investigated case by case and only about 50% are successful.

The new practice is justified by an alleged improved political situation in Lebanon, but several organizations, including Amnesty International and the Danish Refugee Council, have questioned this judgment and are supporting the refugees' right to asylum.

Protests against the deportation of the Palestinian refugees should be sent to Danish embassies or to the Ministry of Justice, Slottholmsgade 10, 1216 Copenhagen K. ★

**I**N THIS ARTICLE I am turning to you who represent more than a half of this country's inhabitants. First of all I will summarize what is known about the terrible state of our living conditions. Then we will be able to address the task of looking for the reasons and analyzing the present situation as a precondition for seeking solutions.

At the end of the Second World War, women took an active part in the renaissance of the republic. Economic motives as well as enthusiasm played an important part in spurring their participation. Little by little a new situation was created within the family, where previously patriarchal organization and the image of woman as mother and housekeeper had been dominant. After February 1948 [the Communist takeover] women were invited to take part in the common cause of constructing Socialism and they were promised that society would create very favourable conditions for them.

At the same time legal equality for women was declared and embodied in the constitution of May 1948. Women took jobs in sectors traditionally reserved for men, such as mining. Men's wages began to decrease so that the wage of the woman became increasingly necessary for the family budget. But the development of social services that had been promised went forward very slowly and education failed to advance. If there was no grandmother in the family, children would be sent to the crèche when they were three months old.

**Emancipation in work only**

Furthermore, women were only emancipated in the framework of work. Their wages were, and still are in most cases, lower than men's. Housework is done free as an additional obligation. In our social consciousness, the education of children is considered among women's main tasks, along with cooking, needlework, flower growing and inventing dressmaking patterns.

There is nothing in theory to stop women occupying the post of director, playing the same role as a man in politics, dedicating themselves to social activity or improving their professional qualifications. But first of all they have to get the children off to school, clean the windows and the floors, do the washing up and the laundry, do the ironing, sew buttons back on and do the cooking for the whole family. After having finished the thousand and one tasks, which extend from the preparation of the family holiday programme to the purchase of toilet paper, women can do whatever men do.

The question is to know if there have been and are many female personalities able to overcome such conditions, and, a sub-question, how many men would be able to develop themselves in such conditions of emancipation. A mother responsi-

# Czech women face the market

**WHILE no clearly feminist current has yet emerged in post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia, a number of women-based political initiatives have seen the light of day. Alena Valterova, the author of the article we publish below, has been involved in several of these, notably the "Political Party of the Women and Mothers of Czechoslovakia".**

**The article, which has been shortened for space reasons, first appeared in the magazine *Zena* (woman), and gives some sense of the current state of thinking about the "woman question" in Czechoslovakia.**

**ALENA VALTEROVA**

ble for two children has in these conditions to have an ability (even a talent) for organizing her daily life equivalent to that of a secretary in a medium sized enterprise. Furthermore, women know the price of a life. They know what it means to bring up a child before it can take its place among the "members of our toiling class"; a forced adaptation of the women, and through them of the children, to the ways of thinking, action and organization of the men being at all times required.

In Czechoslovakia, 94% of women of working age have a job — the highest figure in the world. In *Mlady svet* ["Young World"], M. Malousek has published the results of an opinion poll on the assistance given by men to their spouses in housework. Some 50% of men give no help in the home, the rest give a maximum of an hour and a half a day. Women, on the other hand, must spend four to six hours a day on housework. Men do the things they find entertaining or that they want to do. The women do the rest. The same is true of the national economy. Men are better paid for performing heavy work or when they hold leadership functions. And women do the rest whatever their working conditions.

## Women sicker than men

Last March, the prime minister of the Czech government, in his report on the situation in the Czech Republic, wrote: "From 1970 to 1985 the number of men falling sick has risen by 30% and the number of women by 46%." And everybody knows the difference between a man and a woman who has a cold.

