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**LABOUR FOCUS
ON EASTERN EUROPE**

Vol 6 Nos 1-2 SUMMER 1983



**The Pope:
“Goodbye to
Solidarnosc”?**

**Old Bolsheviks on Socialism
The East German Peace Movement
Sabata on East Europe in the 80's
Hungary: Samizdat under Seige**

LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

Statement of Aims

A growing number of socialists and communists are taking a stand against the suppression of democratic rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The labour movement has international responsibilities in this field as well as in the field of solidarity action with those struggling against oppression in Chile or Southern Africa or Northern Ireland.

But up to now socialists have lacked a source of frequent and reliable information about events in Eastern Europe. Coverage in the papers of the Left remains scanty, while reports in the bourgeois press are selective and slanted. The first aim of **Labour Focus on Eastern Europe** is to help fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive and regular source of information about events in that part of the world.

The mass media gave ample space to Tory politicians and to some from the Labour Party who seek to use protests against repression in Eastern Europe as a cover for their own support for social inequality in Britain and for witch-hunts against those who oppose it. At the same time campaigns run by socialists in the labour and trade union movement for many years concerning victims of repression in Eastern Europe are largely ignored by the media. The second aim of this bulletin therefore is to provide comprehensive information about the activities of socialists and labour movement organisations that are taking up this issue.

Labour Focus is a completely independent bulletin whose editorial collective includes various trends of socialist and Marxist opinion. It is not a bulletin for debate on the nature of the East European states, nor is its purpose to recommend a strategy for socialists in Eastern Europe: there are other journals on the left that take up these questions. Our purpose is to provide a comprehensive coverage of these societies with a special emphasis on significant currents campaigning for working class, democratic and national rights.

Whenever possible we will quote the sources of our information. Unless otherwise stated, all material in **Labour Focus** may be reproduced, with acknowledgement. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editorial collective.

In these ways we hope to strengthen campaigns to mobilise the considerable influence that the British labour movement can have in the struggles to end repression in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

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EASTERN EUROPE**
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Subscription Rates

SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 1982 (for six issues):
Inland: individuals £4.50; all institutions £8.00.

Overseas: individuals £6.00 (US\$ 15.00); institutions £10.00 (US\$ 25.00)

Air Mail: £10.00 (US\$ 25.00)

Individual copies: £0.65 (US\$ 1.50) plus postage.

All cheques, international money orders must be made out in Sterling. If you pay in dollars, please add another \$2.50.

In the USA copies of *Labour Focus* can be ordered from Joanne Landy at 301, W. 105th Street, New York, New York, 10025.

In Quebec copies are obtainable from Peter Solonysnyj, 1276a St Zotique, Montreal.

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Thanks to Colin Smith for the design.

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Walesa's Redundancy Notice From the Vatican

Within hours of the Pope's return from Poland, the Vatican organ, *L'Osservatore Romano* served a redundancy notice on Lech Walesa. For the Vatican, the Pope's meeting with the trade union leader was not, after all, a gesture of solidarity but a golden handshake.

Even by Vatican standards, the affair was a breathtaking example of intended political duplicity. And the sacking of the editorial's author smacks more of an exercise on damage-limitation than an attempt to clarify policy. Despite enormous pressure, neither the Pope nor his Secretary of State has repudiated the editorial's substance. Instead, unnamed officials have declared the editorial — whose author, a leading Papal expert on Polish affairs, was briefed by the Pope's own private secretary — to be a 'tactical and diplomatic error'.

The central issue in the affair is not so much what the Pope may or may not have said to Walesa, but what the editorial tells us about the Pope's general policy. There must now be strong grounds for believing that Rome is seriously interested in removing Solidarity from the scene and agreeing with Jaruzelski on measures to place Poland under joint clerical and Communist Party management. There are great obstacles on the path to such a deal but both institutions have one great principle in common: their

authoritarian-bureaucratic natures and consequent hostility towards autonomous, progressive mass movements.

Some on the Left here may yearn above everything for stability in Poland, viewing the country as a potential flashpoint in international affairs, a fuse leading towards an explosive confrontation between the superpowers. From this angle, would not a deal between Warsaw and Rome at least have the merit of ensuring Poland's domestic tranquility?

But such a stabilisation plan would be based on little more than the magic and myth of the Pope and its supporters would have to prove why such foundations, themselves heavily dependent upon developments in international affairs, would be more secure than substantial real rights for Poland's working class.

The response of the left and the labour movements in the West to these Byzantine manoeuvres between Warsaw and Rome should be to reaffirm more strongly than ever our support for the restoration of trade union and democratic rights and freedoms in Poland and to insist that these alone can ensure lasting stability. And we should say quite bluntly that if the Pope does offer himself as an alternative to Solidarity and its leaders, he will turn out to be a God that failed.

Free Edmund Baluka!

At the end of a trial that lasted two and a half months, Edmund Baluka, historic leader of the Szczecin workers in 1970-71 and prominent socialist voice within Solidarity, was jailed for five years by a court in Bydgoszcz. He had been charged with attempting to overthrow the republic.

Solidarity's roots lay in the struggles on the Baltic in 1970-71 and its organisational model — the Inter-Factory Strike Committees which flourished during the August 1980 strike first appeared in the Szczecin area in January 1971. Similarly the demand for trade unions independent of the Communist Party had first been raised by the Szczecin workers. And the moving spirit and leader of the Szczecin workers was Edmund Baluka.

He had first been noticed as a possible leader by the Warski shipyard workers in the autumn of 1970 when, as a foreman, he had been ready to support a strike by welders in his section of the yard. In December, when the Warski workers took to the streets against the government's price rises, Baluka had been elected to the strike committee. The demonstrations were put down by the army's gun fire, but in January Warski struck again and Baluka drew the crucial lessons from the earlier confrontation when workers were killed. He urged Warski's employees to stay in the yards, occupy them, and refuse to negotiate with anybody except the Communist Party leadership in Warsaw. Other factories came out on strike in support of the Warski yard's demands, an inter-factory strike committee was formed, and the Party leadership was forced to come from Warsaw and negotiate an end to the strike. These were exactly the methods used in Gdansk ten years later. The Szczecin struggle was the indispensable prelude to the victory of August 1980.

And this is the fundamental reason why the martial law regime had to try to crush Edmund Baluka. They have been seeking to use a number of trials to try — in vain — to discredit every phase of Solidarity's tradition. The preparations for Solidarity between 1976 and 1980 should be tackled in the trial of the KOR. August 1980 was tackled in the trial of Anna Walentynowicz. The Solidarity period itself should be dealt with by the trial of all the top Solidarity leaders bar Walesa himself. And Edmund's trial covered the start of everything, 1970.

