

International VIEWPOINT

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POSTAL DELAYS

The good news: postal workers in some areas of France have been taking strike action for higher pay. The bad news: your copy of *IV* may have been delayed as well as subscriptions correspondence — *c'est la lutte de classe!*

International VIEWPOINT

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EDITORIAL**A good start
for our
circulation
campaign**

WITH THIS issue of *International Viewpoint* we are inaugurating a regular column to follow the momentum of the circulation drive we announced in our 150th issue.

We plan to keep our readers up to date on the progress of the campaign, and most importantly to keep the subject of *IV* circulation in a spotlight of sorts; to focus our readers' attention on ways to extend distribution of the magazine and ways to convince those intrigued but reluctant potential subscribers encountered to invest in this journal.

Since issue 150 we have received a very substantial donation from a reader in the US, and we would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks.

Perhaps those who are in a position to do so might consider that the approaching commercially-packaged Season of Goodwill (and Conspicuous Consumption) would be an opportune time to donate funds to a valiantly struggling magazine like *IV*.

Money we receive is often used to improve equipment or to start special projects. Over the last year we have used resources from our readers to pay for a new campaign of advertising in left journals and this has had very positive results. We have received requests for sample copies from countries as diverse as Mexico, India and Zimbabwe, not to mention Canada, Quebec, Britain and the States. We would like to continue expanding our advertising campaign, and in this way introducing *IV* to new layers of revolutionaries and activists.

One of best ways our regular readers and subscribers can help is by convincing bookstores to take bundles; another is by showing the magazine off to the largest possible periphery. We are proud of the utility of our special coverage and analysis and we think that the magazine will speak for itself given a new and expanding audience. ★

**A mass, democratic
uprising**

ONLY a few days had passed since the end of the nationwide popular uprising of young people. With many of the 500 new *shahada* (martyrs in Arabic) as yet unburied, and thousands of demonstrators still tending their wounds or rotting in crowded prisons, the regime announced a national referendum for November 3, 1988.

The Algerian people were called upon to approve an initial reorganization of the executive branch. After this was completed, the prime minister, chosen by the president, would form a government "excluding no one" that would be responsible to the National Assembly.

SAÏD AKLI

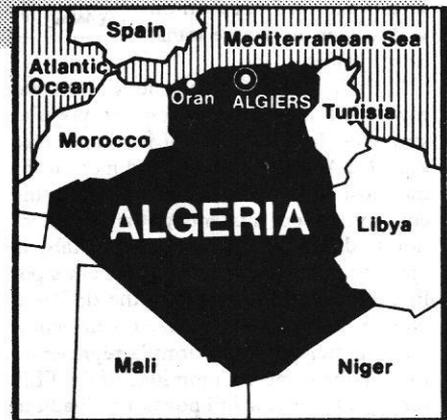
SUCH A REFORM without immediate concrete consequences seems pathetic indeed in view of the price paid in blood by young people hungering for democracy, dignity and social justice.

But the presidential communique of October 12 implies that this is just an appetizer, and that the main dish on this menu of political reforms is yet to come, as Chadli must first submit it to the FLN's Congress in mid-December.

The announcement of this symbolic referendum was accompanied by the traditional attempt to provision the markets, the "carrot" that is offered after the repression of every demonstration. It also came in tandem with the release of radicals and activists who had been arbitrarily arrested and of all minors detained, as a sign of lessening of tensions.

With this combination of measures the Chadli regime is trying to cleanse itself in the eyes of the people after massacring hundreds of their children. The people are not falling for it. But, on the eve of the thirty-fourth anniversary of November 1 (the beginning of the Algerian War of Independence) they sense that a page in their history has just been turned. Despite the tragic consequences of the uprising, it is not being taken as a defeat. To the contrary, there is great hope that the bloodshed will bring about thorough-going political changes in Algerian society.

In March 1976, as Boumedienne was just beginning to institutionalize the power he won in the military coup of June 19, 1965, four political personalities of the bourgeois opposition in Algiers put out a call for democracy. This initiative on the part of



bourgeois currents excluded from power after independence converged with the challenge from within the regime itself to the extreme concentration of power. The political convergence took place around the same desire for a redistribution of power among the different factions of the Algerian bourgeoisie that believed they had matured enough to free themselves from stifling Bonapartist administrative supervision.

Confident of popular support against his bourgeois critics, Boumedienne reacted by authorizing the first public debate since 1965, putting his made to order Constitution and National Charter up to a plebiscite and being triumphally elected. The internal debate of the bourgeoisie however was seized upon by the mass of people and transformed into an expression of their own democratic and social aspirations. This popular appropriation of unaccustomed free speech was to thaw a political climate frozen for years by an obsessive fear of the Military Security (SM), and to bring in a new political period in Algeria. Student struggles flourished, and a big strike wave forced the regime to concede some wage rises and liberalization on the trade union

front. In April of 1978, the Fifth Congress of the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) confirmed and gave a new impetus to this renewal of the labor movement, marked by the democratic aspirations of workers.

Boumedienne's death in December of 1978 encouraged the blossoming of this new democratic climate through breaches opened by the struggles over who was to succeed him. After having assembled behind the banners of either Yahyaoui, the Boumediennist; or Bouteflika, the free enterpriser, the different wings of the bourgeoisie reached a compromise under the authority of the army. They installed a collective government in order to fill up cracks which would be dangerous to the regime's stability. The shadow of the *infatih* ("opening" in Arabic, the name given to the policy of economic liberalization) would extend from then onwards over the whole transitional period.

The relaxation of state control over society aided the development of popular struggles. In spite of all of its limitations, the UGTA appeared more and more to be the most significant political force in the country. School students got an introduction to democracy, and soon, the Kabylia uprising highlighted the government's political weakness. Appalled, the different bourgeois factions abandoned their democratic pretensions: the army's representatives in the Central Committee of the FLN forced it to bestow full power on Chadli in May 1980.

Political control over society was further strengthened by repressive means and the reinforcement of the para-police role of the FLN itself. In 1981, the FLN launched an offensive on several fronts which consolidated its total political monopoly over all cultural or political activity in factories, neighborhoods, high schools or universities. But popular discontent expressed itself in even more explosive ways in the streets, in the form of mass demonstrations around basic social needs (housing, water and so on), ending frequently in clashes with the police.

In 1985, democratic demands reemerged, this time in a new guise: the formation of a Human Rights League, several leaders of which were soon thereafter imprisoned. The national and international solidarity campaign aroused by this seriously annoyed the government, which was worried about preserving its image. The timidly conducted internal debate in the FLN's structures around the project of revising the National Charter got out of hand, despite all of the precautions taken.

4 Thus, internal divisions in the regime were the focus for the first time ever of

public debate between the central organ of the FLN and *Algérie-Actualités*, a weekly paper expressing the positions of liberals fighting "officialese."

Infatih supporters' wish for democratic credibility encouraged better news coverage of politics, despite regular attacks against the opposition. But the brutal rep-

was kept isolated from these democratic impulses by the FLN bureaucrats. Despite their avowed fear of the *infatih*, these bureaucrats continued to throttle the desire for democracy clearly expressed in the union elections of 1987.

This rapid overview of the advance of democratic demands shows how, during the last few years, the internal conflicts of a bourgeoisie expressing its political growing pains have combined with the growing desire of the masses for a democracy from which they have been excluded.

After equating their need for a redistribution of power with a project of democratizing the regime, the supporters of the *infatih* found themselves bogged down in the contradiction between their free enterprise credo and the myth of unity in thought proclaimed by the FLN from 1980-81. Paradoxically, it was with Chadli and his economic opening that the FLN's political monopoly over society acquired the

most institutionalized para-police power.

The bourgeoisie needed to institute free enterprise and gain a liberal image in the eyes of its imperialist guides. But its fear, as a propertied class facing more and more violent and powerful popular mobilizations unveiled the cracks in its liberal mask. This increased the weight of the petty-minded *apparatchiks* who were hostile to all tentative moves towards free thought.

Every time, it has been the popular mobilizations that have disrupted bourgeois projects of a democracy reserved for the wealthy. Current acceptance of democratic demands was imposed by the broad masses on a regime whose liberal pretensions did not prevent police repression on a scale unseen since independence.

The height of this contradiction has just been reached with the promises of political democratization, intended to wipe out the memories of a savage military repression more murderous than that of certain dictatorships commonly denounced by the official press.

Moreover, promises of democracy have done nothing to stop the repression. The government itself admits to having put 4,000 youth on trial, legal parodies churning out sentences of up to ten years. The minors recently released tell of the tortures they underwent, and medical testimony confirms their statements.

Even more than after the demonstrations in Constantine and Setif, anger over this new repression is mobilizing large numbers of intellectuals. A general assembly of doctors in Algiers adopted a motion of support to the parents of victims and has set up a provisional office. Teachers from the Universities of Algiers, Blida, and Tizi-Ouzou got together at Bab Ezzouar to denounce



repression of the youth demonstrations in Constantine and Setif in November 1986 was a reminder of the regime's real nature. Hundreds of young people were quickly tried and received stiff sentences while oppositionists from varying currents were arbitrarily arrested and deported without trial to the vast southern region of the country. A solidarity campaign against repression grew, involving much of the intelligentsia. The democratic movement spread to include the periphery of the Socialist Vanguard Party (PAGS, the Algerian CP), thereby acquiring a whole new political dimension.

Legacy of the student struggles

The liberals reacted with the creation of another Human Rights League, recognized by Chadli who proclaimed that he wanted to establish a state of laws. To lend this initiative some credibility, those under house arrest were freed, and some young demonstrators were pardoned. This momentum led to the proposal of a law on the right to freedom of association. But it ran up against the resistance of the FLN apparatus, which was anxious to block any weakening of its political monopoly on society. Chadli managed nevertheless to get this bill passed, after having given the deputies the necessary assurances.

The development of big student struggles in 1987-88 produced many forms of self-organization, capped by a national coordinating body, which was tolerated by the powers that be despite its declared intention of building a democratic and independent student union. As for the working class, it

the repression and torture. Journalists, who had been active for several months around their own demands, have reacted to the role they were forced to play during the events with the announcement that they are going to form an independent organization free of FLN tutelage.

Lawyers denounce farcical trials

On October 19, a meeting of the Presidents of the Bar of the Order of Algerian Lawyers denounced the farcical trials and demanded an independent judicial branch. On October 20, after Chadli had promised to punish any infringements of the law, the official Human Rights League formed a commission of inquiry into the attacks on human rights and the rights of legal defense.

The referendum announced for November 3 is a direct result of the popular uprising. But, apart from its symbolic value as a demonstration of how quickly the government can react to popular aspirations, its political content is far less than its pretensions. The constitutional changes proposed only concern the executive branch. The constitution drawn up to legitimize Boumedienne's power in 1976 had already been amended in the time of collective government in 1979. These amendments offered the head of state the possibility of appointing more than one vice-president, and made the designation of a prime minister—charged with assisting the president in his coordination of governmental action—obligatory.

The November 3 changes do not even raise the possibility of choosing vice-presidents, which had never actually been put into practice. On the other hand, the power of the prime minister is strengthened. Until now all ministers have been named by the president and have been responsible directly to him. The new text provides that the prime minister as a head of government "will engage in broad consultations and present the members of government he has chosen to the president of the republic who will appoint them". The government thus constituted would have to present its program to the National Assembly for approval. If the program is rejected by the National Assembly, the government must resign. But to ensure that the National Assembly does not abuse its new power, article 114-4 provides for its dissolution if it refuses a government's program twice in a row.

In this way, the prime minister and the National Assembly have been given greater powers. It is between them that the content of government action and of new laws will be decided. This will no longer be the sole prerogative of the president.

In view of this, the president would no longer be directly responsible for the daily management of the state, above the fray and perfectly capable of tossing the gov-

ernment to the lions of popular discontent. This arbiter's role is so reinforced that the draft states that the President "can resort directly to the people's will" through a referendum.

There are other aspects of these proposed constitutional changes that have received less press coverage, but which nevertheless could have a significant effect on the future. The president would symbolize the unity of the nation and no longer the unity of the party and the state. In the same way, his right to preside in all joint meetings of party organs and the state is no longer mentioned in the new text.

These amendments to the constitution taken together mean a redistribution of power that could have had a certain political importance in itself. But in the aftermath of a national uprising and its tragic consequences, it appears quite ridiculous and politically inappropriate. It in no way responds to the desire for democracy expressed by all layers of the population.

The true democratic opening brought about by the popular uprising is not this reform that will have no immediate concrete effects. It is taking shape more through the various general meetings taking place among all sections of society. Only recognition of the right to strike, to demonstrate, freedom of speech and organization, as well as the right to form independent trade unions, can fulfill this movement.

The only truly significant constitutional reform would be the abolition of a single party system, the dissolution of the rump National Assembly and the free election of a sovereign Constituent Assembly. In such a new Constituent Assembly, representatives democratically elected by the people and not by an illegitimate FLN Congress, would decide on the new forms of social and political organization in the country.

Once more, popular mobilizations are giving a dynamic impetus to the struggle for democratic demands in Algeria. But the bourgeoisie is still trying to coopt these popular democratic aspirations, by channeling them into the the tortuous process of reorganizing its power.

Internal power struggles in the FLN

In fact, the bulk of the political reforms promised by Chadli on October 10 must first go to the FLN's Congress in mid-December, before being submitted to a referendum. So, the reform project, which was a product of the uprising, will fall within the framework of the interbourgeois conflicts that are to be settled by the FLN Congress.

Up until January 16 1986, the date the "enriched" National Charter was adopted, internal power struggles were always settled by a compromise. An analysis of these struggles has been made quite difficult by the fragmentation of the Algerian bourgeoisie into a multitude of clans and

factions, constantly in flux, and usually based on apolitical factors like regionalism or clientelism. It has been especially hard because, despite well manipulated rumors, the ruling class has always tried to present a facade of unanimity, immediately closing ranks when faced with popular mobilizations. However, since the middle of the 70s, the question of the *infatih* has been the real dividing line determining the different factions. This was particularly clear after Boumedienne's death, with the two rival candidacies that cancelled each other out.

From 1980 on, *infatih* partisans have continued to gain support for the measured process of economic liberalization adjusted to suit the economic conjuncture and the relationship of socio-political forces. Despite the temporary slow-down due to the youth riots in Constantine and Setif in November 1986, this process later entered its quickest period of growth just afterwards, in connection with the collapse of the international petrochemical market. The sharp reduction in export revenues and the rise in foreign debt service payments allowed the government to justify the barely disguised privatization of agricultural lands and transforming state enterprises into independent concerns subject to bankruptcy.

Confusion in the ranks of the FLN

In September 1987, even before these bills had been passed in the National Assembly, the new organization of agriculture had been put into practice and the state enterprises had been prepared for independence. This vigorous push for the *infatih* came directly from the president's office, breaking with the consensus approach by going over the heads of the ministries, the party and the National Assembly. One section of the deputies protested against this cavalier treatment at the hands of the president, and the National Assembly was torn between those who wanted to accelerate the process, those who would support it as it was, and those who wanted to put on the brakes. However, after pressure had been applied to the most recalcitrant of the deputies, the economic reforms passed with only minor amendments.

Since the acceleration of the *infatih* process, the populist base of the FLN has been at a loss politically, and the Stalinist leadership of the PAGS has sought new allies in government to make up a resistance front. But Messaadia — who has been the leader of the FLN since the elimination of Yahyaoui, and who was supposed to represent the Boumedienist tendency — took the opportunity of the trade-union rally of May 1, 1988, to declare in front of his potential political base that the reforms were the product of unanimous decisions of the congresses and leadership bodies of the FLN and not of some isolated group.

Nonetheless, implementation of the economic reforms was at a standstill, and

Chadli used his public speech of September 19, 1988, to violently denounce those responsible, declaring that this process once started was irreversible. The FLN Congress planned for December 10 seems therefore intended to serve as the framework for the final legitimization of economic liberalization and its relaunch.

Paradoxically, the recent uprising which came about precisely as a result of austerity policies and the *infatih* (which even the IMF recognizes as more rigorous than its own reflation programs) has reinforced Chadli's position on the eve of the FLN Congress. The political reforms which he had envisioned but not yet dared to advance, such as the possibility of ending the requirement of an FLN membership card for candidates in local elections, now have every chance of being accepted as necessary evils. After the popular uprising, which has sounded the death knell for the FLN's legitimacy, such reforms are the least that can be conceded to popular hunger for democracy.

Bourgeois projects cannot solve social problems

Speaking to an official delegation of the Human Rights League, Chadli has just declared his desire to "promote a legal framework permitting any opinions whatsoever to be expressed in perfect freedom." Such a political project could only strengthen *infatih* partisans who will be able to take advantage of the coming political opening in order to support their economic reforms.