Women account for nearly a half of the national economy's total production. Over the past forty years women have had only the most minimal and token representation

in all the decisions making structures of the economy, services, health, education, arms and the environment.

Because of this, women's traditional "spheres" (aesthetics, tenderness, family life, the raising of children) have been considerably reduced. Women have been appreciated for their success in the male "spheres": professional success, participation in political life, drinking of alcohol, smoking and so on. In the course of time it has become customary to depict Czech and Slovak women only as passive and incapable, supposedly responsible for a crisis in the family and causing great moral damage to the children. In the same period of time, those qualified specialists, the men, have proved incapable of producing sanitary towels.

## All in the past?

You are going to reply that all this is of the past. In November 1989, there was the velvet revolution. During the demonstrations we won our liberty and there after everything has been better. The single women's organization, the Women's Union, of which 16% of the country's women are members, 80% of them with no party affiliation, has since been in deep crisis. This crisis has been all the deeper in that the Union's committees — 80% of whose members were Communists — have collapsed, without taking into account the activity of the different sections or the problems of women at a national level. In the Slovak republic the organization has changed its name.

On February 3, 1990, the Central Committee of the Women's Union issued a proclamation in which it promised to ensure that at least a third of Federal Assembly deputies were women, before winding itself up. The sections of the

Czech committee supported the creation of a new movement, the Movement for the Emancipation of Women in Bohemia and Moravia (led by Eleonora Slavickova), and took part in the elections via this committee. However, in January 1990, the number of women in the Assembly in fact dropped to 21.6% [this assembly being coopted on the base of the previously existing Assembly]. There was only one woman in the federal Government of National Entente, in control of ministerial budgets; there were three women in the Czech government and one in the Slovak government. Six months later, a committee for women's and family questions was born in Slovakia bringing together organizations both old and new. There was even talk of the creation of a ministry for the family in Slovakia.

The representation of women on the electoral lists of the various political parties was below 25%. Furthermore, they were usually put at the bottom of the slates. After the June 1990 elections, the proportion of women in the Federal Assembly had dropped to 10%. In Slovakia there are now no women in the government, so that the proposal to create a new commission for women has remained a dead letter. There is only one woman in the Czech government and there is no women's commission there either. At the federal level, things are no different; the only woman has no brief for women's issues.

## No democracy without women's representation

In the same framework, I cannot resist quoting a comment by Ms. Dohnal, the first Austrian woman to become a minister: "if there are less than 30% of women in the assembly, then there is no democracy either." It is true that last July the president expressed his astonishment that there were no women around him. This was very nice of him, but that was it. Nobody in official circles shows any interest in women's issues.

In recent times, women have been criticizing one another. They discuss as they wait in line. Their conversations are about daily life reveal the hope that things are not going to stay the same, that things are not so bad, that someone has some explaining to do. And if you ask them what they are going to do themselves, they all reply: "But what can I do?"

The statistics have already for a long time shown that a mother responsible for two children can only expect to sleep for between five and seven hours a night, that Saturday is a day off only for men, that the working day in Czechoslovakia is the longest in Europe, and that women have a shopping bag with them at all times. However, if women do not begin to get organized, they can only expect one thing: that their situation and that of their children will get still worse.

And how are things in fact developing? The first strip show took place in the framework of the new democracy, even before the draft law on political parties was ready. At the moment when a shortage of medicines was becoming apparent, a heated debate was taking place on changing the state logo. While people were keen to start in business and create real competition, the problem of the name of the state was being dealt with. Street names have been changed, but our children do not have the right to choose their own profession.

The new assembly stated that it was necessary to rapidly adopt a wide range of new and better laws; the deputies sorted out the issue of their salaries and went on holiday. The end of 1990 was seen in with discussions on jurisdiction and the new year was greeted with the freeing of prices, although business possibilities remain highly restricted, without talking of foreign competition.