But while the trial of the KOR and the Solidarity national leaders had to be postponed, because of the powerful domestic and international backing for the accused, Edmund was a far easier target for the simple reason that he was an outspokenly radical socialist. During the early 1970s, the Polish authorities worked hard to undermine and destroy the working class leadership in Szczecin around Baluka, and in 1973 Edmund was forced to flee to the West. He ended up working in a factory in Man-

chester and living in obscurity until Bolek Sulik contacted him and persuaded ITV to produce a dramatised documentary of the Szczecin strike. This outstanding film, later to be presented to the Solidarity leadership and shown to working class audiences in Poland, enabled Edmund to make contact with the British Left. In the late 1970s he travelled around Britain speaking to factory and shipyard meetings, to Labour Party conference meetings, a Critique conference and other gatherings of the Left. He campaigned tirelessly to educate the socialist movement here on the condition of the Polish working class and to unite the left in defence of workers' rights throughout Eastern Europe. He was a founding sponsor of Labour Focus and enthusiastically gave us whatever assistance he could.

At his trial, Edmund was laughably accused of having links both with the CIA and with the Baader-Meinhof Group — a concoction of nonsense reminiscent of the Moscow Trials of the 1930s. In fact, after a brief contact with the Polish Socialist Party in exile (an affiliate of the Socialist International) he produced his own Polish-language socialist bulletin in Paris, with the aid of a French Marxist group called the OCI (Organisation Communiste Internationaliste).

During the August strike in 1980, the Szczecin workers raised the demand that Baluka be allowed to return to Poland and resume his job in the Warski yard. In November 1980 at a huge meeting of tens of thousands in Szczecin when Walesa visited the city for the first time as Solidarity's leader, he repeated the call for Baluka to be allowed back. In the spring of 1981, when he was still denied permission to return, Baluka entered Poland illegally and gained the shipyard workers' protection.

By this time he was convinced that purely trade union activity was insufficient to defend working class interests and he established a socialist party in Szczecin committed to the struggle for socialist democracy. Although the idea of political parties appealed only to a small minority of workers, his personal authority in the Szczecin working class remained very high.

He participated in the occupation of the Warski shipyard on 14 December 1981 and was interned under martial law. Some months later he was removed forcibly from the Wierschowo internment camp and confined alone in the Kaszubska prison in Szczecin. Edmund Baluka's case has been almost totally ignored by the Western media. This makes it all the more vital that socialists organise a vigorous campaign for his release. Our own meeting on his behalf in April attracted considerable interest and along with the EESC we will be raising support at the Labour Party Conference. Those wishing fact sheets, campaign postcards or more information should contact Anna Paczuska who is co-ordinating our campaign, c/o Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, London N4.

Old Bolsheviks Discuss

One version of the Soviet intelligentsia has it that its members are either careerists or dissidents,¹ another that it is wholly unsympathetic to socialism². While there is undoubtedly some truth in each of these versions, much else that is true is thereby left unsaid. For there clearly exist a large number of intellectuals who are neither careerists nor dissidents, a small minority of whom would describe themselves as socialists or Marxists. While the latter do not form a single group, either intellectually or politically, they can be distinguished from the rest of the intelligentsia by their belief in the importance of the distinction between Bolshevism and Stalinism, although in certain cases a belief in Marxism as a method of enquiry is the only clear distinguishing feature. Many of them began their careers while Stalin was still alive and, as a consequence, they tend to work in traditional disciplines such as history and political economy, where, in any case, Marxism is at its strongest. The older ones tend not to read or speak English, so their main foreign contacts have been with resident or visiting members of West European Communist Parties; however, in recent years, some contact has been made with scholars from English-speaking countries. All in all, though, they are an increasingly isolated collection of scholars, both domestically and internationally. Their best years were undoubtedly under Khrushchev, though my guess is that even then their views were too radical for the reformist wing of the bureaucracy. However, things may have looked more hopeful at the time and for a short while thereafter. The turning-point in their fortunes, as in the case of so many other intellectuals, was the clampdown on overtly critical scholarship that took place between 1972 and 1974. Up to that time they seem generally to have been able to get their articles and books published. Indeed, one of the most impressive works of Marxist scholarship published anywhere in recent decades, *The Method of Investigation of Property in Marx's Capital* by Vladimir Petrovich Shkredov³, in which the author carried through the critique of Soviet political economy he had begun six years previously in *Economics and Law*, (subtitled 'Principles of the Investigation of Relations of Production in Connection with their Juridical Forms of Expression'), was published as late as 1973.⁴ After 1974, their fortunes seem to have diverged. Some of them (Shkredov for example) managed to change both their field of research and place of employment, whereas others were less fortunate, suffering various forms of humiliation at the hands of their conformist colleagues.

It is against this general background, then, that the emergence in 1978 of the free social and literary journal *Poiski* (Searches) should be seen. Democratic socialist in orientation, *Poiski* survived just two years before it was silenced in the ferocious wave of repressions unleashed by the KGB at the

turn of the decade.

One of the intellectual driving forces behind *Poiski*, and a contributor to its fourth number, is a historian by the name of Mikhail Yakovlevich Gefter. Gefter until 1972 was Head of the Sector on Historical Methods at the prestigious Institute of History in Moscow. In that year he was dismissed from his post and his sector was closed down on account of high level criticism of a volume of essays and discussions he had edited on *History and Contemporary Problems* published in 1969.⁵ The overall theme of the volume was the nature of twentieth century revolutions and the contributors included such luminaries of the Soviet historical profession as B. Porshnev and V. Gorodetskii. Two contributions to the volume particularly angered the authorities: Gefter's articles on Lenin's debt to the Populists and Ya. Drabkins article on social revolutions. Gefter's sin, it appears, was that he had depicted Lenin as a flexible theorist and politician who reserved his severest criticism for doctrinaire Marxists who, like Plekhanov, clung to outdated formulae. Interestingly, one of Gefter's students, Evgeni Plimak, had been severely criticised a year earlier for making exactly the same point in an article on Lenin's handling of intra-Party disagreements during the early years of Bolshevik rule in a volume of essays he had helped edit on *Leninism and the Dialectics of Social Development*, published in 1970 under the imprimatur of the Institute of Philosophy.⁶ Both Gefter and Plimak were making the politically critical point that the necessity to rethink former positions as inherent in the revolutionary process, and, in doing so, they played down Lenin's use of the class approach to the appraisal of political positions. Gefter by showing how Lenin was willing to learn from people whom it was *de rigueur* to describe as petty bourgeois, Plimak by showing that changes in the nature of social being rather than the baleful influence of alien social classes were mainly responsible for the kinds of disagreements that had occurred between 1917 and 1921. More generally, each author was arguing for a historical approach to Lenin's political practice, an argument which Plimak and two fellow workers at the Institute of Philosophy were to extend to the categories of historical materialism itself in a volume entitled *The Principle of Historism in the Cognition of Social Phenomena*, published in 1973.⁷ Gefter himself had made free use of this principle in his sparkling contributions to the discussion sections of his volume.