After having assured Chadli of its solidarity during the repression, international imperialism has clearly picked sides by reaffirming that only economic and political liberalism can save Algeria from the social torment that threatens the former's strategic interests in North Africa. But while extracting as many democratic rights as they can, the working class and popular masses must realize that after the utter failure of populism and its capitalist state project, the youth revolt just bloodily put down was the direct result of Chadli's *infatih* and its heightening of social contradictions.

Both bourgeois projects have shown their incapacity of resolving the most elementary social problems. And once beyond the phase of relaxing tensions, the Chadli regime does not have the means to resolve the basic problems of the socio-economic crisis into which he has plunged the country.

The continuation of his *infatih* process can only make social conflicts more and more explosive. The crystallization of a credible socialist alternative, based on the independence of the self-organization of the popular masses, is thus the only "realistic" perspective that revolutionaries can advance if they want to keep the bourgeoisie, in the interim, from using Islamic fundamentalists to divert the spontaneous revolt of Algerian youth. ★

Revolutionary movement in Salvador on the advance

ATTACKS ON THE ARMY by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) have been increasing in the last weeks. *Le Monde's* correspondent Bertrand de la Grange noted on October 19, "the revival of fighting in September and the heavy losses inflicted on the army prove that the guerrillas have been able to modify their strategy to compensate for smaller numbers." He quoted Salvadoran army colonel Zepeda as saying, "We have had to adapt to this new situation by reducing the size of battalions from 700 to 300. The hardest thing is to find the guerrillas." The FMLN also faces new political problems.

In the following interview with Michel Raguet and Arnold Berthu, René, the representative of the FMLN for the EEC countries, describes the current situation in the country.

WHAT ARE the most recent developments in the political situation in El Salvador?

Over the summer, there was a proliferation of strikes and demonstrations, and the level of repression went up a notch. For example, in a demonstration on September 13, four people were killed by the army, 115 were wounded and 350 arrested. At the same time, the regime is trying to restrict the number of international solidarity activists present to a minimum. Ten were expelled a short time ago, and, at the end of August, the leader of the Swiss solidarity committees was brutally murdered, after having been arrested and tortured by elements of the police force.

The death squads have stepped up their activity. On July 28, they murdered one of the leaders of the Bread, Land, Work and Freedom Movement (MPTTL), A. Orellana. For their part, the armed forces are being obliged to use 70 per cent of their troops for counterinsurgency operations, because the FMLN has managed to deal them some very severe blows.

Moreover, there are new organizational forms. For example, the MPTTL was created in June 1988. This movement takes charge of the most unifying vital demands. It clearly identifies the enemy, as well as the tasks to be accomplished, and operates in the mass movement as it exists. The MPTTL aims, therefore, to regroup the vanguard in the mass movement in or-

der to radicalize its objectives and its methods of struggle.

Trade-unionists may be at the same time members of their unions and members of the MPTTL. In a way, this is a return to organizational forms such as the Revolutionary People's Bloc, which although illegal operated openly and publicly. The MPTTL can call demonstrations involving thousands or tens of thousands of activists of various people's organizations (unions, cooperatives, and so on).

■ How have the Jesuits responded to the forming of the MPTTL?

They perceive it as a movement designed to provoke the regime, one that will make it difficult to achieve national consensus. The Jesuits want a third road, different from that of the regime, as well as from that of the FMLN and its allies. But there is no third road in El Salvador.

With the victory of ARENA [the rightist bourgeois party], the armed forces are going to play a larger role than under Duarte [the Christian Democratic president]. The political institutions have been partially stymied, because there is an ARENA majority in the National Assembly, while until the presidential elections the government will continue to be made up of Christian Democrats.

■ Have there been new initiatives to start a dialogue going?

In recent weeks, new initiatives have

been taken by the Catholic Church and the Jesuit university to relaunch a national discussion in favor of a dialogue. For its part, ARENA has tried to take another initiative, which it calls "Peace and Freedom," in the framework of the constitution and parliament. This is part of the oligarchy's efforts to gain a more acceptable image nationally and internationally. They have tried to get the parties that participated in the elections to agree on a proposal to make to the FDR-FMLN.

On our side, we have again proposed a platform for national dialogue. The mass organizations have begun to hold a series of forums on these three initiatives. On this level, ARENA's initiative has not struck any chord, especially since the two other parties in parliament, that is, Duarte's Christian Democratic Party and the National Conciliation Party, have refused to discuss with ARENA.

The Church's initiative has had more impact. About 50 mass organizations, institutions and even sections of the state apparatus have participated in it. But ARENA, the government and some Christian Democratic organizations have stayed out. The last mentioned have gone so far as to call the Church's initiative a cover for the FMLN's military maneuvers. It is important, nonetheless, to note that the oligarchy has had to declare itself in favor of dialogue. It can no longer limit itself to a military response.

■ What is the US's attitude to ARENA's victory?

The oligarchy could not survive without the support of the Americans. The military know that the Americans are not going to suspend their aid. They say, "They can't drop us, or else the Communists will take over." The problem is that ARENA is very discredited internationally.

This is why ARENA is trying now to clean up its image. It is putting forward Cristiani, its [new] chair, who does not have such a negative image as the sinister Major d'Aubuisson. Cristiani has just been invited to the United States. He is less repugnant to public opinion than d'Aubuisson, but still he has declared that his two political models are Pinochet and Thatcher.

ARENA wants to appear to be a "civilized right capable of engaging in dialogue in a constitutional framework." The United States would certainly prefer to discuss with Democratic Convergence, because it represents a more credible alternative both internationally and domestically. The problem is that the two main components of Democratic Convergence, the MNR and the MPSC, which includes the FDR, have already made declarations unacceptable to the United States.

■ Democratic Convergence has announced that it is going to participate in the March 1989 election. What is the

attitude of the FMLN going to be?

We have already said that we are going to boycott this election. We are not against elections in principle, but we are against this one. You have to understand what the alliance between the FMLN and the FDR means. The FMLN respects the autonomy of the FDR, which wants to take part in the elections in the framework of Democratic Convergence. Reciprocally, the FDR respects the FMLN's determination to continue the political-military struggle. There is no danger of a break. We are not going to part company over conjunctural questions. Elections come and go; the armed struggle continues.

It is a strength rather than we can operate both on the electoral and military level in El Salvador. The FDR leaders are going to try to unmask the counter-insurgency project in the elections, without denying the need for armed struggle. We, on the other hand, are going to say, "The electoral struggle suits the methods used by the FDR."

■ But in practice, the situation may be a bit more complicated. Up until now, the FDR has said that there was not enough democratic maneuvering room to take part in the elections, and it went on to say that that was why the military road was justified.

During the March 1988 elections, the situation seemed to change. The FMLN call for a boycott, the UNTS [the radical labor confederation] called for non-participation, while the FDR leaders said that it did not seem intelligent to boycott this election.

For the next elections, it is likely that the Socialist International and the international Christian Democracy are going to try to divide the FDR-FMLN alliance by saying: "Today, there is legal room for participating in the elections. So, it is necessary to get a truce, a cease-fire." In such a content, wouldn't the FMLN be in a difficult situation?

No. We have discussed the elections with the FDR allies and we have said that we understood their participation in the elections. Moreover, they have been able to accumulate strength since they managed to return to El Salvador at the end of 1987, thanks to the Esquipulas II accords.

The situation will not be difficult for us because we have accumulated strength on the political-military level. The situation has changed in El Salvador, and that involves different tactical responses, notably with respect to elections. For the 1982 elections, we called for a boycott and an insurrection. For the 1984 ones, we only resorted to sabotage. In March 1988, we sabotaged them completely by paralyzing urban traffic and preventing them from being held in the areas under our control.

The result was that the participation rate in 1988 was much lower than in 1984. The

March 1989 elections may mark a deepening of the crisis of capitalist domination, since our military position is stronger, the organization of the masses is advancing and the state institutions are in a profound crisis. So, we are gaining strength in the context of the FMLN-FDR alliance. There are social forces that we will never be able to lead as the FMLN. On the other hand, the FDR can. And a broader alliance may arise, for example, in the framework of Democratic Convergence.

■ Can you explain concretely how you will respond to pressures that might be brought to bear by the Socialist International and a part of the international Christian Democracy aimed at dividing the FDR and the FMLN?

I don't deny that there are international pressures, but we are certain of our allies. We have already faced political-diplomatic problems, and we have overcome them together.

To use a simple formula, we say: "We have won the war." Now the problem is to forge the victory. To do that, we have to be very intelligent. We have to be able to see clearly the evolution of the various social forces, and determine what alliances are necessary with a great flexibility. At one point in the 1980s, we were isolated, and in danger of being destroyed. We overcame that situation by achieving the FDR-FMLN alliance and consolidating the unity of the revolutionists, of the vanguard, and by rebuilding links with the masses. At the same time, the mass movement, which had been dismantled, was recomposed.

Now we are able to take initiatives affecting the relationship of social forces. This explains why the FDR leaders have been able to return to El Salvador without being assassinated, although of course the threat remains.

■ To achieve the seizure of power, the FMLN has adopted a strategic project that combines a military offensive and a mass uprising. The problem is that the masses have drawn the lessons of the 1980-81 experiences. When they were rising up, the FMLN was not yet in a position to deal decisive blows to the dictatorship's army. Now the masses are waiting for the FMLN to demonstrate its capacity to inflict decisive blows. The masses want to be sure that if they go into the streets, they will not be subjected to a new massacre.

For the FMLN, the problem is to set the date for a final offensive without knowing whether the masses are going to follow. Isn't the problem then knowing what spark can light the fuse to the powder barrel?

That's right. The problem is, in the context in which the relationship of forces is evolving favorably, knowing how to choose the decisive moment. ★

Pravda writer fences with Lithuanian movement

A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT of the late summer and the fall in the USSR is the emergence of mass movements in the Baltic republics independent of the Communist Party. The following article from *Pravda* of October 26 indicates a tactical approach toward the Lithuanian *Sajudis* ["movement"]. It acknowledges in a backhanded way a shift in the Soviet authorities' approach to this movement.

While using the Stalinist method of innuendo against unnamed political villains, it tries to accuse them of Stalinism. Although "street democracy" was denounced in *Pravda* as the capital sin of the Armenian movement, it is described here as something that has played a useful role but now must be superceded.

D SHNYUKAS

8 **W**HAT SORT of movement is this *Sajudis*, whose founding congress was held over the recent holidays in Vilnius? How does it fit into the public structures of Lithuania. What is its social base? What is its response to *perestroika*? Naturally, there are



questions because the process of *perestroika* is bound up with the most unusual public and social situations and phenomena. This is especially so since we have not yet encountered such massive movements as the People's Fronts in Latvia and Estonia and *Sajudis* in Lithuania. For that reason, the evaluations have so far been very cautious....

Regional self-financing discussed at congress

And so the congress of *Sajudis*. Its agenda included considering the essential tasks of *perestroika* in the [Lithuanian] republic, adopting statutes and programs and the elections to the parliament and its executive. The leadership of the movement will not be fixed. That was the general structure of the congress's work. What was the content? Needless to say, it was not uniform.

In the first place, it should be said that the congress was very instructive for party, soviet and economic workers, both in the broad range of problems that were discussed and in the bold, frank and sharp posing of questions....

The congress discussed and proposed amendments to such important documents as the recently published project for economic independence of the republic. Scholars from the Academy of Sciences of the Lithuanian SSR presented a new draft constitution for the Lithuanian SSR. It was noted that the idea of regional self-financing is finding more and more supporters. The economy of the republic needs renovation, prosperity will come by way of local initiative, not through commands. What is accomplished in each region will assure the reflation of the country's entire

economy.

Self-financing on the republic level, independence in allotting resources, including currency, will offer a real possibility for entering into direct trade, cultural, scholarly and sporting relations with foreign countries. At the same time, it will make it possible to unburden the central authorities and organizations and overcome bureaucratism and abuses. It will make it possible to make the status of the republics, including Lithuania, more real.

A very lively discussion, even a dispute, was aroused by *Sajudis*' program on national relations and the status of the Lithuanian language. *Sajudis* proposes (this is written into the new draft constitution of the Lithuanian SSR) to make Lithuanian the language of government, while creating conditions for the development of the languages of other nationalities living in the republic and of Russian as the language of communication among the nationalities.

As the first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, A. Brazauskas, declared at the congress, the renaissance of Lithuanian national feeling gives no grounds for fear to representatives of other nationalities....

"Social justice and reasonable migration"

The question of "citizenship" of the Lithuanian SSR was raised by considerations of social justice and reasonable migration. It is no secret that there are in the country many "wanderers," who only migrate to places where they scent quick advantage. The lack of attachment to the history and culture of a given region has deprived them of many features of morality and patriotism.

Sajudis is the initiator of quite a lot of

serious work on questions of ecology and health....

The congress devoted considerable attention to the fate and restoration of the dignity and material position of former prisoners and internal exiles in the period of the cult of the personality....

The congress noted another development—the return to public life in the republic of the church and believers....

The bulk of the speakers were people respected in the republic, who spoke purposefully, concretely and offered constructive proposals....

Whipping up "vulgar nationalism"

However, there was another sort of speaker and another sort of audience, the guests or the "gallery." It was not hard to see that among them feelings prevailed over reason, irresponsibility over sense. ...

There were speakers of an extremist character, thrusting ideas of separatism and national isolation on the congress and "forgetting" the concept of socialism, among others. It was reassuring that the delegates were able to separate the wheat from the chaff....

In their enthusiasm, its [Sajudis'] members do not always realize whether their demands are realistic or not. Making great demands on the administrative apparatus, some of them have not raised a finger for *perestroika*. On the other hand, some simply want to settle old scores.... Many of these masters of opportunism and adaptation, denounce the "theory and practice of Stalinism" in words, not realizing that they remain in its grip; they do not tolerate criticism.... It is considered that people of this sort, of whatever nationality they may be, are not loath to whip up vulgar nationalism, to resort to distributing provocative leaflets and so on, which go outside the law.

Participants in the movement often complain that party organs do little to help them. But two first secretaries of regional committees spoke at the congress, and the "gallery" received them with obvious coolness. And there were those who, forgetting the elementary rules of discussion, jumped up and shouted.

"Street democracy" was timely and useful for the advance of *perestroika*. But in the future, when the program is clearly defined and painstaking daily work begins, it can offer a very poor service. The elected leadership should think about that.

There is no reason to hide the fact that up until now, relations between the central and local leaderships and Sajudis have been strained....

Today, when the leadership of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian CC has been renewed and the movement has achieved legal status, with a democratically elected leadership, misunderstanding will doubtless disappear. In fact, Sajudis has proclaimed that its goals are the same.... ★

Nicaragua needs urgent aid

JUST OVER TWO weeks after Hurricane Joan ravaged the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, decimating the town of Bluefields among others and leaving at least 116 dead, the embattled country is still trying to salvage what little remains after such a large-scale natural disaster.

ELIZABETH MILLER

MANY Nicaraguan leaders have said that the destruction is worse than that wrought by the earthquake of 1972, which obliterated most of Managua, the capital. In this second emergency 300,000 people, or one-tenth of the population, were affected or left homeless after winds measuring over 290 km/hr tore through Bluefields, the major city of the more isolated Atlantic coast region, and continued on through across the country.

Almost worse than the leveling of people's homes is the fact that large parts of most staple crops were lost, as well as the crucial export crops such as coffee, which are Nicaragua's sole source of export revenue. International solidarity began trickling in as soon as the winds had fallen enough to permit safe travel, as planes from Mexico and Cuba loaded with food and medical supplies landed at Managua Airport.

Supplies followed from government ministries and international aid organizations in Western Europe. The West German religious group Caritas is giving \$280,000 and the "Swedish Friendship" group is sending \$70,000. Even the Tory government in Britain has responded, although their contribution of \$17,000 is a paltry sum. Conspicuous by its absence — although this is hardly surprising — is the name of the United States. In fact, while the National Emergency Committee was working through the nights leading up to the hurricane on organizing relief efforts, evacuations, and setting up shelters, the US government sententiously declared that it was "warning" Nicaragua to abide by the "democratization measures contained in the Esquipulas Accords." If not, "the Congress could approve new military aid to the contras."

Two days after the hurricane had passed, leaving mayhem in its wake, the United States augmented this statement by not only refusing aid, which it said "could be used against the contras," but forbidding the entry onto US soil of any Nicaraguan diplomat or government official. This is an action that makes access to multilateral organizations that could help the country nearly impossible.

The Voice of America radio station has also thrown doubts upon how international aid will be used in an effort to block such solidarity efforts, especially on the part of the so-called free world.

Nevertheless, all of the closest American allies, not excepting Britain, have managed to detail supplies or money to Nicaragua. On October 25, the United Nations passed a motion with only two voices against (predictably, those of the United States and Israel) calling for the United States to immediately abide by the ruling of the World Court at the Hague on June 27, 1986, which declared that the US-backed war against Nicaragua was illegal and required damages to be paid to the Nicaraguan government. In all, 99 countries voted for the motion, and Western Europe abstained.