### Women and the market

In this situation, what are women going to do? Czechoslovak society is in the process of moving towards democracy and a market economy. The questions of method, of possibility and of time are still posed but the tendency is given. And what do we know of the problems of women and of the family in the developed countries? Last March I received a letter from the European Union of Christian Women, informing me of the situation of women in the market economies, which is worse than we could imagine...

It is necessary that women become conscious of their capacities and begin to use them both for the benefit of their family and in the general interest. Today, there are at least 30 initiatives in Czechoslovakia whose activity is turned towards the problems of women and the family. The political party for women in the CSFR is in the process of being born. "Women's" sections exist in several parties also. All these organizations permit women to develop their centers of interest and their personality, to resolve their problems and those of others, to get involved in political parties which have an established programme and a solid structure.

The political movements in Czechoslovakia are formations created in haste on the eve of the elections, without structure or activity, whose members cannot control their representatives. It is interesting for example that the Independent Erotic Initiative counts in its ranks more members than all the womens' organizations created recently.

Finally, I pose the following question; how much time will it take women to understand their situation? Can they take part in the development of the society? If they are not capable of doing so, they will have neither the possibility nor the right to complain about their destiny. ★

## The labours of Father Aristide

"DECHOUKAY", "balewouze" and "lavalas" — three words in Creole that you need to know if you want to follow the situation in Haiti.

ARTHUR MAHON

“ DECHOUKAY” means to dig up a tree by the roots.

This term was used at the time of the departure of the dictator Duvalier. The population attacked symbols of Duvalierism and hunted down the tonton-macoutes (the Duvalierist armed gangs). The *dechoukay* was interrupted by the intervention of the army, who protected the tonton-macoute leaders, and the Catholic hierarchy, who issued an appeal for national reconciliation.

“Balewouze” means to sweep clean after watering the soil, in order to be able to pick up all the dust. This term was employed by Jean-Bertrand Aristide and several popular organizations in autumn 1987 before the November 29 elections, which the Duvalierists and military interrupted with a bloodbath. “Balewouze” meant: before talking about elections, there had to be a big cleanout of tonton-macoutes. The *balewouze* did not take place, but something similar to it happened. Following military outrages, tens of thousands of people formed self-defence brigades to protect the popular neighbourhoods of the capital in the week preceding the November 29, 1987 elections. The army used force to stop this action.

“Lavalas” is a torrent that sweeps away everything in its course. In October 1990, Jean-Bertrand Aristide conducted his election campaign under the sign of *lavalas*. Since then the torrent has twice descended into the streets of Port-au-Prince. On December 16, 1990, the mobilization of the popular neighbourhoods prevented attempted fraud during the election, and, on the night of January 6/7, 1991, when the radio announced the attempted coup by Roger Lafontant, a former interior minister of Duvalier, the people of the capital once again came out into the streets. Port-au-Prince was covered with barricades and 50,000 people massed in front of the National Palace, which Lafontant had seized. The following days, hundreds of Duvalierists were lynched or burnt in the capital and

elsewhere. And the inhabitants of the rich neighbourhoods trembled before groups of youth who had come to “dechouker” the Duvalierists’ houses.

These three terms, “dechoukay”, “balewouze” and “lavalas” have a synonym: insurrection. They recall the slave insurrection whose bicentenary will be celebrated on August 22, 1991. And it was to the words of the song of that insurrection, “Grenadiers on the attack” that the inhabitants of the country’s second largest city, Cap Haitien, came into the streets on January 7, 1991.

Since Duvalier’s downfall, there have been several days of popular explosion in the towns and cities of Haiti, but they have petered out and have been followed by long periods of calm, and even discouragement.

### “Too hot for a civilian president”

Such uprisings have their roots in the extreme oppression and social inequality in Haiti. And they explain why, over the past five years, the United States has not succeeded in imposing a political solution which enjoys any legitimacy, why general Avril said: “in Haiti the president’s chair is too hot for a civilian” and why Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected despite being considered public enemy number one by the conservative forces and expelled by his religious order. The days following Lafontant’s attempted coup made a deep impression on the bourgeoisie and ruled out further such attempts for the moment.