In Gefter's case, the ideological chiefs had other scores to settle too. In another article on Lenin published in 1969 in *Novyi Mir* he had gone so far as to dispute the existence of a body of thought called Leninism.⁸ While seven years earlier, at the height of the liberal period, *Novyi Mir* had published an article by Gefter, Drabkin and Mal'kov, surveying the previous twenty

years of world history, which formulated a challenge to the authority of the Party the like of which had probably not been seen in print since the 1920s. *A propos* of the problems currently facing the party, the article spoke of:

'principally new tasks, of which humanity in the past had no conception, tasks, the translation of which from the language of Marxist theory into the language of practice cannot be achieved without revisions in the theory itself. The difficulty lies both in objective conditions and in different kinds of subjective obstacles. In some cases, this opposition still exists in spite of the fact that the remnants of the exploiting classes have already been sharply weakened and driving into the background. In other cases, the question concerns a broader and deeper resistance having its sources in petty bourgeois elementalism, forms of thought and habits created by centuries of proprietorship, backward, conservative traditions, capable not only of penetrating into the socialist organism but also of reproducing themselves in new, sometimes different manner of forms. Finally, there exists also the inertia of developed socialism itself, difficulties created by the delayed transition from one historical stage to another, outdated methods and formulae, which are already unprofitable in the changed conditions and therefore able to freeze and even interfere with the normal natural course of development.'⁹

Gefter stayed on at the Institute of History until 1975 and then took early retirement.

I first met Gefter in 1979. A small, intense man with a clear gaze and penetrating eyes he lives with his wife in a tiny three-roomed flat of the type Muscovites call *Khrushchoba* (meaning: slums built by Khrushchev). Propped against the books behind the sliding glass doors of the shelves which line the walls of his study stand photographs linking him to some of the major events and personalities of Soviet history. There is a photograph of a stunningly beautiful Anna Mikhailovna Larina (widow of Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin and daughter of the Bolshevik economist Yuri Larin) taken in the year of her late husband's arrest; by its side stands a photograph of the surviving son of Parvus — who is now generally credited with authorship of the theory of permanent revolution. Both are close friends of Gefter's. A photograph of Gefter in conversation with the late and much lamented editor of *Novyi Mir*, Alexander Tvardovsky, is a sad reminder of better times; and the haunting face of the late Eugenia Ginzburg stares out of a photograph taken in the last years of her life.

Intellectually, Gefter certainly lives up to his reputation as one of the most interesting historians in Moscow. Within minutes of our meeting he launched into an extraor-

Socialism

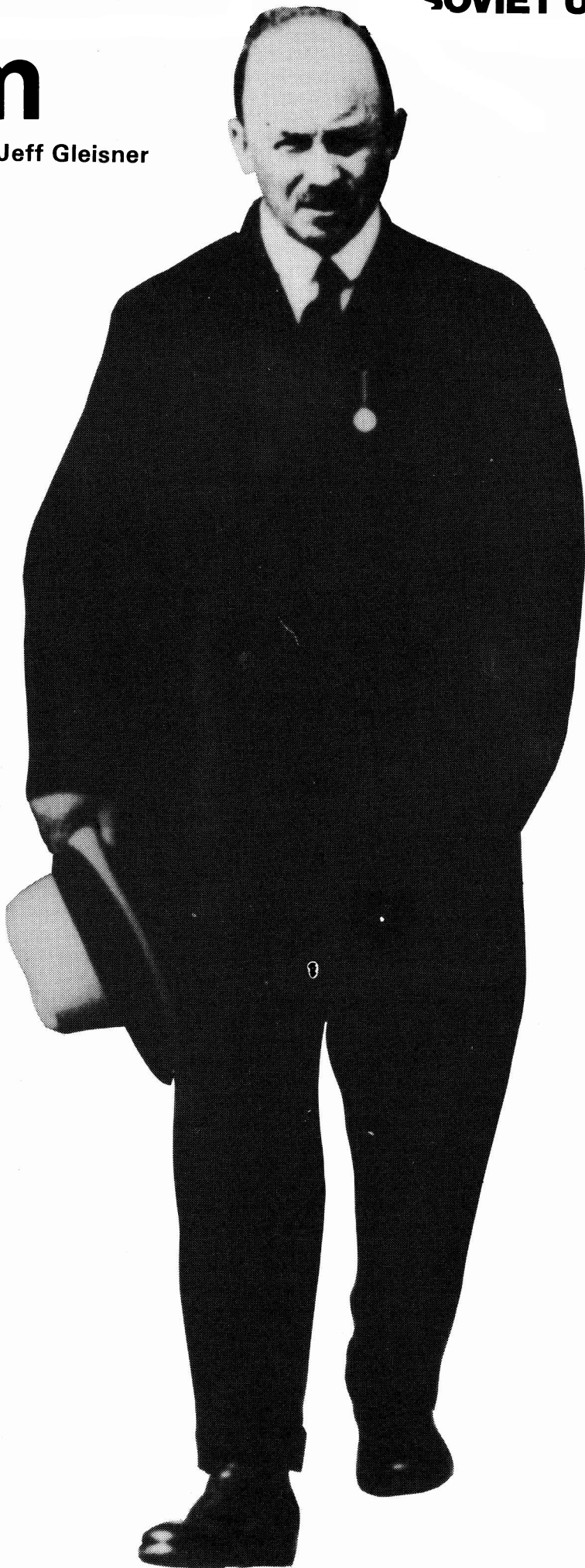
By Jeff Gleisner

dinarily erudite and wide ranging discourse on Russian and Soviet history. Likening its appearance to an explosion, he traced the principal stages in the development of the Russian State, like Avrekh, stressing its autonomy from society, and emphasising its inherently expansionist character as well.¹⁰

But I do not want to give the impression that Gefter is in any way an overbearing person; he was very patient with my frequent interjections and requests for clarification. Yet he does have a firmness of personality, not commonly encountered among Soviet Russians. When he came on to the Soviet period he quickly demonstrated his immense knowledge of Bolshevism and of Lenin in particular. Like Moshe Lewin and Charles Bettelheim, neither of whom he had read at that time, he stressed the importance and novelty of Lenin's NEP writings, pointing especially to the pluralistic implications of his views on the economics of the transition period (we were to return to this topic in our later meetings). He was sympathetically critical of the failure of the other Bolshevik leaders to tease out these and other implications of Lenin's last works, an indictment he extended to Bukharin as well. This was just one of the topics on which he took issue with Bukharin's biographer, Stephen Cohen, whom he had met a year previously; another concerned the much debated question of whether or not there existed a Right Opposition to Stalin in the thirties.

It was Gefter's view that the capitulation to Stalin was almost total, not least of the factors in this being the absence of an alternative political and economic model. In this connection, he considered that Cohen had read things in to Bukharin's articles and speeches after 1929 that simply were not there.¹¹ Furthermore, he felt that Bonapartism was inherent in the economic structure as it existed at that time. (By training Gefter is an economic historian, his first publication being a collection of documents on monopoly capitalism in the Russian oil industry.) None of these propositions is novel, of course, but they seem to take on fresh meaning when uttered by a historian living and working in the Soviet Union today. That there still existed people who understood and valued the distinction between Bolshevism and Stalinism did not come as a total surprise for me; for on my second visit to the Soviet Union, six years previously, I had been made a gift of Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period* by a mature philosophy postgraduate at Moscow University.