Just before the storm, President Daniel Ortega had announced that despite the safety precautions still being taken in the country, between October 17-20 the contras had killed five civilians and wounded five more, including one sick child in an ambulance. And, interrupted only by the hurricane, Honduran troops had been mounting harassment operations against the Nicaraguan soldiers stationed at the borders of the two countries on October 19, 20, 22, and 23.

Hurricane Joan left nothing untouched, and the project of reconstruction requires international solidarity on an unprecedented scale. The Nicaraguan government has sent out preliminary lists of the food, medical and construction supplies it estimates will suffice at minimum for 300,000 people for one month. This and other information should be available via national or local Nicaragua solidarity committees, or at the Nicaraguan consulate or embassy nearest you.

We urge every one of our readers to get involved in solidarity work for Nicaragua, a revolution under siege from many directions. ★

From *perestroika* to the People's Front

**INTERVIEW WITH
BORIS
KAGARLITSKI**

LEADER of the Socialist Initiatives Club in Moscow and one of those responsible for the samizdat publication *Levy Povorot* ("Left Turn"), Boris Kagarlitski was one of the founders of the grouping of informal associations that gave rise last year to the Federation of Socialist Clubs. The platform of this organization was published in *International Viewpoint* 129, November 9, 1987. Today, it is giving impetus to the formation of a Russian "People's Front."

Kagarlitski, a sociologist of art, has published many articles and his book, *The Thinking Reed*, has just been published in English. At the end of the Brezhnev period, he already led circles of Marxist students and a clandestine publication. For this activity he got 11 months in prison.

One of the interesting aspects of the interview is that it grapples with the national question in the USSR, which is new for Russian dissidents, but Kagarlitski has clearly not yet systematized his views on this subject.

Kagarlitski was interviewed in September in Moscow for *International Viewpoint* by Sasha Petrov. The second part, on the Russian People's Front, will be published in our next issue.

IN YOUR opinion, is there a "Gorbachev project," and if so, what is its social base?

There are two different questions here, which are linked in certain respects. I think that the most dangerous aspect of the *perestroika* is that there has never been a project underlying it. First of all, Gorbachev himself explained once or twice at the beginning of his reign two years ago that he would not have imagined himself capable of advocating certain ideas. For him this was unimaginable at the time. It is clear, therefore, there was no project, and that is the big difference between *perestroika* and, for example, the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia.

The difference is not one of the level of radicalization, because sometimes *perestroika* goes as far as the Prague Spring. Doubtless there is not the same freedom, but we are having the same debates over democratic forms, and there are also many similarities in the way anti-Stalinist criticism has been organized.

However, from the outset the Prague Spring had a sort of project. You can say that it was reformist, we can criticize it — we have to criticize it, because it had failings — but in any case, there was a project

that was well prepared, not just by intellectuals but also by the technocratic liberal wing of the party. There was a sort of radical version of this project outside the party. In this sense, the Prague Spring was intellectually better organized.

The compromises between factions in the Soviet Union are, therefore, substitutes for a real project. The bureaucrats' resistance is real, but the project is not. So, the body of compromises that are substituting for a project are giving rise to impracticable laws, such as that of financial autonomy. It has contradictory sections, and this makes it impossible for the enterprises to apply it. They turn to the ministers for help, but the different ministers give different explanations. So, this is an initial difference from the Prague Spring.

The second difference is that the technocracy itself is not homogeneous in the Soviet Union, whereas it was in Czechoslovakia. This is one of the reasons why there is no project, because the technocracy cannot consolidate itself.

The elite of the technocracy is more coherent, but it is not strong enough to impose its own project. It finds itself compromising with the traditional conservative Stalinist bureaucracy. And in order

to counterbalance the conservatives' strength, it makes a certain appeal for popular support, for that of the intellectuals, which is at the origin of *glasnost*.

■ Do you think that they are also seeking the support of at least a part of the working class, the skilled part?

In theory, yes, but in practice, no. This is the reform's contradiction, because you do not have a project but just proposals. Some proposals can be more to the left than others, but they can be combined. For example, one expert may be technocratic, but others may be a bit further left. They make their own proposals, and sometimes they get accepted. The same goes for the language, the ideology. In short, it is very heterogeneous.

It is very significant that workerism has practically disappeared from the official ideology. In reality, it is the left that can, and must, be able to address itself most effectively to the skilled workers. Quite simply, the unskilled workers are less active politically, less prepared to take part in politics. This is the essential test for the Russian People's Front. If it cannot base itself on workers' initiative, it will be a grouping without a social base.

Ligachev referred angrily in his speech in Gorki this summer to the wave of strikes throughout the Soviet Union, not just in Armenia. And in this way, he revealed that the working class is becoming dangerous for people like him. This was an important source of information.

However, the level of activity of the working class must not be exaggerated. Unfortunately, it is not very active. I would say simply that there is a certain radicalizing trend.

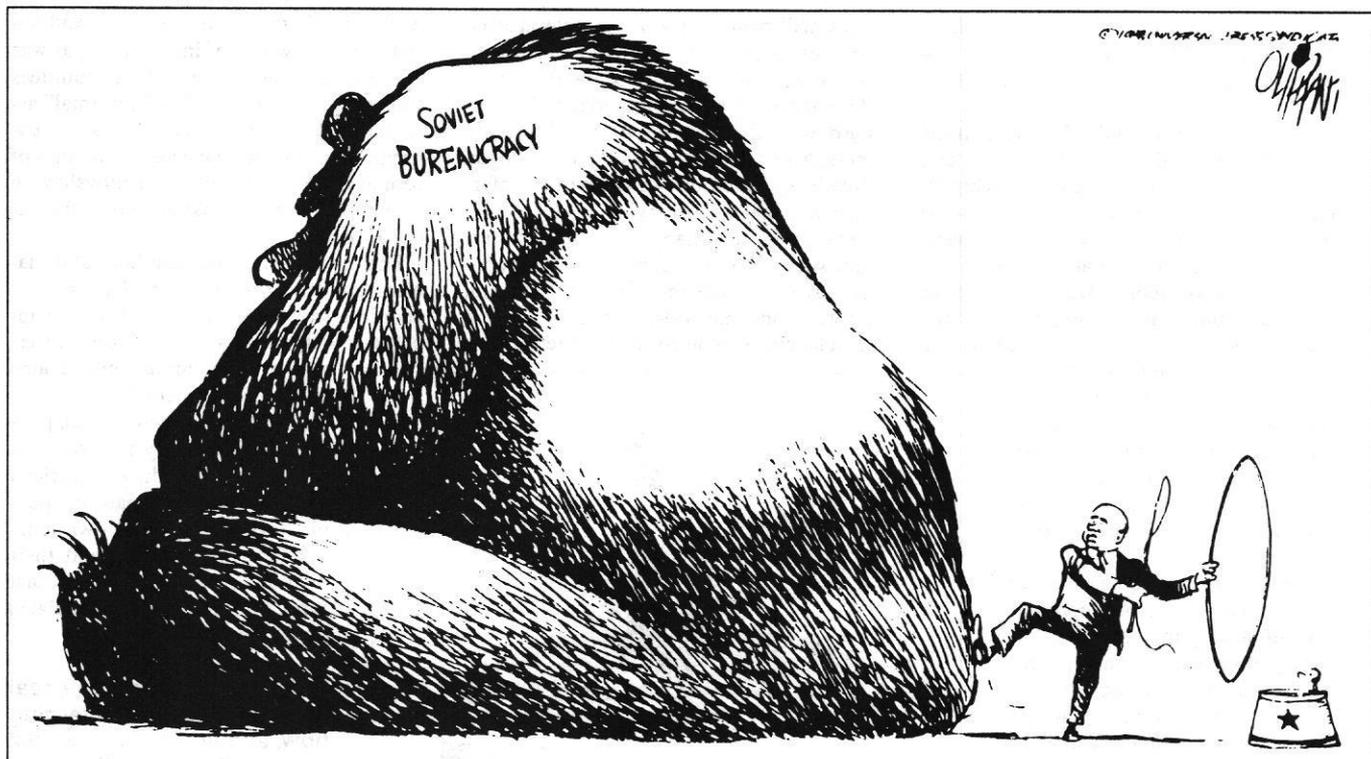
■ To conclude this point, you say that there is no coherent *perestroika* project. Are there at least different interpretations that can be distinguished?

Yes, you can say that there is a bureaucratic *perestroika*, which would not change the old system very much. There is a technocratic *perestroika*, which seeks to replace the old privileges of office with those of money. And there is a democratic *perestroika* focused on expressing aspirations from below, hence the importance of a real *glasnost*.

■ Can you clarify the present scope of *glasnost*?

The bureaucracy sometimes sets limits, and on other occasions it lets things take their course. This is very complicated and contradictory.

On the one hand, you might wonder what



the difference is between *glasnost* and ordinary freedom of the press. For example, you don't say that the publication of some article in *Le Monde* would open a new chapter in the history of freedom of the press in France, because even though this may be a more or less limited freedom, the level of freedom of the press is always about the same in a society such as the French one.

Le Figaro, *L'Humanite* and *Inprecor* regularly express their own points of view about what happens. Here we have quite a different situation. Discussion is mainly about the past, which is less dangerous and allows people to agree on many points, while there is no consensus on more timely subjects. For example, in the party, even the Ligachev faction is against Stalinism. So, criticizing Stalin is becoming a point of consensus.

On the other hand, the "leaders of public opinion" and the press organs that are the standard-bearers of *glasnost*, such as *Moscow News*, *Ogonyek*, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and so on are obsessed with the idea that they could be stopped, because there is no constitutional guarantee. So, they want to say as much as possible as quickly as possible. And this is very destabilizing.

At the same time, they want to be the first to say what was not said 20 years ago [in the period of the Khrushchev thaw], because there is also a generational problem. The generation of the 1960s is coming to power today and finds itself confronting public opinion. So, they want to say as much as possible about history.

However, there is no real criticism today of the present administration's decisions. The decision-making process and today's political figures cannot be questioned, unless such leaders have already been re-

moved from their posts! So, all this is only discussed negatively. For example, when you say that the preceding administration was wrong, that implies that the present one is right. Of course, it is possible to criticize the structures, and such criticisms are very different from those of the Khrushchev period, when people criticized only actions and not structures.

However, the main schema is the same. *Glasnost* remains altogether circumscribed. Inasmuch as there is no constitutional guarantee, no free discussion about present day problems, the only way to keep moving forward, to take new steps in *glasnost*, is to continually publish sensational new material about the past. Once this is published, once it is in black and white, that is a concrete result. That is the only guarantee of *glasnost*, because if this stops, it will disappear. There will no longer be anything to discuss.

A final point on the group that controls the media, the liberal media, the "heros" of liberal public opinion. Their political limitations are not those that the bureaucracy imposes on them from the outside but those that derive from their own political positions. They want to reform the party's history, and write a new one.

However, they remain totally imbued with the official conception of the party's history. This is why they always need a bogymen, such as Trotsky. This conception of history needs a negative hero. The presence of such a figure makes it possible to avoid discussing in class terms, to avoid turning to the real history, to avoid a free discussion of about the platforms or alternatives possible.

Conversely, they also need positive heroes, without any negative aspects. For example, today, you cannot criticize Buk-

harin or Khrushchev. *Moscow News* and the *Book Review* have been conducting a campaign in defense of Solzhenitsyn. It has been said that he is a solid person and a patriot. Not a word of criticism has been said about him, either as a writer or a political figure. Not a word about his anti-socialism, his anti-democratic statements. Nor has there been any mention of his problems in the West, because he was so anti-democratic that he has had problems with the Western democracies.

Why is this? Why defend Solzhenitsyn, when Trotsky remains so dangerous? Because the differences between the liberals and Solzhenitsyn are no so great as those between them and the left. Because Solzhenitsyn is anti-democratic, and so are the technocratic elite! They want the technocratic elite and probably a few people of intermediate status to make decisions, but they don't want the masses to take part in this. They want a liberal state, but not a democratic one. There are also socialists and anti-socialists, but the liberals are very important in public opinion, and in their private conversations they are also very anti-socialist. So, the real differences are not so great.

On the other hand, if you take Trotsky, for example, you can see that he is really a dangerous person for the liberals. They portray him as a sort of anti-market fanatic, a partisan of militarized labor, which is false. If you look at his real ideas, you see that he was favorable to political pluralism, to a realistic utilization of the market in the context of new socialist priorities — all ideas that are very different from those of the new market-economy school.

There is a heritage there that the left can use to criticize the technocratic liberal tendencies. Thus the left's ideas are more dan-

gerous for them than those of the right. There is a good bit of hypocrisy in the liberals' campaign for rehabilitations, justice and so on.

A typical example of this hypocrisy is the Novocherkassk affair, where there was a strike against the price reform in Khrushchev's time. He sent in troops and some people were killed. Today we are witnessing a campaign for rehabilitation of the Novocherkassk victims. But, up until now, no liberal publication has produced any material on this subject. Our slogan is that these victims have to be rehabilitated to prevent any repetition of these events. But such a campaign does not seem to be very much "in fashion," because it could damage Khrushchev's image, when he has to remain a positive hero.

The liberals have at least to say openly that they do not represent the whole of public opinion, but only part of it. They have to recognize that there are various tendencies, not just bad Stalinist tendencies, but also left ones to which they do not want to open their pages. They have at least to say that they exist, and most of the liberal publishers are not prepared to do that. They are trying quite simply to get people to believe that they are the only representatives of public opinion. They are trying to select material, to control it for their own objectives.

In the long run, I think, this censorship is going to rebound against them. If the conservatives waged any sort of counteroffensive, the left could be less disposed to defend the leaders of liberal public opinion who did not defend them when they found themselves in the same situation. Having said that, I think that we on the left will be more generous and fraternal than they.

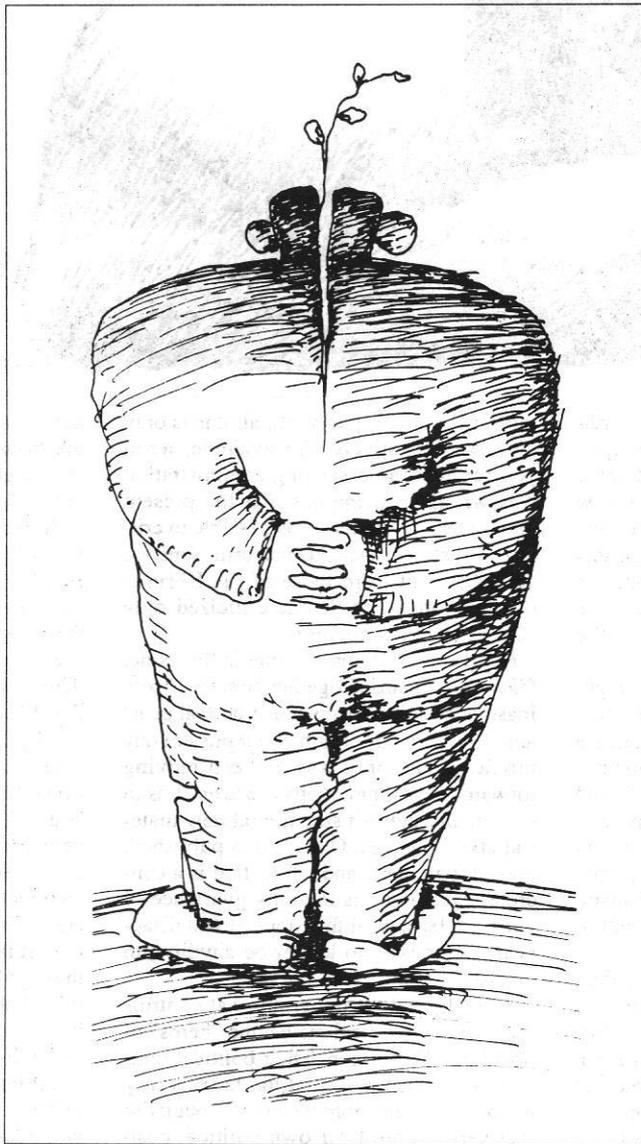
■ You talk about the possibility of a counteroffensive. Can we come back precisely to the situation at the time of the June party congress and the perestroika process in the present period? Is it possible to characterize different periods within a larger process?

Yes. This is not a revolutionary process. It is still only a normal evolutionary process of the society. It is not a reform, because a reform would mean that a project was being applied step by step. And, as I just said, here instead of carrying out changes the gradualists are taking a step forward, two steps backward and then three or five forward.

If more criticisms are heard, if the crisis situation worsens, a faction of the bureau-

cracy will necessarily try to save at least some of its gains. It will make deals with the conservatives at the expense of the people to try to organize a forced march backward with a slogan along the lines of "perestroika equals excess." Such a slogan already appeared during the party conference, and that was worrying.