In October 1990 Jean-Bertrand Aristide decided to run in the presidential elections because it was necessary to mobilize the people and create a shock, after the defeats and demobilization which followed November 1987. It soon became clear that it was not just a question of blocking the road to the Duvalierists, most of whom had been prohibited from standing in the elections by the electoral council. In fact, there was a chance that Aristide would win.

He therefore started to stress certain themes: the US ambassador had offered the comment “after the ball, the drums sound heavy”. Aristide, expressing Haitian pride faced with American arrogance, replied with another Haitian proverb: “with many hands, the work becomes easy”. His campaign took place around three axes: justice, open government and participation. On the other hand Aristide’s campaign programme put forward nothing specific beyond what was

written in the 1987 constitution on, for example, the separation of the army and the police.

Besides the improvisory character of the electoral campaign there were three other deeper reasons for this. The first lay in Aristide's own political project. He explained that he himself would have preferred a "people's revolution", but what was in fact on offer was the possibility of a "democratic transition". As he made clear at the beginning of the electoral campaign: "what is important is to recognize the moment where history gives us a rendezvous for a tactical alliance. Today that alliance must express itself as an 'operation Lavalas' to close the road to macoutism."

This was to be not only an alliance between political currents, but also between social sectors with different interests, an alliance whose effects were to go beyond the election. This idea appeared in the electoral programme: "The state must find an equilibrium based on respect, justice and the law between what the workers demand and what the private sector needs to be encouraged to put money into the country and help it to progress."

### Vague electoral programme

A second reason for the vagueness of the electoral programme is that Aristide wanted to neutralize or reassure the army and imperialism, so that they would allow the elections to take place. The third reason is that in Haiti a reform programme is largely illusory if it is not accompanied by mobilization and organization, something on which Aristide insisted during the campaign and even afterwards, talking about "participatory democracy". "The people is the main actor, we will do only what the people tells us to do," he repeated.

And in his speech on December 23, 1991, after the official announcement of the election results, he spoke both as the future president and guarantor of the institutions and the constitution, and as a militant for whom the country's future depended on the population's ability to develop autonomous forms of organization. In this speech he declared: "Take things in hand, rich and poor; set up good neighbourhood committees, good discipline brigades, good cleanup brigades; link up the organizations in the cities with those in the countryside. In this way there will be an avalanche of organizations which will spread in the blood of our much beloved little Haiti. Without this, the country will be like an empty bag, and an



empty bag cannot stay upright." On February 4, 1991, three days before officially becoming president, he announced that "operation lavalas" was finished and called for the building of a "lavalas organization".

In reality, the socio-economic crisis is so deep, the social inequalities so wide and the degree of dependence such that any serious reform runs up against a chain of problems.

Once at the head of the Haitian state, Aristide found himself in an extremely complicated situation. He faced:

- A state apparatus and administration forged by more than 30 years of Duvalierism.
- An unfavourable international situation.
- A greedy, parasitical bourgeoisie, lacking in entrepreneurial initiative.
- The absence of a structured mass movement.
- A newly elected National Assembly and Senate, composed of mediocre

climbers. This is especially true for the Senate. Thus, at the same moment as Aristide announced that he would give his presidential salary to the poor if it was not reduced, the senators were putting in a claim for \$7,000 a month and a fleet of 33 cars costing \$40,000 apiece. And this was despite the fact that 13 of the 27 senators were elected with Aristide on the National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD) ticket. In truth, they were elected because their voting slip had the same imprint (a cock) as Aristide's.

### Freeloaders on the Aristide ticket

Most of them had never been members of the small organizations making up the FNCD and some found themselves on the lists because they had not been able to get onto the lists of other organizations. One of the reasons for this is that the main organization in the FNCD, the KONAKOM (left-wing social democrat), called on its militants to withdraw from the elections because the FNCD had decided to stand Aristide rather than a KONAKOM leader.