At a later meeting we discussed mainly current politics. I was keen to learn what Gefter thought of Roy Medvedev's views, knowing how respectfully they are regarded in British left-wing circles. I immediately sensed some discomfort at the mention of Roy Medvedev's name; 'Our privileged dissident', he called him. At the time, I was not fully aware of what lay behind that remark; for it was only some time after, when I had returned to England, that I



Bukharin pictured on a trip to London shortly before Stalin had him arrested and executed. He has still not been rehabilitated.

SOVIET UNION

learnt of Gefter's involvement with *Poiski* and that, in fact, he was already receiving the attention of the Organs before I left. I also suspect that there is some professional jealousy on Gefter's part regarding Medvedev's status as *the* voice of critical Marxist historiography in the Soviet Union. His assessment of Roy Medvedev's views, that the latter has been guilty of spreading illusions about the prospects for socialist democracy in the Soviet Union, is nonetheless a fair one.

It was a wary and frail looking Gefter who greeted me at the door of his Moscow flat when I returned to Russia after a four-year gap in the winter of 1983. The intervening years had evidently taken their physical and psychological toll, the extent of which I was to learn in the course of my visit. By coincidence, he had been reading Alexander Turgenev's essays on England at the time of my arrival, so the conversation on this occasion began with Britain rather than the Soviet Union.¹² Another refreshing thing about Gefter is that he shows as much interest in our lives and politics as we do in theirs. I recall how, at our first meeting, he had alleviated some of my doubts regarding the wisdom of expending one's intellectual energies on the study of a foreign country with an old Russian proverb, 'The alien is more yours than your own'; which, as it happens, is the title of Gefter's contribution to the fourth issue of *Poiski*. But the conversation soon turned to the Soviet Union. Gefter said that, not since the dark days of 1940 (another interesting year), had he experienced quite the degree of hopelessness about the country's future that he had felt this last year. 'We are grievously suffering from the absence of an alternative', was his summing-up of the situation — a judgement he extended to socialism in the West too. The masses, he said, were totally inert, and, so far as the peace issue was concerned (on which he spoke only at my instigation), were wholly under the sway of the regime's propaganda as regards the lessons to be drawn from World War II. Indeed, so heavily did the memory of Nazi invasion weigh on their consciousness that Soviet expansion itself, he felt, was seen as a pre-emptive measure.

He also spoke in an extremely pessimistic vein about humanity's movement towards a higher stage of unfreedom ('modernised slavery' was how he described it) and of the need for socialists to revise their conception of historical progress accordingly. But Gefter does not preach a philosophy of hopelessness and he is extremely critical of those contemporary Russian thinkers who do.

Zinoviev, he dismissed as essentially primitive, despite his insights, and of emigre intellectuals generally he said, 'They do not understand anything and do not want to understand anything', having in mind particularly, as he saw it, their lack of historical perspective on Russia's problems. But, as he delivered these judgements, I felt that I was hearing the voice of an embattled socialist, as well as that of the professional historian. I also felt that Gefter's dismissal of Zinoviev was most unjust, but I did not argue the point. I wonder now how well he knew

Zinoviev's work, for I was fascinated to learn later that they share a common preoccupation with the sources of Soviet conduct. According to his son, one effect of Gefter's enforced isolation these last few years has been to make him markedly less tolerant of the views of others.

Hope, for Gefter, rested on his belief that it was not a question of all or nothing so far as the Party's power is concerned. It was not utopian, in his view, to believe that the Party's monopoly of power could be relaxed without issuing a frontal challenge to its leading role. At any rate, he thought that socialist societies were faced with a unique problem: how to effect a principal change within the framework of the existing order. He had hoped that Jaruzelski might push things in this direction and rejected the view that military rule in Poland was a Soviet invasion by proxy. Gefter does not see exploitation as a major feature of Soviet society or indeed as the main problem confronting socialists in any of the industrialised societies: new forms of domination not directly related to economic life are in his view the principal enemies of humanity in both East and West.¹³

It was inevitable that the conversation sooner or later would return to the Bolsheviks. Actually, the discussion was provoked by me when I asked Gefter his opinion of Shkredov's work. He said that he held it in high regard (they are not personally acquainted) and went on to relate the distinction Shkredov makes between nationalisation (a juridical category) and socialisation (an economic category) to Lenin's views on state capitalism. Specifically, he argued that Shkredov's insistence that the degree of (real) socialisation possible in any economy is governed by the level of development of the productive forces — not by transformations in property relations — was more or less what Lenin had in mind when he insisted that the road to socialism in Russia lay along the path of state capitalism co-operation.

In this connection, Gefter drew my attention to Lenin's last major public pronouncement on the transition to socialism at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, where he states that state capitalism would represent a higher economic form than socialism given the nature of the Russian economy at that time.¹⁴ Gefter went on to suggest that were Lenin still alive he might well come to the same conclusion about the Russian economy today! This suggestion is not at all far-fetched when one considers that Lenin uses the terms 'socialism' and 'state capitalism' in his Comintern report to denote *whole* economies, 'state capitalism' denoting a mixed economy (mixed economically as well as juridically) under the hegemony of a socialist state.¹⁵ In his report to the Congress, Lenin pointed out that, 'Our state capitalism is distinguished from state capitalism as literally understood by the fact that we have in the hands of the proletarian state not only the land but also the most important parts of industry.'¹⁶ More revealing still is the following entry in the plan of Lenin's Comintern report:

state capitalism = (1) mixed society = 'guarantee of study' (training?).¹⁷

Gefter was not particularly perturbed by my suggestion that his Lenin would have found himself on the extreme right of the Bolshevik Party had he lived. 'That was the position Dzerzhinsky came to occupy in the last years or so of his life too', he told me.¹⁸ Where Gefter parts company with Lenin and (I think) Shkredov is in his belief that socialism itself should employ a variety of forms of ownership and a mixture of plan and market. His views on socialism, then, are quite close to those of Radoslav Selucky and Alec Nove.¹⁹

The conversation then turned once again to Stephen Cohen's biography of Bukharin. This time Gefter's criticism was that the author too often attributed views to Bukharin that were shared by the whole of the Bolshevik Party at the time; everybody (until 1929) was committed to an evolutionary perspective on the transition to socialism. However, he did agree that Bukharin was the author of the theory of socialism in one country, and that was an unmitigated disaster and theoretical blunder of the first order. Gefter's criticisms of the biography were tempered, however, by enormous respect for Cohen's scholarship and high regard for his empathy with his subject. Moreover, he told me that there was nothing he was saying which could not be said much better by Bukharin's widow, a fact I was able to verify for myself before my visit was over.

For the highlight of my recent visit was an evening spent in the company of Anna Mikhailovna at Gefter's flat. Also present were an Old Bolshevik, who presently goes by the pen-name of A. Zimin, and a specialist on the Italian Communist Party, who shall be nameless. Parvus' son was also to have been present, but he failed to make it on account of ill health.