Everything that happened at the conference shows that the apparatus is quite conservative and ready to defend itself with all the traditional methods, such as the vetting of delegates or control of the media. The



liberals have sometimes been hypocritical about their activities in the apparatus at the local level, but sometimes correct in their criticisms. Some liberals, such as Yuri Afanasiev — who talks about Trotsky and political pluralism — are honest and go further to the left than others.

So, on the one hand, there was the whole mechanism of the apparatus, with elections to salvage the bureaucracy's interests, with more or less silent liberals, who are also more or less ready to make compromises with the officials. And on the other there was the people's movement, which was

really visible for the first time — and not just as a "left wing" of intellectuals, as was the case last year, or the clubs, committees and groups (all the so-called "informal" associations) that only included a narrow fringe. This time we have seen thousands of people go into the streets in Kuibyshev, in Omsk, Yagorsk, Astrakhan and in the national republics.

There has been a situation both of destabilization and polarization. This sort of people's movement from below is supposed to help the liberals fight the conservative bureaucrats, but it also frightens the liberals.

After years of *perestroika*, people have suddenly realized that even while defending the official *perestroika*'s proposals, the people have to have their own independent organization and their own independent movement that is not controlled and manipulated by the liberals at the top.

■ Let's talk about the real movement that is emerging now, and first of all about the broad radicalization that is developing around the national question. How do you characterize the movements that are underway and their impact?

The Estonian People's Front, as well as the Karabakh Committee in Armenia, were very much linked to the local liberal reformists, or even to the bureaucratic elites — especially to the national bureaucratic tendencies that wanted to maintain the power they had previously by becoming more independent from Moscow. But to organize such movements, they necessarily had to make concessions to people more radical than themselves, and finally this led to a sort of national democratic movement, both in the Baltic republics and in Armenia.

■ Can these movements be put on the same level?

Yes, because the mechanisms are very similar in the various republics, and it is striking to see that all the national democratic fronts, all the national democratic

movements, have almost the same documents, when often they could not have had any prior consultation. Their demands are very similar. Of course, the Karabakh Committee was different from the Estonian People's Front, because in Estonia it did not develop in a crisis situation. It simply took up the national traditions and the national symbols, such as the national flag.

■ The fronts in the Baltic republics seem for the moment less in conflict with the official evolution than the committee in Karabakh?

Yes. But in any case the problem is more difficult in Armenia than in Estonia. Of course, the Estonians have a lot of national problems, problems sometimes that even the Armenians do not have. For example, they are in danger of being assimilated into the Russian republic, which is not the case of the Armenians. But at the same time, the Armenians have the genocide syndrome, and they have a real conflict with the neighboring republics, which the Estonians do not have. The Armenian workers, therefore, needed greater support to deal with a graver conflict.

The first group of Karabakh leaders — Zori Balayan, Silva Kapoutikian, and Muradian — were all people belonging to the elite, who had very good relations with the official bureaucracy. They controlled the movement at the beginning, but when the movement became popular in character, with the first strikes and the distinctive features of the workers' movement, all these figures finally lost their positions in the Karabakh Committee, and some of this first generation of leaders were even expelled. The Karabakh Committee kept its links with the bureaucracy, but at a lower level. It became sort of a national democratic movement.

The essential problem for the bureaucracy is that the main support for the Karabakh Committee comes from the working class, which transforms the nature of this movement. Its main bastions are the factories, its real main forces come from the workers who can organize strikes. This populist movement is, therefore, changing into a social one, a movement of the working class.

However, we should not be overly optimistic, because the populist component and the nationalist component still exist. I only want to say that there has been a change.

■ In the course of this change, have workers' self-organization structures appeared?

No. This has only been a change toward a working-class radicalism — not toward a working-class ideology — within the existing structures of the Karabakh Committee. This has not produced a new independent organization of the Karabakh Committee. I think that this is quite correct, because to make the Karabakh Committee into something else today just to establish an independent organization of the working class would be completely idiotic. The Armenians want a broader front, and in this broad front the working-class component is growing.

■ Is there formal organization in this front?

No. Too much should not be expected of a country that has no experience of independent organization, not just in recent years but for centuries. So, I think that in Karabakh they have managed to do everything that it was possible to accomplish.

But now there is another danger. In fact,

if they fail to bring any improvement, to get at least some changes in the official policy toward Karabakh, this is finally going to reinforce the extremist tendencies that are also present in this mass cocktail. This is what happened with the Crimean Tartars' movement, where Tatar fundamentalist tendencies developed. The moderate intellectuals try to keep clear of this movement as far as they can.

■ What do you mean by "Tatar fundamentalists"?

Not the Tatar party but the Crimean Islamic fundamentalists.

■ What are their demands?

They want to return to their lands. They reject cultural autonomy, and proclaim that all those demanding cultural autonomy are traitors, enemies of the Tartar people and should be killed. I know a Crimean Tatar activist who was condemned to death. He was not executed, but he was condemned to death by the fundamentalists simply because he supported cultural autonomy for the Tatars in Ukraine. The fundamentalists claim that he betrayed their idea of basic autonomy, that he was a supporter of Austro-Marxism and not a very good Muslim. This is why he had to be killed, but he fled to Moscow.

I would like to stress that there is a growing danger of extremism, which is on the rise in these populist movements. It is not the people, but rather the technocratic and bureaucratic leaders and functionaries unable or unwilling to make any concessions who are strengthening the extremists in the movement.

■ Have the left groups, in particular in Moscow, discussed these movements and taken positions on them?

What is interesting is that Vitali Ponomarev, editor of *Left Turn*, went to Armenia with some issues of his journal and asked them what they knew about the Moscow samizdat publications. They Armenians replied, "We know Grigoriant's." They saw him as the only person who had published all their documents without any falsification, and they were very favorable to him.

In fact, Grigoriant has not published the documents he considered pro-Communist. But only Grigoriant, who is Armenian and prepared to take advantage of his national origin, was known. Ponomarev showed them issue 8 of *Left Turn*, which was devoted to the Armenian question, and asked them if there was any falsifications of documents or the facts. The Armenians told him, "No, it's fine."

■ What sort of material did you show them?

Documents from the Karabakh Committee, from the Academy of Science, histories of the Karabakh movement and so on. The Armenians (I am talking about the Karabakh Committee, which is now ready to work with them) were sorry that they

had not known about all that before and now want to work with the organizing committee of the People's Front (in Moscow) and with *Left Turn*.

For example, one of the problems facing the national movement and the left is that they have no information about each other. We are now involved in a concerted effort to develop exchanges of information among the various movements and see if there are common objectives.

■ Can you give some information about the fronts in the Baltic republics today and on the demands that have been formulated there?

First of all, they want a kind of economic semi-independence. This can be summed up by the formula: "We get less from the Union than we give to it; so we must limit our contribution to the Union budget," and so on. In principle, this is not necessarily a good thing, but it is understandable, especially for people who had their own state 50 years ago. They want a sort of equal contribution to the Union budget from all the republics, but concretely what they are interested in is limiting their own contribution.

Secondly, they want decision-making power over their own citizens, their own territory. For example, they want people to do their military service in their own republic, people sentenced to prison terms to serve them there, and so on. They also have several demands about the restrictions, on use of the national language or concerning national traditions and symbols, such as the long-banned flag of independent Estonia. In Brezhnev's time, you could be sentenced to prison just for possessing this flag. Today, it is officially recognized as the second flag of the republic.

The Estonians also want to cut down the number of people moving to Estonia from other regions. They want to establish some sort of mechanism to defend themselves against that, not by preventing people from settling in the country but by establishing Estonian language examinations for all those who want to settle or work there.

However, Estonian is one of the hardest languages in Europe. That makes it almost impossible for those who want to settle in Estonia to find work, this being dependent on knowing the language. Moreover, a part of the young Russians already in the country have to leave the country or learn the language, since this system has already been more or less accepted by the officials.

In fact, all this is not very democratic. From the standpoint of socialists, or even of Western democrats, this can seem a bit nationalistic, if you make parallels with the problem of immigrant workers in France. But you have also to look at the other side of the coin. France has a national state, a strong economy and is one of the dominant capitalist countries. That is one thing. The situation of the Estonians, to whom Stalin denied the right to have an independent state, is something else.

Many colonists were sent to assimilate the Estonian nation, in a way against their will. So, they have always been exploited by the less developed parts of the country. Their contribution to the budget has been poorly used. They might have been able to say, "Yes, we are paying too much, but this has made it possible to develop Uzbekistan or Azerbaidzhan." But Azerbaidzhan's situation has worsened over the last ten years.

■ **But why don't they formulate a demand like "control over what these resources are used for"?**

No, they want to keep their resources for themselves! I don't agree with these demands. I think that in the long term they are very limited and reflect national egoism. But you have to understand them, and this is why we support the Estonian movement on certain aspects of its program — because the Estonians have the right to self-determination — without necessarily supporting the movement itself.

This is not a homogeneous class movement but a populist one, with a bureaucratic nationalist component. We have to work with this movement, help it to become more democratic, help the democratic elements to become more conscious, to establish their identity and probably to turn the movement toward the left, toward more social, more socialist demands, as has already happened in Armenia.

■ **To turn to another subject, it seems that Pamyat, although it is very "Great Russian" nationalist, is also trying to address itself to these nationalist movements.**

Pamyat does not need a political program. Saying "kill the Jews" is intended for their specific audience. It does need an ideology, an ideology distinguishing its activists from simple fascists, without however forcing them to give up their more fascist practices and ideological tendencies.

They have to say, "We are not fascists," but the most simplistic way to express this is to say, "We are not Germans, therefore we are not fascists." On the other hand, they have to use fascist democracy in their daily practice. This is very similar to Le Pen in France. Le Pen does not proclaim himself a fascist, and if anyone calls him that, he protests. So, Pamyat has its reasons for arguing that it is not fascist. But its importance should not be exaggerated.

Pamyat is supported by its bureaucratic sympathizers, especially at the level of the local apparatus, but not in the Central Committee, except perhaps partially in Leningrad. If this support did not exist, this group would be less dangerous and less active. For example, from August last year until July this year it kept a low profile everywhere. It was only present when the left raised its head. Pamyat was restructuring itself, preparing for a new counteroffensive, and it seems that they had astonishing links with some official structures.

Now their network has been completed.

They are reappearing, but the situation has become more complicated for them. People understand that most of their slogans are nothing but pure demagoguery, that they offer nothing concrete.

However, if the crisis develops further, if a sort of new reactionary bloc arises, some people may think of using Pamyat or some of its elements. For example, in Kazakhstan, problems have broken out between Kazakhs and the police, as well as squads of Russian colonists organized by the police. These squads have been far more violent toward the local students than the police themselves.

Having said this, the student rebellion in Kazakhstan itself was very violent. It seems, therefore, that in this case the Kazakh fascists, the Kazakh extremists, Kazakh nationalism, was in conflict with Russian nationalism, both sides being intolerant and cruel.¹ But imagine the situation if such squads were formed against the Estonians, the Lithuanians, the Jews or the Armenians, not necessarily in the republics but in the border areas. In that event, the Pamyat activists can be mobilized for political objectives by forces outside Pamyat. And that can only be very dangerous.

■ **Are you thinking about bureaucratic forces?**

Yes. I think that they are encouraging Pamyat in their own interest, especially in Leningrad, with the aim of countering a growing left. This probably serves to promote clashes and incidents between the two tendencies, which can later operate to destroy both of them.

In the Moscow apparatus, a good number of people are unhappy with Pamyat, while it is trying to be more moderate and not provoke repression.

■ **I have often heard an analysis of Pamyat by intellectuals, even on the left, that the reason for its existence is that there is not only a national question of the other nationalities but also a Russian question. Do you agree with such a formulation?**

I do agree with it, because this question has in fact always existed. At the moment, I am reading Klyuchevski, one of the main historians of the nineteenth century. It shows how the Russians were always exploited by the empire, more than any other region of the country.

Stalin himself also behaved worse toward the Russians than toward any other nationality, except for certain Islamic peoples or German exiles. Overall, the Stalin regime was worse for the Russians than for many other peoples.

■ **In what sense?**

Because more Russians were killed. The collectivization was more horrible than in any other region of the country. The Russians have never gained any real privilege from being the dominant nation of the empire, either under the Czarist regime or that

of Stalin, nor under Brezhnev. Russia is a nation that has never had privileges.

■ **But there has been Russification of the other nations.**

Yes, but what has happened? For example, the Russians who go to settle in Kazakhstan are sent there to Russify the country. But at the same time, all the good jobs, even in the nomenklatura, are reserved for Kazakhs and the Russians cannot have access to them. Many Russians have gone to Estonia, for example, but all as unskilled workers, and their average wages are lower than those of the natives. There is a Russification tendency. But the Russians were discriminated against in the very republics that they Russified.

■ **It has been said that even if formally the important posts were for representatives of the local populations, the real power was in the hands of the Russians.**

No, that is not true. Many natives belong to pro-Moscow groups. In Estonia there are problems between the real natives and the Estonians coming from Russia, while the Russians, in a way, are out of the game. Some Estonians are not able to speak the language correctly, but they still hold key posts.

The Russians in the national republics are both subjects of domination and objects of discrimination, this is dialectical. I am not talking about the bureaucrats but about the many Russian workers who have settled in these regions.

You cannot compare the position of the Russians as the dominant nation in their empire in the nineteenth century, and the position of the Russians as the dominant nation in Soviet Russia, with that of the English or French in their empires. The difference is enormous.

Take the standpoint of Klyuchevski. He considered the Russians the victims of this empire. The stronger the state was, the weaker were the people. That is where the Russian national question arises. But Pamyat's solutions are not serious. Just saying "kill the Jews," or "Russians first," or "there is a Masonic conspiracy" is a sort of fictitious response to the problem.

In order to make the Russians more prosperous, more democracy is needed, more rights, social change. I don't think that the Russians are interested by this nationalist demagoguery. Moscow is not very typical. It has practically no working-class tradition, no working-class culture. There is only the bureaucracy. In the country's industrial regions, Pamyat has less influence. They [Pamyat] think that Moscow is the place where they have the most opportunities. But in the country as a whole, the Russian masses are not as nationalistic as Pamyat would like. ★

1. On Soviet press treatment of the Kazakh problem, see "Pravda since the Central Committee plenum," IV 116, March 23, 1987.

Perestroika meets Soviet art:

Sale of the century

THE SWISS financial daily, which regularly publishes a magazine for investments in art, sparkles with irony — like the gleam in the eye of a child who has played a trick on someone. In Moscow on July 7, the flower of international art brokers, Sotheby's, organized the first auction of work by Soviet artists: 18 works from the 1920s and 100 others by 29 contemporary artists. Special flights came in from New York, London and Zurich for the event, a reception and visits to what have been until now clandestine studios.

MICHEL THEVENAZ

AT THE HEAD of this veritable safari was Simon de Pury from Geneva, a Sotheby's auctioneer. He was previously the curator of the big Thyssen-Bornemisza private collection, which has just finished putting on the Lugano exhibition entitled "The revolutionary art of Soviet museums, 1910-1930". It is certainly ironic, this mixing of blue-blooded aristocrats with "new style" Gorbachevite bureaucrats for the purpose of running off with yesterday's revolutionary art and the today's dissident art!

The apparatchiks, won over to "reforms", have not been outdone in this affair. The Sotheby's sale, whose works can be exported tax-free, has supplied hard currency for the tills of the Soviet state, which still smothered and suffocates many artistic developments. Artists despised under Brezh-



nev find that their talents are now being praised, but they still only get the smallest share of the sale price. Obviously, it is the financial aspect that shocks Kristina Piwecki (see box p.16). She writes: "Only a tiny sum in hard currency has been given to the artists".

Revolution liberated creative potential

In 1922, when the Van Diemen gallery in Berlin presented the young Russian artists for the first time, Pevsner, Gabo, Tatlin, El Lissitzki, Malevich and Rodchenko joined Kandinsky in the world of modern art.¹ The Russian revolution liberated a creative potential on which contemporary art has been largely dependent: Kandinsky's teaching; the thoughts of Pevsner (who settled very early in the West) on art and architecture in the industrial era; and the Russian constructivists' studies (which influenced Le Corbusier, Mondrian and so on). All these influences have become part of the cultural inheritance of international modern art. Soviet art experiments in the 1920s² sought to create a new representational language for a world that the revolution had put in a new light, both socially and through the sudden entry of industrial techniques into this, mainly peasant, society.