Aristide does not seem to have great confidence in the FNCD, since none of its leaders has been invited into the government. Since then, the FNCD has waged endless small campaigns against the government named by Aristide, while officially declaring its support for it. Some of its militants have made it clear that their objective is to get control of the state apparatus, which they consider their right.

If Aristide cannot rely on the political organization that supported him, he can expect even less from the Haitian Communist Party (PUCH). After the election



of Aristide, this organization has maintained the attitude of outright hostility that it showed when he announced his candidacy. On many occasions, at the bidding of bourgeois politicians, it has denounced Aristide's attacks on democracy.

Thus, it kicked up a fuss over the arrest of the former provisional president, Ertha Pascale Trouillot, accused of complicity in Lafontant's coup attempt. The PUCH considered that the arrest of a former president was a dangerous precedent — a view also taken by the Western embassies.

So far, the Lavalas government has adopted what can only be described as a low profile. Priority has been given to the "deduvalierization" of the army and administration. The latter is proceeding slowly, since it is difficult in a few weeks to replace people from the former regime by competent supporters of the Lavalas government. This is a serious problem. The struggle against corruption, contraband, and practices inherited from the past has, nonetheless, permitted steps forward, among them the collection of record tax revenues.

The army has been much weakened by the four years of military government. It has been deeply divided by the coups which characterized that period. After the forced departure of General Avril in March 1990, the Duvalierists lost direct control of the army to the benefit of officers connected with the United States. This is one of the reasons why the elections took place. Profiting from this disarray and the relation of forces created by the semi-insurrection of January 7, 1991, Jean-Bertrand Aristide pulled off a big coup when he assumed office on February 7. He closed his unusual inaugural address by sacking the army chief of staff in front of tens of thousands of people, and pensioning off six of the eight top army officers.

However, in exchange, he had to accept the appointment of figures tied to the US to key posts. And he has done his best to restore the army's prestige. From the start of the election campaign, he called for "a marriage between the people and the army" although the latter had not been purged. And when he said in his February 7 speech that the army had been in the street with the people during

the Lafontant coup, this was far from the truth; the army hesitated a long time before intervening and nobody can be sure what it would have done if the people had not covered Port-au-Prince with burning barricades.

In any case, Aristide has succeeded in gaining the confidence of much of the army rank-and-file and officers. This has enabled him to take some steps forward. In the cities, the army has disarmed several terrorist bands, while in the countryside the section chiefs, named by the army, whose writ was law, have been put under the authority of the justice ministry, and have given up at least some of their arms. The personnel of the section chiefs is being changed.

### Army plays traditional repressive role

The Duvalierist sectors of the army are on the defensive. But this does not mean that the army has ceased to play its traditional repressive role in the land struggles, against demonstrators who denounce speculators, and from time to time, in support of bosses against workers. And the Aristide/army marriage is unlikely to prove solid if the president's popular support weakens or if the government comes into conflict with the oligarchy or US imperialism.

Outside the cities, people have shown great patience, despite the slow pace of change. In the cities, on the other hand, the sudden rise in the prices of basic products and the incessant power cuts gave rise to a feeling of dissatisfaction from April onwards. Thus in the city of Cap-Haitien a vigorous demonstration directed at the big traders forced a sharp cut in prices that had rocketed in the preceding days. A significant rise in the minimum wage in industry was decreed by the executive, but this law was held up in parliament and will only come into force in October.

The make-up of the government reflects its low profile. Since no party won a clear victory in the parliamentary elections, Aristide had a free hand in choosing as prime minister one of his inner circle, René Prével, a long time anti-Duvalierist militant. At that time, popular support for Aristide was at its height (it remains very strong) and the parliament had to accept Aristide's decision. René Prével is also in charge of the interior and defence ministries. People with Aristide's confidence were also installed in other ministries which deal with the state apparatus. At the same time, some ministries — such as Economy and Finance, Trade, Justice and National Education — have been given to people who might turn up in any classic bourgeois government.