The first to arrive was Zimin. Eighty-four years of age, Zimin is a genial, good-humoured character — and it is as well for me that he is. For, somewhat overawed by the occasion, I began our conversation by asking where he had worked under Stalin. 'I worked in a camp', came the laconic reply. It transpired that he had spent seventeen years in the camps of Kolyma, six between 1914 and 1941 and the remainder from 1946 to 1957, with five years respite for military services. The reason for his early arrest was his association with the Bolshevik Left Opposition. He had trained as a political economist under Preobrazhensky at the Institute of Red Professors, making his authorial debut with an article on Rosa Luxemburg, but his academic career was effectively brought to an end in 1925 when he came out in support of the Leningrad Opposition. (He was amused to learn that I had read Zinoviev's best forgotten foray into Marxist theory, *The Philosophy of an Epoch*).

What prompted him to join the opposition, he said, were the social and economic inequalities of NEP generally and the privileges of the Party-State bureaucracy in particular. His was not an opposition to bureaucracy as such — he accepted the need



Parvus (left) with Trotsky under arrest after the 1905 revolution.

Photo: David King Collection

for a measure of bureaucratic centralism in the Party — but a protest against the abuses of bureaucratic power. He also stated what is plainly obvious, namely that the oppositions never stood a chance against Stalin, who simply cut the ground from under them. Throughout the long years of his life Zimin has retained both his socialist ideals and intellectual powers. He is the author of an essay entitled 'The Place of History in the Social Structure of the Soviet Union' in the first volume of *The Samizdat Register* (edited by Roy Medvedev) and a study of Stalinism recently published in the West.²⁰ Under the pen-name Elkonin he also supplied *Let History Judge* with most of its theoretical backbone.²¹

I was somewhat startled by my first sight of Anna Mikhailovna Larina, for I had not envisaged the widow of a former political leader dressed in the clothes of ordinary folk. Clearly, she enjoyed no privileges whatsoever. Immediately, I wanted to enquire about *her* life, but fearful of stirring up painful memories I remained silent; in any case, this was neither the time nor the place for such questions. She saved the embarrassment of enquiring about her former husband by volunteering to talk about him herself. Nikolai Ivanovich, she said, was a soft man who possessed neither the personality nor the inclination to be a political leader. Stalin, she sighed, played on his weaknesses like a piano. The so-called Right Opposition, she continued, was pure invention; there was no Bukharin group within the Party. Nikolai Ivanovich, she reiterated, could never have formed such a group for

the simple reason that he was not that kind of man.

In a critical reference to the Cohen biography, she said that he was not a democrat either; none of them were democrats, she exclaimed, how could they be when they believed in the *dictatorship* of the proletariat! The Bolsheviks were a political elite, she said, and they knew full well that herein lay their only means of survival. Only Trotsky of the other leaders, she thought, was any match for Stalin, but he was not interested in leading the Party either; only in his case, it was because he wanted to be higher than the Party! She was very gratified to learn that Bukharin's books were read in the West, especially *The Economics of the Leisure Class*, for he considered it his best book.

However, we had gathered not to discuss Bukharin or Soviet history but contemporary Soviet politics. For instance Zimin was very keen to find out what Michael Foot stood for. 'That would be hard to explain in English let alone Russian', I told him — though I did try. But it was Gefter who, as the dominant intellectual presence, instigated the discussion that held our attention for the rest of the evening. 'How does it happen,' he asked, 'that persons of diverse character and objectives always behave in unison within the framework of Party and Soviet organisations?' He was seeking to explain, in other words, the monolithic pattern of conduct that seems to characterise the behaviour of communists everywhere in public. For, they were all struck by the similarities in the way in which members of

both ruling and non-ruling communist parties behaved, the specialist on the PCI especially. After the latter had reminded us how Togliatti himself had signed the death warrants of the Italian Comintern representatives who were unfortunate enough to be present in Moscow at the time of the purges Anna Mikhailovna observed how communist parties have a curiously depersonalising effect on their members. I felt tempted at this point to stake a claim for Alexander Zinoviev's explanation of Soviet communism's monolithic character, namely, that communal life under communism tends to produce individuals who are adept at altering their personalities chameleon-fashion as the occasion requires, but I kept silent in deference to Gefter's sensitivity on the subject of emigre writers.²²

In any case, they appeared to be seeking a political explanation for the phenomenon, and the Italian specialist's suggestion that communism spawned a distinctive political culture met with general approval, although Gefter felt that social factors were at work in the situation too, but he did not say which. In retrospect, I am surprised that none of them mentioned the possibility that the kind of social transformation Russia has undergone in these last few decades (the destruction of an established upper class followed by the destruction of a rural society) might well cause people to cleave to collective forms of life, whatever the cost. Uncertainty and fear (of Stalinism) seem to me to be largely responsible for the sort of behaviour that Gefter and his friends were trying to explain. I am also inclined to think that Zinoviev's work can be made palatable to most tastes once it is placed within this framework.

When the present conversational possibilities of this topic had been exhausted, Gefter turned our attention to the recent Spanish elections. Duly noting that Carillo is the only communist leader ever to have relinquished power voluntarily, Gefter proceeded to expatiate on 'the world-historical task' (he commonly expresses himself in such terms) Gonzalez and the Socialist Party had set themselves, namely, to make Spain safe for democracy, and it did not very much matter to him what else they achieved so long as this task was fulfilled.

It was now midnight and we had been talking for close on five hours so with this observation the company began to disperse. First to depart were the Italian specialist and Zimin: both sent their greetings to Mikhail Fut. This left Gefter, his son, Anna Mikhailovna and myself to clear up: we had been seated around a heavy folding oak table which seemed to fill up the whole room (less a comment on the size of the table this than on the size of the room) and had conversed to a typically Russian accompaniment of tea, cakes, jam and sour cream.

It quickly became obvious in this more intimate atmosphere how close Gefter and Bukharin's widow are to each other; a portrait of him by her son hangs on the only wall of this room that is not covered by books. They have both suffered a lot, she in the long years of loneliness and isolation

following her husband's execution, he more recently. Most of Gefter's former colleagues are afraid to meet him on account of his involvement with *Poiski*; in 1981, he resigned from the Party after forty years of uninterrupted membership (but then one does not interrupt one's Party membership in the Soviet Union); and he has difficulty in relating to his son's generation on account of their antipathy to even his moderate version of socialism: most of them are natural scientists and so far as I can tell natural social democrats — British-style — too. But the main source of his suffering is (he told me) that he is not able to use his abilities on behalf of society. Yet he never once displayed a trace of self-pity throughout the entire period of my visit. But, for Russians, of course, life and suffering go together.

Almost Gefter's last words to Anna Mikhailovna before she too departed were taken from Pushkin: 'I want to live, to suffer and to think.' It is precisely this willingness to confront the pain involved in living that makes the company of Russians so demanding and rewarding to foreigners. But Gefter's suffering is nothing less than a tragedy for his society, because there can hardly be a more enlightened person alive in Russia today.