This is not the case today. In the era of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, new art has seen hardly any change in its marginalized status in Soviet society. Stalin condemned it to hell, Khrushchev threw it to the lions, and Brezhnev pushed it into internal or external

"The picnic" by Oskar Rabino, c. 1970 — the herring wrapped in *Pravda* was evidence for the authorities of the artist's anti-Sovietism (DR)

exile.³ As for Gorbachev, he is throwing it onto the market. He understands the financial (and diplomatic) value of this "cultural inheritance", denigrated by his predecessors, which Western collectors have fought over for 70 years! For all this, avant-garde art has still not found the place in its own country that it held briefly at the beginning of the revolution.

Since Stalin, bourgeois collectors have been smart enough to appropriate this cultural heritage, which decorates the salons, galleries and museums of Europe and America. The repression suffered by 1920s art is behind the high value of the market where Baron Thyssen has spun his webs, notably with the help of his blue-blooded aristocratic Swiss curator, Simon de Pury. De Pury is not just a connoisseur of Mos-

1. Kandinsky is of Russian origin. One of the creators of abstract art (in 1912), he had already worked at *Blauwe Reiter* in Munich with Klee before returning to Moscow. Later, he taught at the Bauhaus (which was closed by Hitler), with Klee, Gropius and others.

2. Those reading French can find a passionate insight into this, plus numerous bibliographical references, in *Changer la vie, changer la ville*, by Anatole Kopp, Collection 10/18, 1975.

3. The exhibition of dissident art, called the *Manège* ("Merry-go-round"), sounded the death knell of a timid liberalization. The bureaucrats deliberately authorized this exhibition in order to attack "decadent" art and the liberalism of Khrushchev, who agreed with them. Read his remarks in Karl Eimermacher's study on post-war Moscow art in the catalogue of the *Je vis — je vois* exhibition, Kunstmuseum, Berne, 1988, p.182.

cow art, but of any art that can be exported. Used to flying to Moscow, he has been in contact for a long time with "dissident" artists (Kabakov, for example). He quickly grasped the possibilities of the new markets opened to him and his bosses at Sotheby's by *perestroika* — in other words, a certain liberalization of exports and the need for currency.

In the following passing remark, Kristina Piwecki shows that the discovery of these new Soviet "assets" certainly answers to the needs of criteria other than that of art: "All this has an exotic charm for the jaded appetites of the Western bourgeoisie". Their collections are already full, from Picasso to Beuys, but their wallets are still bulging and they are looking for investments. This "demand" creates as much an attraction as the works themselves! The art market is a form of investment where originality and rarity, combined with the search for low-tax assets (safe investments), caus-

Advert for the state department store
Gum by Aleksandr Rodchenko, 1923

“ WHAT A WONDERFUL shop window display the Kremlin is offering for the next Sotheby's super-auction. Capitalist commerce twinned with the communist flair of Red Square is a piquant mixture. The Marxist dialectic causes the strangest flowers to bloom! Perhaps we'll end up by writing a 'Capitalist manifesto' that will talk about the 'spectre of corruption that is haunting Europe'. The West's hard currency is thus causing the retreat of more than one Ideology ”

Kristina Piwecki, *Schwizerische Handelszeitung*, June 16, 1988

es incredible price rises. In a few days, artists who were previously hounded or ignored see their canvases go for between \$32,000 and \$73,000 (Ivan Chuikov and Yankilevski according to Sotheby's estimate). At the same time, people are running off with works from the 1920s that are still lying around in Moscow. A canvas by

Aleksandr Rodchenko, that "fanatical communist"⁴ is valued at between \$360,000 and \$480,000!

Knowing the expert traditions — not to mention the cunning — of Swiss financiers with investments, it is not surprising to find them in the front row of this cultural/financial banquet. The "fashion" for new Soviet art was set off by Erik Bulatov's exhibition in Zurich, followed this summer by the exhibition *Je vis — je vois* ("I live — I see") at the Kunstmuseum in Bern. This latter was a presentation of work by Moscow artists in the 1980s. Auctioneers of the ilk of Simon de Pury are not the only ones at the origin of this "new popularity". Cultured Swiss diplomats are also in on the act.

"A tragic ordeal for Moscow artists"

Hailing "the return of the Russians to the international artistic community", Bertil Galland⁵ delighted in emphasizing the role of ambassador Paul Jolles, who, when he headed up Swiss external trade, "knew all about Russian 'clandestine' art. He infected successive Swiss diplomats in Moscow with his passion, many of whom became collectors." It's a sure bet that their diplomatic bags were not always full of just documents....

In Moscow, this sudden entry into the limelight is disorienting more than one artist. The interesting catalogue of the *Je vis — je vois* exhibition contains some interviews that point up this confusion. "The uniqueness of the Moscow artistic world has already been destroyed. We can no longer return to the past, and the future is unclear. The hour of temptation has arrived. People are already appearing and offering to buy up the harvest there and then. Who will survive?" (Vadim Sacharov).

4. This term comes from Camille Gray, *L'avant-garde russe dans l'art moderne, L'Age d'Homme*, 1962. Rodchenko, along with Tatlin, belonged to a group called "Art in life", revolutionary artists who wanted to incorporate modern techniques in order to change art and reconcile it with the world of work.

5. *24 Heures*, July 30-August 1, 1988.

**ХВАТАЙТЕСЬ
ЗА ЭТОТ
СПАСАТЕЛЬНЫЙ
КРУГ!**

ГИМ

**ВСЕ
ДЛЯ
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**ДОБРОКАЧЕСТВЕННО
ДЕШЕВО!**

16 ИЗ ПЕРВЫХ РУК!

АГЕНТ. РЕКЛАМ

"Some artists — we know who they are — are profiting from this situation to become the 'top artists'. I'm absolutely opposed to this.... The new situation is a tragic ordeal for us." (Vladimir Yankilevski). "On principle, I have never sold my paintings. Because I think — and will always think — that those who start selling begin at the same time to wonder if their works will please others or not, whether they will sell or not. It's the beginning of dependence." (Irina Nachova.) "In the commercial atmosphere that rules today, relations between artists have become strained. In the past, we discussed all the time and visited each other. All that is over. In this sense, this new situation is a bad thing, above all for those of us who aren't used to it." (Ivan Chuikov).

Perestroika: changing the place of dissident art

Only Dmitri Prigov, a critical poet and author of a series of works entitled "Glasnost" (pages of *Pravda* superimposed with Gorbachev's reform slogans), admits to feeling "very happy with the success, the sales and the publicity".

But it would be wrong to put down this identity crisis only to the "temptations of the market". Perestroika is placing "dissident" art in a new context where it must win back space for itself and, at the same time, confront the public. Put under a sort of house arrest by the bureaucrats of "socialist realism", it has developed — under the pressure of events — a mentality that Yevgeni Barabnov describes as follows in his preface to the *Je vis — je vois* catalogue:

"In the absence of a normal artistic milieu and of a wide-ranging communication between the artist and the public, both artists and critics produce a particular type of artistic activity, a system that is closed off from the outside, internally stable like the monads of Leibniz [a philosopher who argued that the world could be split up into totally isolated units, whose inter-relations were just an illusion]. This is well-illustrated by the meditative and internalized scenes displayed in Bern, above all in the case of the older generation of painters such as Schwarzmann or Krasnopevtsev. Take Schwarzmann's highly stylized figures, that he describes (not without a prophetic presumption) as a new religious language of which he is the guardian. Or Krasnopevtsev, whose frozen still lifes in the style of the cubists continue the classical language of the painter's easel. Volkov, from the youngest generation, follows this tradition.

The generation who were 20 years old between 1955 and 1965 under Khrushchev (Bulatov, Faibissovich, Gorochovski, Yankilevski, Kabakov, Chuikov, Vasilyev) — precisely those who are selling at high prices via Sotheby's — take much livelier approaches. Often photography, montage and type are used to examine the real and the

Logo for the Epoch publishing house, Anonymous 1924



imaginary, to expose their ambiguities — a basically dialectical and profoundly realist notion that the hacks of "socialist realism" have never been able to tolerate. For example, Faibissovich's work, "That is the question", offers a startling image: a photomontage of a room where the patterns of light take the form of a question mark.

Many obstacles remain for Soviet art

These artists — influenced by the debates on "socialist realism" initiated under Khrushchev and by the discovery of Western art (an exhibition of American art was held in Moscow in 1959) — have often also trained in the graphic arts or technical drawing and have had to earn a living in odd jobs as decorators or designers. They no longer have the positive and new approach of technique that you find among the artists of the 1920s, but they have taken on board a lot of their formal language, transforming it into a critical process. This is much more realist and rich (something that is not difficult) than the Stalinist eulogies of a world "without contradictions".

The youngest generation (Prigov, Orlov, Lebedev, Bruskin, Sacharov, Svesdochotov) also often come from graphic schools, especially because "dissident" art was partially tolerated under Brezhnev in the graphic arts section of the artists' union. But they embody a new spirit, a more rebellious one in terms of irony or means of expression (collective actions and "happenings"), and more independent from the norms of traditional painting (using coloured objects and montages). Rejecting all ideas of putting art onto a pedestal, something that he accuses his predecessors of,

Prigov explains that, "the artist is simply a creator of cultures".

This brief outline — of necessity very schematic — shows something of the diversity of the approaches: from religious idealism to objects of pop-art, Moscow produces everything — so much the better.⁶ But even so, between the lines one can see here the evolution of two or three generations of art and also of the whole of Soviet society. In this regard, the less meditative and internalized style of the young generation is revealing. In the post-war period, an industrial and urban world, a technological but also sadly reified one, developed in the USSR. Its preoccupations began to mesh with those of the capitalist world — including in the area of representational expression.

But what will art, artists and representational expression be like in this new Soviet Union? How are these artists going to meet their public? These questions remain unanswered after all the years that have gone by in a "closed system". But already there is a danger that the market appropriation — or, for the bureaucrats, the clearance sales — of this culture may cut it off, once more, from the Soviet society where it should have its place.

Soviet art still has many obstacles to surmount before it can reestablish itself — in the Soviet Union, of course, but also in the world at large. ★

● This article was first published in *La Brèche*, bi-monthly French-language publication of the POS, Swiss section of the Fourth International.

6. *Je vis — je vois* only showed art from Moscow. It goes without saying that this diversity must be much greater across the whole of Soviet territory.

**AROUND
THE
WORLD**



I R E L A N D

Anniversary of civil rights movement

The anniversary of the start of the mass movement for civil rights, marked by the march to Derry in October 1968, has been an occasion for reflecting on the experience of the twenty-year struggle in Ireland. The following article from the October 13 issue of *An Phoblacht*, the paper of the Irish republican movement, indicates some of the ideas that are coming to the fore.

THE HIGHLIGHT of the Derry '68 Committee commemorative week's series of debates, lectures and workshops was undoubtedly the forum on the theme 1968-1988. The speakers, who each spoke on the way forward after 20 years, included Gerry Adams [president of Sinn Fein], Bernadette McAliskey, Michael Farrell, Eamonn McCann, Carol Coulter and John McAnulty of People's Democracy [Irish section of the Fourth International].

Beginning the debate, Gerry Adams proposed that the building of a mass movement be formally put on the political agenda in the coming year in the run-up to the 20th anniversary of the re-introduction of British troops to the streets of the Six Counties. "The reason why conservatism in this country is so powerful is because of the failure to build a broad-based struggle which could unite all of those people with a stake in an Ireland of equality where the people themselves would gain control.

"I would like to suggest that such a movement be open, democratic, nationally organized, transcending partition and should have the capacity to fuse together all of the disparate strands of discontent in Ireland. We need to have not just a political facet to such a struggle but a movement that reflects our social, economic, cultural and political positions, because imperialism is social, economic and cultural as well as political.

"I would argue that the central objective of such a movement should be national self-determination and that the demand for national self-determination is capable of driving a wedge between those who are leaders of what is called 'constitutional nationalism' and their supporters. We need to show the contradictions between the rhetoric that the leaderships of 'constitutional nationalism' use in order to placate their

grass roots and the action and practice.

"We have to spend time building a struggle, and I would argue that the lessons of the last 20 years show the potential for building such a movement. A charter of sorts such as the Freedom Charter of South Africa must be built. The people must govern. The people have the right to homes, the people have the right to equality. And the people who have the most to lose and the most to gain — that's people like us, from Derry, Belfast, Dublin and Cork together — should be in the leadership of that movement, fusing together one struggle which will overthrow the conservative regimes in both parts of Ireland and start an irreversible thrust towards national self-determination and socialism."

Adams' call was welcomed by all the speakers on the platform in their speeches. Eamonn McCann wanted to explore further on what political basis such a movement would be built. He felt that if the mass movement was based solely upon the expulsion of the British and the realization of national self-determination it would fall into "all sorts of cul-de-sacs and traps". This theme was taken up by several of the other speakers who pointed out the damage that 60 years of neo-colonialist misrule had done to people in the 26 Counties, to their attitude to national unification and the uneven development in the experience of struggle between people in the North and South.

Carol Coulter said "the existing government in the South has decimated the health service, been responsible for the biggest wave of emigration in 30 years, and has stood idly by while a massive campaign has been waged against women's and trade union rights. If this is going on and we are proposing a national movement, what do we do about these questions?"

Michael Farrell explained how, because of the ferocity of the Orange backlash against the civil rights struggle, the whole energy of the anti-imperialist movement was devoted for a long time to pure physical self-preservation. Consequently, class issues and attempts to make links with the Protestant working class were pushed off the agenda.

"So far we have not achieved a type of freedom which means anything to ordinary working class people. We have only achieved a type of paper freedom, a freedom of colours and flags. We have to put socialism back on the agenda, so that when we do come near our objective, we don't

find that what we have achieved turns to ashes in our hands."

Bernadette McAliskey felt that the charter Gerry Adams proposed should clearly define what was meant by freedom.

"It must include the basic freedom of women, the basic rights of workers and all the basic rights which would of themselves predetermine the type of society we are struggling for."

She said that she did not accept that posing national self-determination as the central demand in this country, along with clearly defining what we mean by the kind of country we want to build, is, in the present climate, a backward nationalist demand.

"I believe it is a progressive demand that can be related to the day-to-day living conditions of the people in the problems they are fighting.

"Not only can we, but we must, begin to build a broad movement and a vehicle which allows us to move together and to move separately, and to raise the central issues. Then we will be creating the confidence and the beginnings of an alternative." ★

G E R M A N Y

Protests against the IMF

An interesting aspect of the recent anti-IMF demonstrations in Berlin was coordination between protesters in the East Germany and West Germany. The following article from the September 29 issue of *Sozialistische Zeitung*, the paper of the United Socialist Party, to which West German Fourth Internationalists belong, describes this development.

IN EAST GERMANY, you have to be in the opposition in order to be able to make a thoroughgoing criticism of the capitalist world economic order. While "the capital city Berlin," in return for hard currency, declared itself willing to work together with the capitalist West and put its hotels at the disposal of the bankers, opposition groups decided to hold a week of actions against the IMF.

They began on Friday with a solidarity concert. At the weekend, a seminar on a "Just world economic order," took place in the Sophia church. It closed with a religious service, in which 800 people participated. A pilgrim's march among several churches was banned, as was a vigil in front of the US embassy.

The 60 participants in the seminar, who came from all over East Germany, criticized the role of the IMF and World Bank, which "organized poverty for the peoples." They had invited representatives of the liberation movements and experts from the East bloc countries. The latter, many of whom were university professors, expressed a position close to the government — the IMF and the World Bank were "ob-

jective technical enforcers" of a world economic order that for the moment could be superseded. Moreover, the developing countries had no chance to take a socialist road. Radical criticism of the IMF was, therefore, "Luddism."

This was not an ideological dispute. The debate was potentially explosive for the Eastern countries, since the participants criticized countries like Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, China (all members of the IMF, and entry of USSR is also being discussed), which are trying to escape from economic bungling by reintroducing a market economy. Instead of this, the participants demanded that the "countries of actually existing socialism" offer proposals for a world economic order based on solidarity.

Likewise, they expressed criticism of the reform course in the Soviet Union and demanded that control of the social means of production in "actually existing socialism" be fundamentally transformed on the basis of socialist planned economy ("democracy of workers' councils with self-management").

The organizers drew up the following statement: "We oppose the capitalist social system, along with its laws and institutions, which currently govern the world economic order. This system is based on exploitation, and widens the gap between the poor and the rich. We oppose also the structures in the countries of actually existing socialism, which expose the peoples of this part of the world to the effects of the capitalist world economy, and prevent the development of alternative international economic relations.

"We have common interests, but we are very well aware of the fact that achieving these interests in East and West poses quite different tasks. We firmly oppose any attempt to falsely present our criticism of our own system as advocacy of the other." ★

INTERNATIONAL

Symposium on Bukharin

BETWEEN October 10 and 13 an international symposium was held on the thought of Nikolai Bukharin in Wuppertal, West Germany, under the auspices of the town's university. It was an exceptional event, first of all because of its composition. The hundred or so academics present brought together official representatives from the Soviet Union, such as Professor V.A. Koslov from the Marxist-Leninist Institute, as well as from "informal" groupings. Chinese scholars were present, including the director-on-leave of the Peking Institute of Marxism-Leninism/Mao Zedong Thought, Professor Su Shaozhi. Also at the symposium were important experts on the Soviet Union from Britain, America, France, Italy, Scandinavia, Germany, Portugal and Austria. These included Professor Moshe Lewin, Theodore Shanin, Sidney Heitman and Michal Reiman.