It is sometimes said that Aristide's policy is to combine a government with a moderate appearance with the development of a mass movement. But the past,

## "Two wings of the same bird"

*WE publish here the message from Father Aristide to the Dominican people, issued on June 21, 1991 at the time of the deportation of Haitians without proper papers from the Dominican Republic to Haiti.*

**THE Haitian people and the Dominican people are two wings of the same bird. Fragments of the great Caribbean nation, we are two proud peoples, fighting tirelessly for liberty, national independence and social justice.**

**The Haitian people solemnly declares to the Dominican people that respect for human rights is an invariable line of its government's policy. It also solemnly declares that the exercise of national sovereignty is nothing other than an instrument for the defence of human rights and cannot be used for the oppression of workers, children and old people. Peoples should not treat their guests, however poor they are, inhumanely.**

**Our people express their solidarity with all Dominicans and above all those Dominican men and women who earn their living here. We share what little we have with them, and will never, we repeat never, profit from their discomfort.**

**Our national identity has been forged in the struggle of the disinherited of diverse tribes and peoples from Africa and Europe, and we do not fear enrichment by the contributions of foreigners that come amongst us. We defend our sovereignty while defending the oppressed without distinction of race, colour, ideology, nationality and religion, for we have struggled throughout our history for the defence of the elementary principles of the rights of workers and of the human personality.**

**In these difficult hours for our two nations, the government of the Republic of Haiti, leaves open its doors for dialogue. The first independent state in Latin America, Haiti is jealous of its sovereignty, but will never, in the name of that sovereignty, attack the rights of children, women, workers and old people.**

**Alone, we are weak; in solidarity throughout the Caribbean we are strong; in solidarity throughout the Americas we are a power for right, peace, social justice and liberty. ★**

connections and mentality of some of these ministers makes it hard to follow such a tactic. For one thing they present an additional obstacle to the purging of the administration. The Minister of Justice has been removed, and one of his aides jailed. On the other hand, the composition of the government is an obstacle to open government and dialogue with the masses. And this is already one of the main deficiencies of this government.

Furthermore, the government will, at some stage, have to make firm social and economic decisions, given the likely development of mobilizations raising such demands; the time will come when it becomes necessary to decide between the interests of the oligarchy and the oppressed sectors. Jean-Bertrand Aristide stated recently: "I would prefer to fail with the people than succeed without it." This opinion is not, however, shared by all in his government.

### Collapse of popular organizations

Lack of internal democracy, corruption and political maneuvering have infected many of the popular organizations which developed during the effervescence of 1986/87. Such problems led to the disintegration of the KID (Confederation of Democratic Unity), of the CATH (Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers), and the MPP (Papaye Peasants Movement), which had considerable support in the central plateau and was well known abroad.

The trade union movement is now in complete confusion. On February 7, Aristide called for the formation of a "Lavalas Organization" which could bring together popular organizations and various currents disposed to give critical support to the government. Representatives of a variety of organizations, from the four corners of the country, have met on several occasions with this aim in mind, and have also undertaken joint activities. But things have gone slowly. The absence — except perhaps in the Cap Haitien region — of a popular movement with a sufficient level of organization to organize mobilizations and have an impact on the national political scene, is one of the big problems now. Without the development of such a movement, it will not be possible to make inroads into the economic power of the ruling classes, a necessary condition for improving the living conditions of the most destitute. This situation leaves the field open for demagogues who can speculate on the complexity of the situation and the defaults of government action.

The United States is trying to play several hands at once. Officially, the US supports the process of democratic transition. We have even seen the American ambassador striving to reassure the bourgeoisie as to Aristide's intentions. But, at the

same time, the US has banged the table when, for example, the former president was arrested. They are setting conditions for financial aid and their pressure is set to increase as soon as the government comes out with its ideas on economic policy. They are establishing more and more points of support inside the president's entourage. And they exercise unrelenting silent pressure on the government through the army, which guards the limits of the acceptable.