My abiding memory of all these people, then is not their suffering, but their hope and liveliness and the depth of feeling they have for their country. The older ones have also led very eventful lives, which gives them ample material for living. Yet, sadly, I must end on a sombre note. After Anna Mikhailovna had left, Gefter gave me two letters he wanted posting when I returned to England (I was due to leave the following day). Watching him fumble as he placed the

letters in their envelopes and sensing how nervous he was as he handed them over to me brought home in a most vivid manner the reality of living in what is still a police-state. It was tragic to see a proud man and talented human being being reduced to this condition.

1. This is more or less the position Alexander Zinoviev takes in his early fictions, *Yawning Heights* and *Radiant Future*, though he modifies his position somewhat in his later writings; see, for instance, the statement of his position in *Myi Zapad* (We and the West), L'Age d'Homme 1981, p. 111.
2. This view has been forcefully stated by Hillel Ticktin in a number of articles in the journal *Critique*.
3. *Metod issledovaniya sobstvennosti v Kapital K. Marksa*, MGU, 1973.
4. *Ekonomika i pravo*, Ekonomika, 1967. An account of this book will be found in M. Lewin, *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates*, Pluto, 1975.
5. *Istoricheskaya nauka i nekotorye problemy sovremennosti: stati i obsuzhdeniya* Moscow, 1969. For a review of this volume and the controversy it aroused see J. Keep, 'The Current Scene in Soviet Historiography', *Survey*, Winter 1973.
6. *Leninizm i dialektika obshchestvennogo razvitiya*, Nauka, 1970.
7. *Printsipy istorizma v poznanii sotsial'nykh yavlenii*, Nauka, 1973.
8. 'Iz istorii leninskoi myslis', *Novyi Mir*, Vol. 45 No. 4, April 1969, pp. 135-157.
9. 'Mir za dvadtsat let', *Novyi Mir*, June 1965, pp. 206-31.
10. For a discussion of Avrekh's views on Russian absolutism see J. Keep, *op. cit.*
11. *In fact he thought it was misleading to talk of a Right opposition at all in the Party. The so-called Right, he said, never possessed the sort of ideological coherence and organisational unity that would entitle it to be spoken of in the same terms as the Left.*
12. *Khronika russkogo dnevniki* (1825-26), Nauka 1964. Alexander Turgenev spent the last 25 years of his life in voluntary exile in Western Europe during the period of reaction following

the abortive Decembrist uprising. The essays in the first part of this volume record his impressions of life and society in the West and were originally published by Pushkin in his journal, *Sovremennik*. This is the period Gefter is now working on; it has obvious parallels with the present.

13. Nicos Poulantzas came to a similar conclusion in his last book, *State, Power, Socialism* (New Left Books 1978), Part Four.
14. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, tom 45, Moscow 1978, p. 280.
15. It is interesting to note that neither Moshe Lewin nor Charles Bettelheim refer to Lenin's Comintern report in their respective accounts of his last writings. In fact, each author explicitly states that Lenin abandoned the concept sometime after 1921. Lenin's article 'On Co-operation' (written about two or three months after the Comintern Report) is cited by both authors as evidence of his break with the theory and practice of state capitalism. In my view, there is no contradiction between the strategic perspective Lenin outlined to the Comintern delegates and his praise a few months later of co-operatives. His discovery of the virtues of co-operation simply enabled him to fit the peasant economy into the strategy of building state capitalism and compensated in part for his failure to enlist the support of foreign capital in pursuit of that end. But I should emphasise that this is my view, not Gefter's.
16. *Polnoe ...*, p. 289.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 437.
18. This is easily verified by reading Dzerzhinsky's last speeches and writings in his capacity as Chairman of VSNKh.
19. As presented in *Marxism, Socialism and Freedom* (Macmillan 1979) and *The Economics of Feasible Socialism* (Allen and Unwin 1983) respectively.
20. Alexandre Zimine, *Le Stalinisme et son 'socialisme reel'* (Collection La Breche 1982).
21. Spokesman Books, 1972, pp. 552-3.
22. For Zinoviev see *Zholtyi Dom* (L'Age d'Homme) 1980, especially part four, and *Gomo sovetikus*, L'Age d'Homme, 1982. For a good account of what Zinoviev means by communalism see Philip Hanson, 'Alexander Zinoviev: Totalitarianism From Below', *Survey*, Winter 1981.

Eastern Europe in the 80's

2 articles by Jaroslav Sabata

(In our last issue, we published a long article by Janos Kis on the main trends in Eastern Europe after the declaration of martial law in Poland. We continue this series of reflections with two articles by the prominent Czech Marxist Jaroslav Sabata. A leading Communist political leader and theoretician in 1968 and a moving spirit within Charter 77, Sabata has tirelessly sought to find a common language with the rank and file of the Communist Party in his struggle for democratisation. His first article, outlining a path towards socialist democracy, reflects this concern. It was originally written as a letter to his interrogator, a Captain in the Czechoslovak political police, and the style of the article, which we

have slightly cut to remove references to immediate circumstances, reflects this setting.

Sabata's second article, addressing Eastern Europe's international setting at the end of the detente era, is an extract from a much longer letter which he wrote earlier this year to E.P. Thompson. We are very grateful to Palach Press for permission to publish both pieces. The first article was translated for Labour Focus by Andrew Csepel. The second is taken from the English version published in Voices From Prague, issued jointly by Palach Press and END.)

What path out of domestic crisis?

Z. Kamecki demanded a fundamental political analysis of society. I am not going to attempt that here. I am not analysing the Polish crisis. I only wish to illuminate one thing: that the overall development of the crisis puts into question the well-known old stereotypes of subversive activity; and the old matter of the 'artificial creation' of class enemies is once again topical. Only its presentation is different.

Two or three years ago in Czechoslovakia, it was officially publicised that the system of economic management corresponded to conditions prevailing in the fifties and that by the end of this

period it had become necessary to change things. Perhaps you remember how I quoted the Prime Minister in this context? The question is whether the given system has ever corresponded to actual conditions and needs. However even if we do assume that change was necessary by the end of the fifties, we would not be saying anything more than that we lived in a historically outdated system, to be dispensed with in practice as well.

The well-known argument conducted in the sixties hoped to answer the question as to whether we should improve upon the existing system or opt instead for a new one. For a short time the



Jaroslav Sabata pictured at a recent Charter 77 meeting in Prague.

more radical approach was able to assert itself to such an extent that in its developed form (preparing the ground for a new economic and political system) it was condemned as anti-socialist.

But if we then establish today that we have a system that is historically outdated, we are saying nothing more than that history has pronounced a clear verdict over the concept of 'socialist principles', which it has deserved for postponing the necessary changes over a full quarter of a century.

In history 'If ...' has no value. But this does not mean that we cannot say: if the 'conflict of ideas' were engaged in as a 'conflict of ideas', and if they did not degenerate into accusations, then this process of change would not be so unbelievably overdue. Or put another way: If we are to find a way out of this acknowledged stagnation, we have to destroy and overcome the old official presentation of the development of relations, conflicts and arguments, which have filled the domestic political history of recent decades. Otherwise all attempts at reform will remain still-born.