In addition there were representatives of the Prague Spring; scholars from Yugoslavia, Hungary and Bulgaria; leaders of the DKP (West German Communist Party) and left wing social democrats from West Germany and Britain; Bukharin's daughter, Dr. Gurchik-Bukharina; and several representatives from the revolutionary Marxist current, including Pierre Broué and Ernest Mandel.

The event was also extraordinary because of the freedom and tolerance of the discussions, with all points of view being expressed without no exceptions. All the aspects of Bukharin's activity were examined objectively and critically, with no sacred cows and no reticence about pointing up the contradictions of his thought and political action.

It would be no exaggeration to say that such a clash of different opinions, with Soviet and Chinese scholars freely discussing with each other and often at loggerheads, and with the participation of Trotskyists and left social democrats, would have been impossible in at least the last 60 years, if not longer. It is a measure of the progress — certainly still too limited to the academic/intellectual sphere — of workers' democracy and scientific freedom achieved on an international scale over the past few years.

Towards the end of the symposium, we proposed that a similar event be held soon on the thought of Leon Trotsky, a proposal that was warmly applauded by the hall.

The high scientific level of the contributions, whether specialized or generalized, also made this an exceptional meeting. New information came to light on Bukharin's writings: an until now unknown exchange of letters between Lenin and Bukharin; equally unknown aspects of his

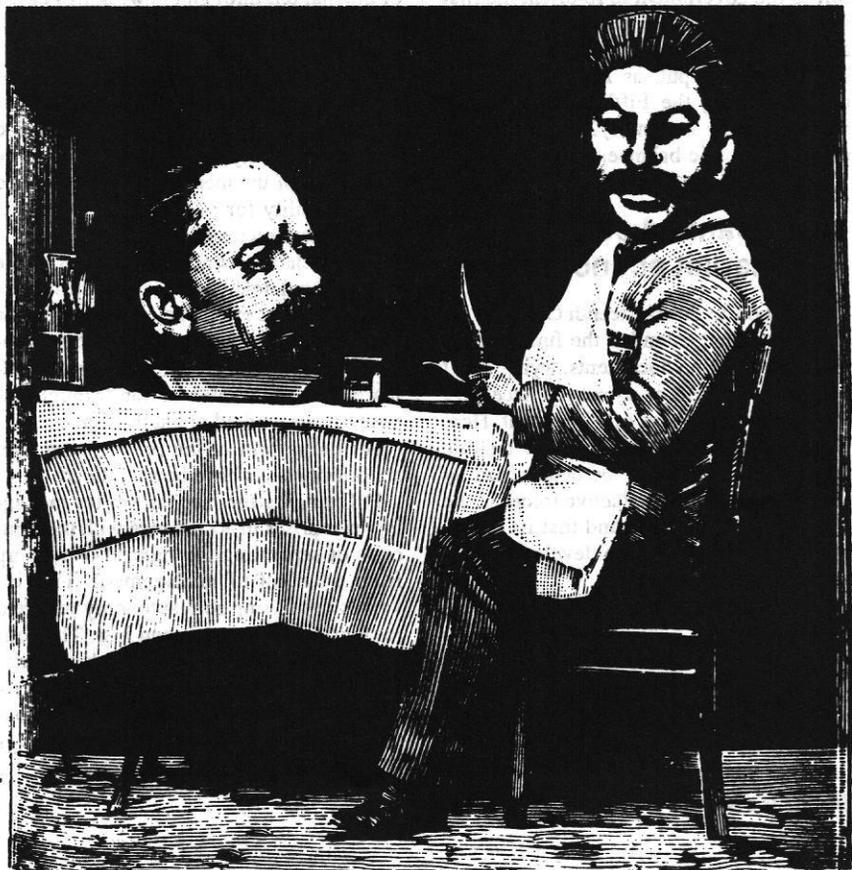
activity at the head of the Comintern; some of his little known criticisms, written in Aesopian language, of the Stalin regime during the last years of his life. Some interesting exchanges and discussions took place touching the work of Bukharin as a philosopher (and notably his relations with Bogdanov), and his intervention in the literary debates of the 1920s and 1930s.

But the discussion, inevitably, centred around Bukharin's conception of the New Economic Policy and the relations between the market economy and planned economy, or more exactly the place of market mechanisms in building socialism. Here also, the very rich debates were entirely unrestricted, in spite of the pressure of historical and existentialist pressure that incontestably bore down on the participants from the post-capitalist countries.

In fact, between them, those at the symposium represented hundreds of years in Nazi concentration camps, in Stalin's gulags, in the jails of the "cultural revolution" and in imperialist prisons. In a way, they also represented the survivors of the wave of demoralization/privatization after May '68 (or, more precisely, after 1975) — including on a more modest scale young people.

In these conditions, it is even more remarkable that the prevailing spirit among the overwhelming majority of participants was turned towards the future and not the past, optimistic in terms of the possibilities for human progress. And a good number of those at the symposium were optimistic about a socialist future for humanity too.

The symposium's organizers should be thanked — in particular comrade Theodore Bergmann, an ex-militant of the Brandler group in Germany — for having made such an exceptional event possible. ★



Zhao Ziyang's new clothes — II

THE DILEMMAS of the economic reform proposed by the liberal wing of the Chinese bureaucracy are the focus of the following article.

The first part, published in the last issue of

International Viewpoint, centered on the factional struggle between the liberal and conservative wings of the party.

A MARAVER

THE HIGH POINT in the economic reform debate in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came during the Third Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee, which approved "the decision on reform of the economic structures," and the National Party Conference in September 1985, which elaborated the lines of the Seventh Five-Year Plan for 1986-90.

In both cases, despite the conservative faction's opposition and bias, the reform line managed to provide a new vision of the functioning of a socialist economy, summed up by the formula of a "socialist market economy" and a development strategy calling for 7% annual growth rates.

Subsequently, in 1986-87, some bottlenecks began to turn up in specific industries (energy and transport, among others). Additional problems were a much larger budget deficit than expected, inflation arising from the "scissors crisis" between the towns and countryside and a reduction of foreign investment.

All this, on top of the social tensions and the political struggle among party factions, forced the government to re-orient the first stage of the five-year plan by applying an austerity program and structural reforms. The stress was put, as Zhao Ziyang explained during the Fifth Session of the Sixth People's Assembly, on a domestic macro-economic balance.

A planned socialist market economy

The report to the Thirteenth Congress recapitulated and extended the fundamental aspects of the two documents, trying to set down the elements of correction necessary for the 1986-87 phase of adjustment. Here it should be remembered that the economic policy was supposed to be determined by the real state of the productive forces in the first stage of socialism and that its objective was "to promote the development of the socialist economy."

The concept of the "planned socialist market economy" calls for the following: Starting out from the existence of a socialist property sector planned by the workers' state, to develop the market as a form of integrating economic sectors with different



property forms (state, cooperative, individual) so that the influence and hegemony of the state sector can shape the entire economy through utilizing the market mechanisms and the "law of value."

The development of a market economy involves a substantial advance with respect to the overall weight of the subsistence economy in the GNP. However, in the reformers' conceptions, its importance goes beyond this. According to the theories of the economist Sun Yefang, the expansion of the market, through the workings of the law of value, makes possible economic calculations and planning itself.

The planned market economy is differentiated from capitalism — which the economist Liu Guogang calls "the anarchic market economy" — by the collective ownership of the means of production and the possibility for planning based on this predominant sector of the economy.

In a socialist economy, "it is up to the state to regulate the market, and the market in its turn must orient the enterprises." The regulating mechanisms must be macro-economic, legal and administrative, avoiding bureaucratic intervention through imposed plans worked out at the top.

For the reform of the present structure, six priority tasks have been outlined:

1) Changing the mechanism for managing enterprises in accordance with the principle of separating the right of ownership from the right of management. This involves conferring real autonomy and real responsibility for profit and loss. The concrete form will depend on the characteristics of the enterprise. But the relations between the state and the specific companies will always be defined by contract or

other binding legal agreements.

The workers are invited to participate democratically in the running of the enterprises, although the report is very vague about this, even by comparison with the decision of the Third Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee.¹ The factory managers will be chosen on the basis of merit through competition, and a system of responsibility will be applied to them according to the results obtained by the enterprises.

Obtaining investment funds by issuing stock is to be accompanied by forms of participation of the stockholders in the management councils, whether this involves the state, financial institutions, other enterprises or individuals.

Expanding the market

2) Developing horizontal economic association among the enterprises in such a way as to speed up the circulation of the factors of production. This is to involve voluntary formation of cartels, inter-enterprise research centers and a general advance in the division of labor.

3) Expanding the market from consumer goods to producers' goods, services, real estate and so on. The first step is to be reforming the system of prices parallel to that of wages, assuring that the standard of living of the population is maintained and raised.

4) Perfecting the state's capacities for in-

1. "At the same time as the system of personal responsibility of factory managers is set up, it is necessary to perfect the system of workers' and clerks' councils, as well as the system of democratic administration in its various forms. This is needed to give full value to the functions and role of the unions and workers' and clerks' delegates in examining all important decisions in the plants, in monitoring the work of managers and in safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the workers and clerks, thereby concretizing the role of the working class as the leading force in this country." (Decision of the Central Committee on the Reform of the Economic Structure.)

The organization of Workers' Congresses has been very uneven throughout China. In part, the rebuilding of the unions after the Cultural Revolution was designed to create a social base of support for the alliance that stopped the Gang of the Four, which had a very active presence in the unions, by relying on a certain workers' aristocracy and reinforcing their role as a party transmission belt. (See *Trade Unions in China*, Lee Lai To, Singapore University Press, 1985.)

direct macro-economic regulation, with the objective of maintaining a balance between overall supply and demand. The banking system has to assume a central role. The same goes for the creation of a structure for overseeing and collecting taxes as mechanisms of state intervention and distributing investment funds. Also projected is the drawing up and refinement of economic legislation and the judicial system. The state will retain direct responsibility in a series of public works and key industrial projects.

A legal framework for foreign investment

5) Maintaining and promoting the various types of ownership on the basis of the predominance of the socialist sector. The weak socialization of production requires a combined development of all forms of ownership, including a private sector with wage labor operating on the basis of a legal code. In the same way, it is necessary to offer a legal framework for foreign investment that will make such investment attractive internationally.

6) Diversifying the forms of remuneration, with the predominant formula of "to each according to their work." The appearance of dividends and interest has to be regulated so that the more rapid enrichment of a section of the population will not create excessive inequalities. Such inequalities must be corrected by the state. But the present problem is not "egalitarianism" and the theory of the "iron rice bowl," which prevent the operation of material stimuli. Indispensable in this framework are the fight against inflation and a balance between consumption and production, linking wage increases to real rises in production.

Likewise, the report pointed up the importance of the psychological climate. The reform was being carried out in a difficult context of readjustment, which required reviving the enthusiasm of the population but also a slower advance than that foreseen in 1984, following a tactic of cautious consolidation. In this respect, the major conservative criticism of the reform project has been incorporated, and this reflects its influence in the general balance sheet of the January 1987 crisis.

As regards the development strategy and the obstacles that the Seventh Five Year Plan has encountered, the report pointed with satisfaction to the successes of the first stage of the reform. This stage led to a doubling of the GNP in 1980, making it possible to meet the population's basic needs. The objective today is to double the GNP again in the year 2,000, as a starting point for reaching the level of the "moderately developed" countries in the following fifty years.

In the present stage, the most pressing problem is the low profitability of the enterprises — unlike agriculture — and the scar-

city of natural resources and investment funds. This is why it is essential to re-orient the production model toward intensive rather than extensive development. The following three aspects are fundamental:

- Giving priority to developing and applying science and technology and adjusting the educational system to them. At the same time, it is necessary to keep an eye on the rapid changes of the scientific and technical revolution and China's need to become integrated into this process.

- Maintaining a general macro-economic balance, avoiding sectoral bottlenecks and applying the policy of structural reform. It was necessary to take into account the large population migrations from the countryside to the cities that will occur in the coming years, and the need for rapid development of light industry and the consumer sector, without delaying investment in the basic industries and the infrastructure.

To avoid foreign debt stemming from imports of sophisticated products and technology transfers, it was essential to promote a dynamic export sector. Along with this orientation, which is centered geographically on the eastern part of the country, the existence of a large domestic market required developing, on a different technological basis, the industrial structure set up in the 1950s and 1960s thanks to Soviet aid in the central and western regions.

For an indefinite time, the foundation of sustained growth for the country's economy as a whole will continue to be agriculture. Along with this, there will be the development of small industries in the rural areas and a perfecting of the system of family responsibility that has brought such good results up until now.

- Extending the open door policy and the



Chinese economy's relations with the world economy; seeking to increase currency reserves and rationalize imports policy so as to help introduce high technology. There was not, however, any balance sheet of the special economic zones (free-trade

zones), whose results have been far from what was expected when they were set up.

Finally, the report referred to the policy of population control, whose maintenance is a precondition for any other economic policy, and the need for taking into consideration ecological problems in development planning.

The objective of the political reform, according to the report, was to "forge a still higher and more effective democracy" than that of the developed capitalist countries. However, this does not mean copying such countries' political model, "separating the three branches and governing with an alternation of various parties," but rather "perfecting socialist democracy and legality and trying to eliminate manifestations of bureaucratism and influences of feudalism." And the starting point for this was the people's democratic dictatorship with its system of People's Assemblies, cooperative conferences and consultation with the democratic parties and personalities under the leadership of the CCP, with the application of democratic centralism.

Separating the party from the state administration

This was "a gradual process of slow accumulation," the precondition for which was "a political and social climate of stability." By no means should there be any "practicing of 'grand-style democracy,' which would undermine state legality and social stability." The immediate objective was "to create a leadership structure favorable to increasing efficiency, which would serve to increase vitality and make it possible to activate initiative in the various sectors."

Later, the report went on to list seven measures for introducing the reform:

- 1) To separate the party from the state administration. It was considered that this was the most important point of the political reform. "The party leadership is a political leadership, reinforced by the cadres appointed to important posts in the organs of state power. The main form by which the party exercises its political leadership is by converting its principles, through legal procedures, into the will of state."

To assure a separation of functions, "no party committee will any longer have a secretary or permanent member engaging exclusively in government work without having a governmental post." Likewise, it was necessary to "dissolve the party leading groups in the various state departments," and the disciplinary commissions should cease to concern themselves with infractions of the law or administrative errors. The objective was not only to form a modern state apparatus but to reinforce the capacity for social leadership of the party, which "must devote itself to its own construction."

- 2) To decentralize the government by transferring powers to lower bodies. Because of the scarcity of cadres, the party

and the state had concentrated decision making powers at the higher levels, "becoming bogged down in routine" and restricting the "autonomy of the ranks and the initiative of the popular masses." The general principle was not to keep anything in a higher body that could be transferred to and resolved in a lower one.

3) To reform the state administration. "For economic and socio-historical reasons, it is necessary to extend our struggle against the bureaucracy." The political twists and turns since 1949 and the confusion between the party and state had made the Chinese administration into a labyrinth, with which any similarity to a modern state was pure coincidence. The fundamental objective was to create a capacity for indirect intervention into the country's economic system through readjustments in personnel and functions by means of a plan worked out by the State Council, to be approved by the first session of the Seventh National People's Assembly.

4) To create a body of technical functionaries as the axis of a reform of cadres and personnel. The state functionaries are presently assigned by the party's Personnel Department to the various levels, under the title of "state cadres." Separation between the party and state requires "establishing instead a scientific system of organized administration" in accordance with a specific law on this question.

A system of consultation and dialogue

The functionaries may be political or technical. In the first case, they will be proposed and monitored by the party and elected by the People's Assemblies. In the second, they will be recruited through competition, in accordance with the law, and promoted in accordance with their professional performance.

5) To set up a system of consultation and dialogue for the society. In order to stimulate activity by the population and make possible efficient and informed leadership by the leading bodies, it was necessary to "to give a more open character to the activities of the leading bodies, inform the people of important issues and give them a chance to discuss questions of a higher interest."

6) To democratize the mass political institutions. To improve the electoral system, starting from the 1979 law and its reform in 1986, "respecting the will of the voters and guaranteeing them some room for choice." In the various Assemblies, "the proportional division has not contributed to interpreting the will of the electorate." So that the candidates could be more representative, "the system of elections by zone can be complemented by one of election by social sectors and other categories."