The US was disconcerted by Aristide's victory in the first round, and then by the violence of the popular reaction to Lafontant's attempted coup — which they knew something about. The absence of a strong organized popular movement gives them the room to fight to regain lost ground and weaken Aristide's position through various manoeuvres.

Actions by some unemployed associations, manoeuvres by some senators and deputies and rumours carried in the press may well be signs of a US-sponsored destabilization operation.

The new regime is threatened by another danger; that of isolation. It is worrying that, in the neighbouring Dominican Republic, President Balaguer has succeeded in gaining significant support for his plan to deport illegal Haitian immigrants, despite some vigorous criticisms. Juan Bosh and his Party of Dominican Liberation have given their support to the deportations, while demanding Balaguer's resignation for other reasons. This makes it all the more important to develop solidarity with Haiti, which Aristide has described as "a star of hope in the eyes of the Caribbean and Latin America." ★

## Rome versus Wall Street?

**IT IS NOT** always easy to fit the Vatican into the international political map; allied with Reagan in the fight against Sandinista Nicaragua, it condemned Bush's Gulf war; defender of human rights against dictatorships, it is trying to impose a ban on abortion in Poland, against the will of the majority, daring to compare abortion to the genocide of the Jews. While denouncing poverty and the exploitation of the Third World, it ceaselessly persecutes and punishes those such as the liberation theologians who take an effective stand at the side of the poor.\*

MICHAEL LÖWY

**O**VERALL, the pontificate of John Paul II represents an attempt at a "restoration", both in terms of doctrine and the system of power within the Church. This is shown by his particular virulence on matters of sexual morality and in opposition to women's rights such as contraception, divorce or abortion. The line has been imposed by the systematic appointment, both in Europe (Salzburg, Cologne, Namur, Coire) and in Latin America (Recife), of ultra-conservative bishops, known for their opposition to any relaxation and unconditional supporters of the "magistracy of Rome", often in the face of opposition from the local clergy and congregation.

The Vatican is trying to reimpose the old principle of *Roma locuta, causa finita*

(“Rome has spoken and the matter is closed”), and uses all its power to silence those, such as the Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff, who will not submit to this rule.

This has not prevented the Vatican from taking positions on specific social and economic questions that are critical (the word progressive is not appropriate in this context) in relation to the Western imperialist consensus.

### A closer look at the encyclical

It is a useful exercise, if one wants to see one's way clearly through the contra-

\* The following article first appeared in the July 5, 1991 issue of the Swiss revolutionary Marxist fortnightly, *La Brèche*.

dictions and ambiguities, to look more closely at John Paul II's most recent encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, which commemorates the hundredth anniversary of the famous *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII.

It was greeted by a near unanimous chorus of praise from both left and right — one of the happy exceptions being Daniel Singer's article, "Papal polonaise" in *The Nation* of May 29, 1991, elements of whose analysis are used here.

The encyclical and its reception have strengthened the notion of the Pope as a moral authority above existing blocs and systems. Indeed, celebrating the end of the "socialist" regimes and of "Marxist atheism", John Paul II writes: "One cannot accept the idea that the defeat of 'real socialism', as it is called, should simply give way to the capitalist model of economic organization."

To better understand this statement, let us recall the analysis of the sociology of religions developed by Max Weber. In his view, there exists a profound tension between the ethic of Catholicism and the reified, impersonal and anonymous functioning of capitalism which leaves little room for the moralistic intervention of the Church. The critique of liberal capitalism is an old tradition in Catholic thinking, from Thomas More to today.

### Realistic view of New World Order

Faithful to pre-capitalist culture and values, the Vatican can afford a more realistic vision of the world in 1991 than that of the neo-liberal ideologues of George Bush's New World Order. Contrary to the high priests of the new religion of the market, Rome has understood that Eastern Europe and the Third World find themselves on the dark side of the capitalist system.