The security organs have collected many pieces of information about our dissidents (chartists, non-chartists and pre-chartists alike) since the end of the sixties. They include former Party members and those who were never in the Party, yet who nonetheless consider themselves Marxists and Communists (Petr Uhl is one amongst many); they include democrats and non-Marxist socialists as well as committed Christians of independent political persuasions. Even without the aid of this information, it is common knowledge that almost all who were sentenced and condemned for subversion of the Republic refuted the accusation that they were inspired by hostility towards socialism.

This behaviour is understandable both because they do not wish to prejudice themselves in the eyes of the court (bearing in mind that hostility towards socialism is a precondition for the charge of the criminal act of subversion), or as proof of the claim that pre-war capitalist conditions have not only been historically overcome, but also politically and practically.

I am not trying to persuade you that things are better than they are by saying that. I do want to impress upon you that this behaviour is not anti-socialist. I am consciously coming around to the question of 'plurality' — that is, whether it is possible in our society to have and to contest different political viewpoints. The official line is that 'we do not need pluralism' (Jan Fojtík in his polemic against the attitude of the Italian Communists to the Polish crisis). But this is not convincing; we do not live in a society

free from contradictions. Yuri Andropov remarked in a similar context (in his speech celebrating Lenin's birthday this year), that within this new society there is no room for the formation of political parties hostile to socialism (even if conflicts exist within that society) and he added that the Soviet people would not tolerate such parties ...

We could realistically modify his ideas if we agree with the fact that there is no fertile ground *for the victory* of anti-socialist parties. While it is true that such parties, objectively, could be formed, they could not be victorious; they would represent an anachronism. They would not be able to find support among broad sections of the people, whose power is anchored in the constitution. A qualified democratic representation of a free people would prevent their victory.

The dam preventing the restoration of capitalism must of course be consciously built. Above all by ensuring the prosperity of socialism. This necessitates that it functions within a democratic framework to include all socialists. I mean by this a strategic alliance (not one of mere temporary convenience) which is to be anchored in the power structure, the political, ideological and judicial life of social relations as they actually exist. This alliance would use radical methods to expose and discard the National Front. Vaclav Havel (who has always been beset with doubt about the fundamental points of this problem) used the term democratic-socialist bloc in reference to such a political coalition. Words are not so important. We could talk equally well of a 'front' or 'union' or whatever. What is important is the content of the organisation. If you so desire it, in terms of class content: the genuine political expression of a union of workers, peasants and intelligentsia ...

And while I am paraphrasing the Constitution, it may also be appropriate to add that new wine can be poured into old bottles.* Considering this problem, Zbigniew Siedlcecki wrote in *Trybuna Ludu* in the autumn of 1981. He was reflecting on the ruins of the Front of National Unity (FJN) in Poland and on the possibilities of a concentration of all democratic socialist forces. He correctly realised that only in a concentration of this kind could a realistic and democratic way out of the crisis be found. However the forces in favour of such a solution were at the time weaker than those who opposed it.

* The phrase 'the genuine political expression ...' is a more or less direct quote from the Constitution. Sabata seems to be hinting that the existing Front could be transformed into a genuine one.

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A democratic socialist bloc is of course in itself an expression of a 'closed' plurality. It would and could not include all political tendencies existing in a given society. It presumes unification around a programme and voluntary democratic discipline, which would discourage a tendency towards a fight 'without rules' and the principle of an egoistic battle with everyone for themselves. But it is not an expression of political monopoly. It does not seek to deny the independent existence of each individual article included in the fundamental political agreement within a corresponding constitutional framework. It does not limit political democracy by 'excluding on principle'; it does not deny the principle of free expression of *all* independent viewpoints.

You may say that the project of a democratic socialist bloc is wishful thinking. I maintain that it is the only way forward. The only way to overcome stagnation and crisis, how to move on whilst avoiding solutions of the left or right which history has discarded.

The creation of a democratic socialist bloc cannot be carried out by a one-sided administrative act of the power apparatus. The conditions for it need to ripen. The necessity of change can be seen and heard everywhere, but ideas as to what form it should take still vary too much. On the other hand conditions for a new unity exist throughout our society and in the political apparatus (unity 'within variety'). A comprehension of the vital questions is growing in all classes, strata and groupings, and in the circles of those who govern and judge. The experiences of great crises, especially the present Polish crisis, accelerate this process.

This does not mean that no forces exist to retard the process. These are strengthened by the fear of emotional anti-Communism and political demagogy in the camp of those who speculate about the possibilities of reform 'from above'. We have already talked about this. Your colleague contributed to the discussion on this subject with the cry: 'It is precisely people like you, the Sabatas and the Mlynars, who opened up the flood-gates to anti-Communism in '68.' He did not realise that we were talking about two different things. I was considering the anti-Communism of the person in the street who for years has been cursing conditions, the regime and Communists (between which they do not differentiate), yet that does not make them bourgeois, pining for lost privileges. Your colleague's conception of anti-Communism was of ideological diversion organised by imperialist centres, which encourage people like me who express what people think and how people feel. This betrayed a noticeable inability to differentiate between real anti-Communism, which is an apology for capitalism, as Heinrich Böll says, and specific anti-Communism of the person on the street who identifies and values emotional democratism, and finds any sort of authority distasteful.

There has been a significant increase in this emotional anti-Communism in recent years. It has penetrated the feelings of ordinary people who, despairing at the course taken by economic and public life (without really differentiating between the two — and with good reason), cry out, astonished and powerless: 'I don't believe it! You've got to be kidding! What's this country coming to?'

You never gave the impression that you were worried by this — it is a mood common amongst workers, a significant section of people involved in running the economy and the intelligentsia. But you made it quite clear that my ideas worry you. But I concede that the ideas of me and my friends could worry you if you were worried by the mood which is spreading throughout society. That is, so to speak, built in to your role as a member of the State Security, the task of which is to neutralise 'anti-Communist, anti-socialist dissidents'.

However, in the context of this role, no answer can be found to the question which the phenomenon of dissidence throws up. That is not your fault. It is a question of the attitude of those in responsible places to political reality.

The last time we parted you remarked — to yourself really — that you value humility above all else. It sounded like an admission of faith. It was curious and unusual. We did not have time to elucidate what exactly you meant to say by it. But in as much as you wanted to inform that in political matters I act with too much self-confidence, it was tactful.

I am interested in the subject because it came from you. On many occasions I have remembered my dear Professor

Komarkova who greatly disliked those who thought they were right, and who considered it their right to suppress other people's opinions. This affliction threatens people in power in particular. I assure you I know what I am talking about. I would therefore be glad if you believe me when I say that I am the last person to think that we, opponents and critics of the regime, think we are right about everything everywhere and the dear Party is always wrong. No one particular party is privy to an absolute and comprehensive truth when answering questions posed by the crisis of human civilisation at the end of the twentieth century. Nor can it. Because no universal truth exists to hand. It is born out of a 'conflict of ideas'. I would not be telling you anything now, if I said that it exists between us.