In this way, the People's Assemblies should find their role reinforced, as well as their functions of adopting laws and super-



vising their implementation. Likewise, voices had been raised in favor of a greater political role for the democratic parties and the Political Consultative Conference "under the leadership of the Communist Party."

The unions, the Youth and the Women's Federation were called upon to "act independently" so that "at the same time as they defend the general interests of the entire people, they can better understand and defend the specific interests of the masses they represent." In order to achieve this, they had to gain the confidence of the ranks and "cease to act like bureaucrats and administrative bodies."

7) To build socialist legality, "there have to be laws that can be referred to in all areas of our country's political, economic and social life, as well as at every link in the democracy and the dictatorship, which are observed, which are strictly applied, and any infraction of which is punished."

In a country without any cultural tradition of legislation, where the emphasis has always been put on social cohesion and consensus—something that has been enforced by the party intervening directly in the running of the state—formulating any legal system is already defining a project for constructing the state, as well as a new conception of the society as a framework in which conflicts develop that can be regulated at all levels.

Consolidation and rectification campaign

Although these measures have a limited character, they are considered the "foundations" of a gradual development of socialist democracy and "an underlying guarantee" for preventing a repetition of the "Great Cultural Revolution" and of lasting peace and stability in the country.

The party's consolidation and rectification campaign has been an arena in which the reform policy has had great difficulty advancing. The report sums up the axes of the new period opened by the Thirteenth Congress, during which the central task as-

signed to the party apparatus is to build itself.

The first of these axes is political homogenization of the activists around the theses adopted in order in practice to reduce the play of internal factionalism over the interpretation of the reform program, especially as regards the tempo of its application. Li Peng recognized this at the congress.

The second axis is the policy of rejuvenating the cadres, in which notable progress was made. From the Twelfth Congress in 1982 to the National Conference in 1985, 581 of the 656 civilian cadres in the provinces have reportedly been removed. The average age of the new leaders is supposed to be 53.

"Alliance of three generations"

In fact, the "alliance of three generations" slogan has operated only at the level of the central leadership, where the factional balance is probably harder to maintain. At the provincial level, the replacement of the "revolutionary generation" and the "persecuted generation" has been conducted at a faster tempo than during the roughest years of the Cultural Revolution. Its most immediate effect has been a "technocratization" of the cadres, of whom 52% now have a university education.

The struggle against bureaucratism, nepotism, abuses of power and corruption—vices said to be caused "by the position of our party as a party of government, which has a certain tendency to become divorced from the masses"—was another central task, according to the report, and had to be a feature of Communist morality in the period of the reform. In response to the argument used by the conservatives, it was stressed that applying these political reform measures, especially reinforcing socialist legality, would reduce these negative phenomena.

The purges, criticisms and self-criticisms and other consequences of the constant factional struggles in the CCP, especially during the "ten years of chaos," have developed an acute syndrome of insecurity in the activists and cadres. Both the Twelfth Congress and the recent one tried to establish the rules of "internal democracy" and "collective leadership."

The treatment of majorities and minorities², and the system of consultation between lower and higher bodies, has now been reinforced by the requirement that the Standing Committee account to the Political Bureau and the latter to the Central Committee, which is going to increase the

2. "The Twelfth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party," Lowell Dittmer, *China Quarterly* 93, May 1983. When differences appear and there is large majority and a small minority, the latter must yield but can express its positions and its protests through the proper channels. If the majority is narrow, and the minority large, the decision is to be delayed until a new discussion and a broader consensus is achieved.

number of its plenary sessions. New rules are projected for the functioning of these bodies and a two-round system for electing candidates representing different options by secret ballot for all the party's committees.

This is the method that was followed for the election of the Central Committee by the 1,959 delegates.³ From the list of candidates drawn up by a commission of the congress, the delegates elected 173 names by secret ballot, to which two others were added for unknown reasons. This list of 175 candidates, as well as that of 110 candidate members, was then adopted unanimously.

Only a third of the 175 members of the new Central Committee belonged to the CC that the Twelfth Congress elected in 1982. The 98 members out of the 210 who made up the preceding CC that were not re-elected belonged mostly to the "revolutionary generation" over 70 years of age who supported Deng Xiaoping in his fight against Hua Guofeng.

Reforms of leadership structures

However, in order to assess the speed and depth of the generational change between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Central Committees, it is necessary to take account of the resignations and cooptions made at the Fourth Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee, which met a few days before and a few days after the National Conference of September 1985. At that time, 64 full and candidate members cleared the way for 91 new candidates, in accordance with Deng Xiaoping's appeal for the old generation to step down.

If you add to this the changes that have occurred in the provincial leaderships and the central apparatuses of the party and the state, from which the majority of congress delegates came, you get the impression that the reform faction could have formed a relative majority by respecting regional power bases.

The Political Bureau elected by the Central Committee at its first plenum had its membership reduced from 20 to 17. Seven new members were brought in thanks to the departure of ten others. Those leaving included the most important leaders of the "revolutionary generation": Deng Xiaoping; the president of the People's Republic, Li Xiannian; and Chen Yun, who was in the former Standing Committee along with Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang. Among them also were the chair of the National People's Assembly, Peng Zhen, and the conservative ideologue Hu Qiaomu.

The departure of other less well-known national leaders should also be noted, such as the vice-chair of the National People's Assembly, Xi Zhongxun; the director of the Political Department of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Yu Qiuli; the chief of the PLA, Yang Dezhi; the chair of

the Science and Technology Commission, Fanf Xi; and the chair of the trade-union federation, Ni Zhifu.

Older leaders still active in public life

With the exception of the latter, the withdrawal of these leaders from the Political Bureau was justified by their advanced ages, ranging from 71 to 85. This did not mean, by the way, their disappearance from public life or the end of their ideological influence in the factional struggle. In fact, Deng Xiaoping will remain the supreme arbiter in the party as chair of the Military Commission. Chen Yun will hold the chair of the Central Consultative Committee, where the conservatives will have a *de facto* majority. And there is every indication that, despite his 85 years, Peng Zhen will remain at the head of the National People's Assembly.

Most of the new Political Bureau are clearly reformers. Among them, there has been a sharp reduction in the weight of members from the National People's Assembly and the old generation of the PLA. A conservative nucleus remains, formed by Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Yao Yilin and Song Ping. It should be noted, in particular, that Hu Yaobang remains in the Political Bureau, despite being kicked out of the post of general secretary during the January crisis.

The Standing Committee has undergone radical changes. Of its five former members, only Zhao Ziyang remains. The rise of the "replacement generation" gives the impression of filling one by one the openings left by its predecessors — Yao Yilin in place of Chen Yun, Hu Qili in place of Hu Yaobang and Qiao Shi in place of Li Xiannian. In the cases of Li Peng and Deng, we do not find such an exchange, which apparently gives the conservatives a majority in the leading body that oversees the party's day-to-day work.

The Secretariat, which is placed directly under the direct control of the Political Bureau, has had its members reduced from 10 to four. This has transformed it into a much more flexible body, which is able to coor-

dinate the functioning of the other leading bodies, and this has made possible a broader sharing of political responsibility than in the past. It is significant that it is headed by Hu Qili, who was Hu Yaobang's crown prince until the latter was removed, and is a representative of the most liberal section of the reformers.

Rui Xingwen, Shanghai party secretary, also belongs to the reform faction, as well as Yan Minfu, who has been responsible for the policy of the United Front since 1985. The Secretariat's fourth member is Qiao Shi, head of the Discipline Commission, who gains the very important right to intervene as a final authority, especially at the provincial level, as shown by the consolidation campaign of recent years.

The relationship of forces between the two factions is thus being restructured in a complicated system of balancing among the leading bodies. That explains the stress put on a real collective functioning of the leadership, with a greater political weight for the Political Bureau. Although the latter body was one of the standard-bearers of the conservatives in the January crisis, it was regained by the reformers.

The new rules announced by the congress for the functioning of the leadership will be fundamental for maintaining this dynamic balance — a Standing Committee in which the main conservative leaders will have to take the responsibility, under the leadership of General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, for the day-to-day application of the policy worked out by a Political Bureau with a majority of reformers; a reformer Secretariat that will have to give impetus to the dynamic of this balance, with a Discipline Commission, the final appeal, led by the conservative Qiao Shi.

Real succession only just beginning

It remains to be seen what role the Central Consultative Committee will play. Constitutionally, its chair, Chen Yun, seems to be a counterweight to Deng Xiaoping, but unlike the latter, he does not enjoy collective, unanimous recognition as the party's supreme arbiter. From the chair of the Military Commission, Deng can, at the same time, personally direct the generational change in the army in favor of the reformers.

The real succession is going to begin with these results of the congress, because Zhao Ziyang, at 68, is at best only going to have a period of five years before the Fourteenth Congress to exercise his mandate as general secretary. From this post and that of vice-



3. At the Twelfth Congress, the election of the CC was done in the following way. There was an initial vote to draw up a slate of candidates. On this basis, the Presiding Committee proposed a second slate with ten more names than the number of members to be elected. This second slate in turn was voted on by the congress through a computerized system that made it possible to count the votes instantaneously.

chair of the Military Commission, in view of the foreseeable death of Deng, he will have to assume the latter's role as chief of the reformer faction and the party's arbiter. Li Peng holds the chair of the State Council and Hu Qili is emerging as a possible successor to Zhao Ziyang.

These are only hypotheses that will have to stand the severe test of a factional struggle in the framework of the bureaucracy's different responses to the objective contradictions and problems in applying the reform. This is, moreover, a bureaucracy whose social base, owing to the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution and generational change, is still unstable.

It is foreseeable that, far from being consolidated, the dividing lines between the factions and personal allegiances will undergo important modifications in the "replacement generation." The latter will be affected more by its own problems than by the ideological perspectives it has inherited, even if for some time its members will have to lean on the leaders of the "revolutionary generation," who today have been relegated to the background, in order to advance their individual positions in the struggle for succession that has opened in the party.

Bureaucracy far from being consolidated

The regional power bases, and to a lesser extent those in the army, will take on an increased importance in this context. Figures such as Wan Li, Li Xiannian's expected replacement as president of the republic, or Qiao Shi, who may become Hu Qili's conservative rival for the general secretaryship at the Fourteenth Congress, are still far from having demonstrated their potential in the factional struggle.

In the press conference given at the end of the Thirteenth Congress, Zhao Ziyang warned foreign correspondents against a temptation to interpret the Chinese political situation as a clash between reformers and conservatives. In a sense, this advice is valid, and will be so to a larger extent with the generational change in the CCP.

As a social caste, the bureaucracy is far from consolidated and stabilized. In no other section of the Chinese population is the Cultural Revolution syndrome so patent. This means at the same time that broad sectors of the bureaucracy subordinate any dynamic of change or reform to consolidating their place in society.

The reform faction's economic and political project is a program for transforming Chinese society that, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, will make it possible to consolidate the bureaucracy's power. With all its contradictions, this scheme expresses the very nature of a social stratum that in order to exist has to base itself on the gains of the socialist revolution — whose fruits are more evident today in China than ever — while at the same time having to



politically expropriate the working class in order to hang on to its privileges.

This bureaucracy is appealing for enthusiasm, mobilization and activity by broader and broader sections of the population in order to carry through the "Four Modernizations," at the same time as it divides them, atomizes them and controls them in the name of the "Four Principles."

The Thirteenth Congress resolutions represent a vision of the future by the "enlightened" bureaucracy, as the reform faction considers itself to be. It is a project for social domination that makes the bureaucracy into an arbiter of the conflicts among the "special interests" to which the reform itself will inevitably give rise. Throughout 1987, it was building itself a social base among the intellectuals who were repressed by the Maoist left, the sections of the working class employed in the state enterprises with the most modern technology, the new industrial managers — who the press call *qiyejia* — and the immense section of the peasantry that has profited from the "system of family responsibility," achieving a very rapid increase in their standard of living.

On the other hand, the conservatives lack a general long-term political project, and reflect in particular the Cultural Revolution syndrome from which the entire bureaucracy suffers. Peng Zhen, one of the first to be purged in those "ten years of chaos," has been able, from a platform offered by the PLA, to give a positive form to these fears by advocating a system of "socialist democracy and legality" that would establish the rules of the game in order to prevent a repetition of the past. But it is not by chance that at the same time he was the conservative spokesman in the January 1987 crisis.

The conservative faction has sought social support in the intermediate bureaucracy, especially in the provinces, which is threatened by the generational change or has to resolve the contradictions created by the reform, in particular the social conflicts, with means that do not permit it to play an arbiter's role. It has also sought support here and there among sections of

workers who have found themselves de-skilled by the new division of labor or who work under subcontracts in less productive industries and, to a lesser extent, among peasants in the less fertile regions.

In an underdeveloped country like China, with 800 million peasants, the existence of a national market, with varied forms of ownership, is inevitable and necessary. Recognizing this, in opposition to the dogmatism of the Maoist left, is a giant ideological step forward. In China, the socialist revolution has the advantage of having a dominant public economic sector that offers the possibility, through planning and intervening in the market, of socially orienting economic development as a whole. This is why the question of who decides on this orientation is so important.

Regardless of where it hits or misses the theoretical mark, the reform faction's fetishization of the law of value in the "first stage of socialism" is a whole ideological construction that is designed to explain the growing social inequalities, the economic division of China into an advanced region in the east and a backward one in the center and west, as well as the privileges of administrators resulting from objective economic laws, which the bureaucracy limits itself to respecting.

The political reform is thus being converted into a means of managing the inevitable social conflicts. It does not challenge the political domination of the bureaucracy. It makes possible maintaining a certain social consensus, enabling the bureaucracy to mobilize the population in a controlled way to achieve the objectives of the economic reform. It is the basis of the second central element of the reform program, its gradualism, which establishes a direct relationship between economic development and broadening the democratic market.

The problem lies precisely in the search for a median point of equilibrium between opposing social interests. Up until now, the urban population has oscillated, depending on its own perspectives and interests, between the most total cynicism and independent mobilization. And, as happened in January 1987, this has divided the reform faction itself.

Impact of the reforms on agriculture

In the economic area, while the application of the reform in the countryside has in fact brought an extraordinary increase in productivity — so much so that it merited a cover story in a magazine as reactionary as *The Economist* — this has produced a major imbalance in the production of basic food cereals.

In 1986, through the criticisms of Chen Yun, an effort was made to increase agricultural produce purchasing prices. A system of contracts and mechanization credits was introduced. The price of fertilizer for these crops was cut, and the budget appro-

priation for infrastructural projects in the countryside was increased by 40%. The results pointed up the state's capacity for intervention, since the area under cultivation increased by 2 million hectares, and the harvest amounted to 391 tons, or 11 million tons more than in 1985.

The combination of the austerity policy in the cities and the increase in agricultural productivity in 1985-86 affected agricultural prices in some sectors, increasing the pressure for emigration on the rural industrial nuclei. The result is a big contradiction: Given the features of Chinese agriculture, increasing productivity is possible in this phase only through mechanization, and the precondition for this is the transfer of labor from the rural areas to small-scale industry.

In 1986, gross non-agricultural production in the rural areas (industry, building, transport and trade) grew by 22.3%, and already exceeded 46.9 % of the rural GNP. But, on the other hand, the total power of agricultural machinery increased only by 9.1%. The "scissors crisis" in rural-urban exchange prices is going to be a sort of Sword of Damocles hanging over the head of the reform faction, along with the problems of inequality and social assistance for the most vulnerable sections of the population.

With respect to the urban economy, the state, in the name of a strict application of the "law of value," has responded to the problems of maintaining the general equilibrium, the celebrated macro-economic framework,

with a reluctance or even an unwillingness to intervene with corrective measures. The final result has been the general application of an austerity policy, with calls for re-launching the reform in specific sectors through new investment. This stop-go pattern has had important psychological effects on plant managers, without eliminating the traditional bottlenecks in energy and transport.

However, the two problems that most worry the urban population are inflation and the threat to job security. Early on in the reform, wages were raised for political reasons. Then, shortly afterward, they were frozen and tied to real productivity per worker and per enterprise.

The elimination of price control at the end of 1984 touched off an explosion of inflation, and only the fall of agricultural prices at the end of 1986 managed to bring it down by a few points. But it is clear that it remains at more than 10% a year, and the only solution that has been found so far is to cut wage costs. Any new advance of the reform of the price system, one of the key

aspects of the urban industrial reform, will have similar results. This explains the postponement in 1986-87.

The most vexed, and therefore the most dangerous question, however, is job security and the restructuring of personnel. In 1983, 96.8% of the workforce came under the category "workers with stable jobs." The *Danwei*, or work units, were actual micro-societies, responsible not only for the production targets but also for providing their members with housing, day-care centers, schools, social insurance and pensions.

A fundamental aspect of the reform has been to break the "iron rice bowl," that is to end job security and the immobility of the workforce and replace it with a "system of contract labor."