A selective and one-sided reading of the document could even create the impression that the Pope is opposed to capitalism, insofar as he considers "the struggle against an economic system understood as a method of assuring the absolute primacy of capital, of the ownership of the means of production and of the land over the liberty and dignity of work and man" legitimate.

The document not only condemns the arms race and the destruction of the natural environment, but also the inhuman exploitation of the Third World and its placing under a "quasi-servile yoke"; the decolonization that leaves "decisive sectors of the economy in the hands of the big foreign firms"; "national security" regimes, which destroy liberty and personal values; and the external debt that is responsible for "the hunger and despair of entire populations".

The Pope's irreverence goes so far as to lead him to denounce the "idolatry of the market", which ignores collective and qualitative needs and all the important human requirements that escape its logic.

Finally, he refuses to "reduce human labour and humanity itself to the level of a commodity" and points out the existence of many countries where "the practices of crude capitalism are still in force, in a situation whose cruelty is in no way less than in the darkest moments of the first phase of industrialization."

One could pick out many remarks of this kind. They will certainly, and with good reason, be used as welcome ammunition by Christians and trade unionists in Latin America and Eastern Europe in their fight against IMF policies, North American economic advisers and neo-liberal austerity programmes bringing unemployment and poverty.

However, there is also the question of what alternative the Pope proposes to this alienated civilization, "oriented towards having, not being." One thing for sure is that the alternative is not to be socialism.

He denounces not only the totalitarian regimes and "really-existing socialism", but the very idea of a socialist society based on the "rejection of private property." Unlike the liberation theologians, he also rejects the class struggle (since it excludes "reasonable compromise") and "an impossible compromise between Marxism and Christianity."

### Third way based on conviviality

It would seem at first glance therefore that the Pope sees capitalism and socialism, liberalism and Marxism, as two sides of the same coin, and proposes a third way, that is, an economy and society based on "conviviality" and the search for the "common good".

However, an attentive reading of the document shows that it is not in fact a matter of a third way.

John Paul II, like his predecessor Leo XIII, the apostle of conciliation between capital and labour, proposes nothing more than an impossible "capitalism with a human face". That is to say a capitalism without "cruelty", without excesses, "fitted into a firm judicial context", tempered by the intervention of the benevolent charity of the Church.

### Capitalism by any other name

There is thus a flagrant contradiction between the severity of the condemnation and feebleness of the proposed remedies.

This, of course, corresponds to the traditional logic of the Church's social doc-

## To all our readers

**THIS is the last number of *International Viewpoint* before the summer break. The next issue of the magazine, no. 212, will be dated September 16, 1991. Who knows what new world historic events will have taken place by then...**

trine, which, while distinguishing itself from bourgeois liberalism by criticizing the most outrageous inhumanities of the system, can conceive of no alternative other than a capitalism rendered more "charitable" by Christian morality.

The real social content of the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* should be understood in this light.

In the last analysis it legitimates the market, the role of profit and private ownership of the means of production while shamefacedly proposing to call all this by a different name: "it would be more appropriate to talk about the 'enterprise economy' or the 'market economy' or simply the 'free economy'". As if a change of name — or the replacement of a liberal government by a Christian democratic one — changes the nature of the system and its logic of oppression, exploitation, alienation and exclusion.

It is thus no surprise that the "option for the poor", the watchword of Christians in Latin America and elsewhere who take the side of the poor in their struggle for their freedom, is for John Paul II nothing more than "a special form of emphasis in the practice of Christian charity."

Marxists can recognize brothers in arms in those Christians, such as Frei Betto and Leonardo Boff, who have chosen the camp of the exploited and the oppressed against capitalism and imperialism.

They should not, on the other hand, entertain any illusions whatsoever about the social doctrine of the Church and the Roman encyclicals, whether from Leo XIII or John Paul II. ★