The contracts specify the "responsibilities, powers and advantages" of the workers and the enterprises for a given length of time, and their renewal depends on the needs of the firms and the workers' productivity. The work units' social security systems have been passed into the hands of workers' insurance companies, which in

experienced workforce, advocated a threefold system of stable jobs, as well as contract and temporary labor. Each of these categories would enjoy benefits in accordance with its status. In Jiang's opinion, the contract system involves a shift in power within the enterprises in favor of the managers, a fact that put its socialist character in question.

The reform faction is aware of the danger of social tension involved in applying the new labor system. In 1980, in the Wuhan steelworks, there was a first experience of an independent trade-union nucleus showing up. It was severely repressed. Throughout the Thirteenth Congress, there were repeated allusions to the need for a reform of the unions, which embrace 80 million workers, to make it possible to manage the labor conflicts that will inevitably arise.

Along with reform of the trade unions, the other axis of the reformers' strategy is dividing the working class by introducing new categories that will de-skill a major section of the Chinese workforce and expose it to unemployment.

This last aspect has been essential in the annual growth of the urban workforce by up to 8 million people. This has created an unavoidable clash between the objective of raising productivity through a restructuring of personnel and averting the social consequences of unemployment. Up until now, the reform faction has chosen the first option, and found no other solution to the second problem than calling on people to seek self-employment



practice involves destroying the *Danweis'* internal cohesion. In addition to the workers hired under this new system, the enterprises can recruit temporary workers with lower wages and benefits.

The application of this system since 1983 has given rise to important differences within the bureaucracy itself, to say nothing of the resistance put up by the workers. At the Zhengzhou National Conference in 1984 on this question, four positions emerged. Some were in favor of the immediate application of a "socialist labor market." Others, like the minister of labor himself, wanted a step-by-step application of the labor-contract system to keep the restructuring from creating temporary unemployment that would aggravate the already grave jobs problem. Others defended the old system of stable jobs, arguing that there were other more important reasons for the fall in productivity, and that it was an anti-socialist measure.

Still others, such as the economist Jiang Yimei, spokesperson of the big public enterprises that require a specialized and ex-

and massive executions in the countryside to suppress crime.

It will be Chinese cities, and not the countryside, that will be the new social focus of conflict in the coming period. As the application of the urban industrial reform is pursued, these conflicts will center on the factories. In opposition to the reformed, narrowly professional unions and the administrators, the Workers' Congresses, whose prerogatives have been cut back since the Third Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee, may become centers of united resistance by the workers.

Whether or not the reform becomes a second Long March will depend on the solutions found for these conflicts of interest. But only the massive mobilization of the urban working class, a return to its alliance with the peasantry through democratic control over planning and the state apparatus and the full expansion of democratic freedoms will enable it, as in 1949, to break into the Forbidden City where the members of the Central Committee today hold court and live. ★

4 NEWS FROM THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

WESTERN EUROPE

Women's liberation school

FOR THE FIRST time in its history, women from different sections of the Fourth International have had an opportunity to get together and discuss questions relating to feminism at a school arranged around these themes.

The school was primarily made up by European comrades, but two Japanese women were also able to participate. This gathering made it possible to deepen our debates over key questions of the day for feminists, such as the significance for women of new reproductive technologies; the evolution of the family and the relationship of these changes to the role of women in the workforce and also violence against women.

The school concluded with a more general debate on our orientation today in a situation where the feminist movement is far less organized than in the past, and on what we can do to contribute to changing the situation.

Forty women from almost every country in Europe living and talking together for four days: everyone agreed it was a memorable occasion and one to be repeated. ★

JAPAN

FI members still in jail

TWO MEMBERS of the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL), the Japanese section of the Fourth International, who were arrested in 1978 for their role in a protest against the extension of the Narita airport are still in prison. Watada Kumeo and Mayeda Michiko received respective sentences of 12 and 10 years in prison.

The campaign against the destruction of the peasant community of Sanrizuka in order to make room for the Narita Airport culminated in a sizeable demonstration on March 26, 1978. More than a hundred people were arrested and sentenced to a year in prison. But the Japanese bourgeoisie chose to focus on sixteen of the demonstrators who had occupied a control tower. Of these sixteen, twelve were members of the RCL. Fourteen of them were condemned to heavy sentences of from four to seven years of prison and the last of these has just been released. All of them resisted the pressures put on them, and have become active again. Only Watada and Mayeda remain in jail.

The Japanese state wanted to make an example of someone. Despite the petition

campaign with over 130,000 signatures for their freedom, it is keeping them in harsh conditions at Fuchu prison in Tokyo and Yokohama prison, often in isolation without books or newspapers whenever they are deemed to be disobeying the guards. They only have the right to one visit a month from no more than three family members. A campaign was mounted to extend their visitation rights, and to allow them to receive letters from non-family members. It was taken up by the Kyuen Renraku Center [a civil rights defense group] and several university and trade union figures, but the state refused to back down. In order to show its solidarity, the RCL elected Watada to its Central Committee at its 1987 congress.

Meanwhile, the struggle against the airport continues. Today ecologist forces—which grew enormously in Japan in the 80s because of their opposition to the staggering program of installing nuclear power plants—are also involving themselves. Committees against food contamination have linked up with the peasants of Sanrizuka and created cooperative stores. These new militants are learning the history of the earlier struggles. The government plans to further extend the runways and buildings at the airport and a new construction project will be underway in 1989. Peasants and their allies remain determined to fight this new menace to their community and to the Tokyo population's environment.

Solidarity messages can be sent to the Japanese section at the following address: JRCL, Shinjidaisha, Shiba 5-13-17 Minatoku, Tokyo, Japan. ★

WESTERN EUROPE

Auto-workers' conference

AT THE INITIATIVE of the Fourth International, a European conference of auto-workers was held in Paris on October 15 and 16. It brought together delegations of

auto-workers from Austria, Belgium, the Spanish state, France, Britain, Holland, Germany and Sweden. A delegation made up by members of the American SWP attended as well.

At the beginning of October, cars were all the rage in French current events, as there was a huge auto show going on, and at the same time one workshop in a Renault factory in Le Mans was on strike, paralyzing almost every Renault factory for days.

This is only a coincidence, since the conference had been planned for this date for over a year, but it serves to highlight the themes which guided the weekend gathering.

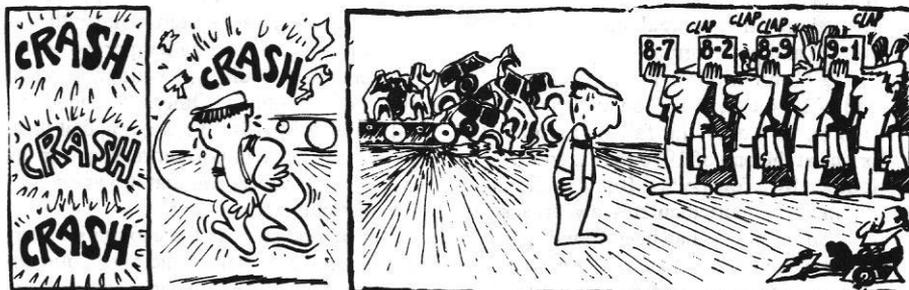
Despite the satisfied statements of French manufacturers on television and in the press, world competition between car makers, especially the Japanese and Americans, is becoming more and more vicious as they compete to win the European market, the only market as yet unsaturated and solvent. The restructuring of the last few years, which has turned the industry upside down and created enormous new profits, has not run its course yet.

However, the struggle at Le Mans to increase workers' buying power shows the vulnerability of the new organizational methods in auto plants. The introduction of the Japanese methods of fast turnover—which keeps inventory levels very low—makes strikes at different points of production extremely effective since stock runs out immediately.

In a context where, in spite of their continuing attacks, the bosses have not been able to bring the workers to heel, the "Japanization" of work methods leaves flaws in the manufacturing process.

The conference provided a space for an assessment of the breadth of attacks that will continue in order to complete the restructuring of the industry at the world level. On the other hand, it also provided a source of new hope for fight-backs, with an exchange of experiences and information and with an analysis of the weakness of the organization of production due to the lack of coordination.

More than ever, as the day of a European single market draws near, and as international car companies continue to consolidate themselves, the development of international coordination and solidarity becomes essential. This conference was a first step in that direction. ★





U S A

Anniversary celebrations

TWO EVENTS have been held in recent months in the United States to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Fourth International.

The first was organized by Socialist Action in San Francisco on August 6. Over 300 people heard leaders of the Fourth International and representatives from revolutionary movements throughout the world. Speakers included Jeff Mackler, co-National Secretary of Socialist Action; Rosario Ibarra, presidential candidate for the PRT, Mexican section of the FI and Edgar Sanchez from the Political Committee of the PRT; Zbigniew Kowalewski, a former leader of Solidarnosc in Lodz and author of a book on the Polish upsurge of 1980-81, *Give us back our factories*; Saths Cooper, former president of AZAPO, now chair of the National Forum of South Africa; Evelyn Martinez from the National Network in Solidarity with Nicaragua; and Paul Siegel, co-chair of the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee.

Giving greetings from the United Secretariat of the FI, Claudio Mangani spoke about the struggle to found the Fourth International and the major changes taking place today, notably in the USSR. He said, "The Fourth International was founded by the generation of the 1930s. The struggle to build the FI is being continued today by a new generation. Just recently, 700 young people from around the world came together at the FI summer camp in France. This is the new generation that will guarantee the continuity of the Fourth International." Greetings were also given to the event by a number of sections and groups supporting the FI.

The commemoration of the anniversary for the East Coast of the United States was held in New York October 14-16. It was sponsored by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT) and the Fourth International Caucus of Solidarity (FIC). The program included forums on "Trotskyism in America," "The Soviet Union today," "National liberation and socialist revolution" and "Electoral politics and revolutionary

strategy."

The speakers at the forum on Trotskyism in America were Jake Cooper, a member of Socialist Action and a participant in the Minneapolis labor struggles in the 1930s; Frank Lovell, a long-time Fourth Internationalist labor expert, now a member of the FIT; and Alan Wald, a representative of the FIC and author of a book on the intellectuals who joined the Trotskyist movement at the end of the 1930s. The program was accompanied by the showing of a film about the 1934 Minneapolis general strike led by Trotskyists.

The forum on the Soviet Union was introduced by Marilyn Vogt-Downey, co-chair of the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee, which is pressing demands for rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin's purge trials. The other speakers were Estaban Volkov and Gerry Foley, editor of *International Viewpoint*.

At the national liberation and socialist revolution forum, the speakers were Susan Caldwell, from Gauche Socialist/Socialist Challenge, a Canadian sympathizing group of the Fourth International; Mahmud Hawari, from the Revolutionary Communist League, the section of the Fourth International in the Israeli state; and John McNulty from People's Democracy, Irish section of the FI; as well as Lloyd D'Aguiar, a Caribbean journalist.

The electoral politics and revolutionary strategy forum focused on the problems posed for revolutionists by the upcoming US presidential elections. It was introduced by Tom Barret of the FIT. In addition, Rosario Ibarra recounted the experience of the Trotskyists in the Mexican elections. And Charles Van Gelderen talked about problems of electoral tactics in South Africa and Britain.

Featured speakers in the concluding rally were Estaban Volkov, Leon Trotsky's grandson and curator of the Trotsky museum in Mexico; Rosario Ibarra, the presidential candidate of the Mexican section of the Fourth International and a well-known leader of the human rights movement; Claudio Mangani, a representative of the United Secretariat of the FI; and Paul Le Blanc, a representative of the FIT. There were also a number of brief messages from other speakers, including Zbigniew Kowalewski.

The audience averaged a hundred in the forums, and a larger number came to the rally. The crowd included many old timers in the US Trotskyist movement, some with more than 50 years service; but also a significant number of young people newly coming around the Fourth Internationalist organizations. The discussions were marked by a broad range of international experience. ★

LEON TROTSKY

50 years ago,
Trotsky founded
the Fourth
International
to fight against
capitalism and
Stalinism

Today, the
FI is continuing
this struggle

RASSEMBLEMENT

Saturday 10 December
2pm until dawn
at LSC, 144 Avenue
du président Wilson,
La Plaine St Denis (Paris, 93)

Debates, exhibition, films, dance,
rally with speakers and delegations
from all over the world...
including Estaban Volkov,
Trotsky's grandson, and Rosario
Ibarra (Mexican PRT)



Provocations make Curtis case smell still fouler

THE FRONT PAGE of the *Moines Register* carried a story on October 20 proclaiming, "A cross was burned Wednesday into the lawn of the home of a teenage girl who was sexually abused by Socialist Workers Party member Mark Curtis."

"The girl's father, Keith Morris, didn't see the culprits but he said that he suspects some connection to Curtis' supporters."

Cross burning is a traditional method of the racist Klu-Klux Klan to intimidate Blacks. The Morris family is Black. The Socialist Workers' Party, however, has a 50 year history of fighting racism. In fact, the SWP and Curtis's defense committee have been winning considerable Black and Hispanic support by arguing that the charges against the young activist were cooked up by racist policemen.

Curtis was badly beaten at the time of his arrest, and charges that the police taunted him as a "Mexican lover" and someone who loves "coloreds." The arresting police had accused him of assaulting them, but these accusations were dropped.

Letters of support for Curtis

Ironically, only a few months ago, in July, a scandal broke about policemen disguising themselves as Klansmen in order to intimidate a Black colleague.

Shortly after Curtis's arrest, a leading Black congressman and chair of the House Sub-committee on Criminal Justice, wrote a letter to the Des Moines police chief saying, "Insofar as I understand the situation, Mark Curtis is an active and outspoken member of Local 431 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, particularly in the struggle for healthy working conditions and fair wages. I also understand that shortly before his arrest, he was present at a union meeting to show support for a number of his co-workers. These facts appear, in my mind, to raise some questions about the possible nature of the arrest."

Coleman Young, the Black mayor of Detroit, also expressed concern in a letter August 18, 1988, "that Mr. Curtis may be being harassed for his political beliefs rather than fairly investigated and brought to trial for actual criminal activity. The circumstances surround-

WITH PROTESTS growing against the conviction of Socialist Workers Party activist Mark Curtis on incredible charges of attempted rape and burglary (which he is supposed to have committed between two political meetings), a still more bizarre charge has been raised against Curtis's supporters.

GERRY FOLEY

ing the arrest and the allegations of police brutality are quite disturbing to anyone who believes in fair play...."

The Detroit City Council also denounced the charges against Curtis in a formal resolution on July 6, noting, among other things: "Nationally respected lawyers and legal organizations such as John Brittain and the National Lawyers Guild have reviewed Mark Curtis's case and agree that there is no evidence to support the charges against him."

The activity in which Curtis was involved at the time of his arrest was a protest against US Immigration Service harassment of Mexican workers in his plant. He was well known as a fighter against racism.

The hallmarks of a crude provocation

In these circumstances, there could hardly be a more unlikely story than the claim that Curtis supporters were involved in an act of racist intimidation. In fact, this claim bears all the hallmarks of a crude provocation.

It is not the first. On July 15, the father of the alleged victim attacked the bookstore where the defense committee has its headquarters and smashed all the windows. The police ignored it. But plainclothes cops were sent to attend one of his defense meetings.

In fact, Curtis was convicted on the

testimony of the arresting police. The teenager who claimed that he tried to rape her was not a credible witness, and the defense showed that there was no physical evidence to show that Curtis had any contact with her. Moreover, it showed that at the time the alleged victim claimed to have been attacked Curtis was in the Los Compadres bar with dozens of co-workers.

Although the testimony of the police was the basis for the conviction, the judge prohibited the defense from introducing evidence that Curtis had been beaten by the cops and of the accusing cop's record of lying and brutality. Moreover, the one Hispanic on the jury was removed by the judge before the verdict deliberations.

Solidarity is urgent as new trial opens

On the grounds of many such decisions by the judge, the defense is filing a motion for a new trial that will be heard on November 10. If it is turned down, Curtis faces an indefinite period in prison at best. Iowa state law prohibits bail to persons convicted on these charges. The law also carries a mandatory sentence of 25 years for the burglary charge and ten years for the third-degree sexual assault charge on which Curtis was convicted.

The judge can only decide whether the two sentences run concurrently or not, thus the minimum sentence would be 25 years and the maximum 35. In many countries this minimum sentence is longer than those generally served by first-degree murderers. It is virtually a life sentence, on nothing more than a policeman's word. This would be exceptional even in the most repressive countries.

Protests continue to grow both in the United States and internationally. But it is urgent now to send statements against the persecution of Curtis to Polk County Attorney James Smith, Room 408 Courthouse, 500 Mulberry, Des Moines, IA 50309, Tel. 515-286-3737.

Copies should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, PO Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Letters of encouragement to Mark can also be sent via the committee. ★