The theme of humility has, however, a noticeable historical political dimension. Lenin, who contrived to look at communists through the eyes of non-communists, once asked himself, in a pointedly unconventional fashion, the rhetorical question, what is communist conceit. He talked about a characteristic type, still inhabiting the party to this day, who thinks that all problems can be solved by decree. Lenin was pillorying the vice of more or less individual behaviour. But the phenomenon, which he was so biting ironic about, had a more profound dimension. And this ultimately became an organic and institutionalised affliction. The essence of the Stalinist spirit was 'the decree', which triumphed in the system of direct order from above (bureaucratic centralism) and in the repression against the undisciplined, until it led to despotism and crime. And so it had to be followed by 'the spirit of the 20th Congress'.

Even so, the old methods and practices were not overcome in one go. The new general line of the international communist movement (and many have forgotten, possibly sincerely, that such vocabulary was used in the past) had to cope with more than one internal conflict. These problems were visible, for example, in the immodest policy claiming that the transition to communism could be achieved in the lifetime 'of this generation'. I am referring to the programme of the early 1960s without any desire to make cheap jokes at the expense of Nikita Sergeevich (Khrushchev). The mistake runs much deeper and drags on far longer in the erroneous assumption that the trouble lies in an unrealistic approach to the task of building the *economic* bases of communism and moreover in getting the timetable wrong for its construction (technically, we should have already made the transition to communism at the start of the 1980s, according to the programme).

Today we look at the internal history of the communist and working class movement from a far higher and more mature vantage-point. We have the additional experience of Asian Communism (not only of the Chinese cultural revolution and the Khmer Rouge) and of Eurocommunism, and most recently of martial law in Poland. The list does not end there. What once appeared to be a manifestation of 'Khrushchevite subjectivism and lack of sobriety' now reveals itself to be a conceptual mistake of the most literal kind: a mistaken approach to reality in general. Its failure has lain in its assumption that it is possible to construct a communist, self-managed society in this or that particular country or group of countries, without the whole world, and above all the whole of Europe (united, not divided) maturing into a system of *democratic* self-management. Democratic self-management (the programme of Solidarity referred to a self-managing republic) is in the setting of a classless society a very humble historical-political formation. It is a state or 'semi-state' based on the well-known democratic tradition of the bourgeois-republican era, but at the same time transcending that tradition (above all in the area of the self-managing producers, ie. in workers' self-management, workers' councils, etc.). The concrete form which it takes in this or that country can certainly not be a matter to be worked out on paper beforehand in a preconceived programme. This merely emphasises the enormity of this practical political goal, which stands before humanity and above all before Europe and necessitates sobriety. The realism of the post-Khrushchev era (Brezhnev) must be carried through to its conclusions in this sense. The rebirth of the spirit of the 20th Congress of the CPSU would thus be only an apparent return to the old ways, as would a similar return to a renewal of the spirit of Helsinki.

Both these programmes can incidentally only be understood as two sides of a single, unique, democratic political process encom-

passing both domestic and international relations. If I were to expand this theory I would be going too far.

But something more must be said, nonetheless. Many communists start to bristle when they hear the words democracy, democratisation, democratic renewal. In such words they instantly perceive the devil of bourgeois or petty bourgeois liberalism. They have completely forgotten the difference between a democratic and a liberal approach. Using phrases about a class viewpoint they seek to deny the revolutionary tradition of the workers' movement in its real sense, which is a democratic and in no way a liberal sense. It was formed within a mass working class movement in conflict with the politics of the liberal bourgeoisie and of ruling minorities acting in an enlightened fashion 'from above'.

For this reason, dear Captain, I talk of a democratic turn to the left. I mean by this a turn which both depends upon the support of the broadest strata of the people and carried them with it. It is of course a turn to socialism of a democratic and self-managing type. The strategy of a democratic turn to the left is the precise opposite of a liberal (pro-capitalist) turn to the right, and it must not be narrowed down to a reform communist policy of liberal steps to the right following the example of the 'Hungarian road' (exclusively 'from above'). It is a thorough and multi-faceted turn to the reality of our epoch.

The word 'turn' reminds you of the concept of 'overturning' from the penal code ... I am not sure, but perhaps I can put your

mind at rest by reminding you that the transition to the new economic policy before the events of the 1960s was also a democratic turn of this type. The Soviet publicist, Yevgenii Ambarsumov, wrote about it in the following way. Writing in *New Times* (1980/15) before the Polish crisis, he concluded an essay by saying that when Lenin encouraged just such a turn he was doubly right, in his own time and again today. But why twice and why did the second turn not come earlier? Today we could also pose the question: why is it possible to see a common denominator in the events of Kronstadt (1921) and of Gdansk (1980)? Are they both the intrigues of counter-revolutionaries or are they the reality of mass working-class and popular protest against wrong politics? This begs the further question: what was the source of the underlying idea of the immediate transition to communism and self-management, in which Lenin saw the cause of the most severe economic and political crisis? And has this sort of approach already been overcome?

Every great political turn is a process which develops in differing historical degrees and semi-degrees. Within them new conditions are ripening amongst both ruling circles and the opposition, in the camp of those who rule and on the side of those who are ruled, in official structures and outside them. It is a process with various essential elements both 'below' and 'above'. It is possible that some may come into conflict with others; the question is: can they be channelled constructively?

The struggle for peace and Eastern Europe

Viewed overall, the peaceful coexistence of the two opposing systems is going downhill. There has been an even sharper downhill development since Helsinki. As for the Belgrade and Madrid meetings, they have been a waste of time. Recent years have shown that peaceful coexistence is actually being transformed into nonpeaceful coexistence. So-called peaceful coexistence achieved its greatest "successes" in the most controversial area — that of armaments. A strategy of so-called military parity emerged which became the main bone of contention in later disputes. Looked at naively, the situation can be understood as follows: First of all it was necessary to achieve military parity and everything else had to be subordinated to this aim; now that that aim has been attained the main task is to limit military competition in favour of economic, cultural, social and other kinds of competition. But the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Meanwhile, the fact that the entire post-war history of our continent is virtually the history of its militarisation and there is no end of it in sight if we continue to behave in terms of limited rapprochement.

A major change towards democratic peace, which is what the democratic peace movement constitutes, is therefore a historical necessity. Any grassroots peace activity in whatever part of Europe will lose its identity and cease to be autonomous if it fails to develop in the spirit of such a major democratic transformation.

There is no contradiction between this prospect and support for measures which help relax international tension. Every disarmament measure is important viewed in this light. The same is true of every advance in human rights. The important thing is for governments to take part in really productive negotiations, for them not to feign negotiations, so that genuine progress is made, the pace of talks increases, and the opportunity for democratic peace activity widens.

This calls for open and public negotiations. We must fight tooth and nail to prevent talks going on behind the backs of the public and disarmament matters eluding public control and instead remaining the province of military technocrats and technocratic diplomats whose aim is to soothe the public with the pretence of negotiations. The demand for talks to be as open as possible to the public should be pursued with much greater emphasis. This represents the most practical link between the different 'sectional' initiatives and programmes. It contains the main pointer to major democratic transformations. The expression *force a change* means no more nor less than the struggle of 'the public' for 'public' dealings, a struggle which is being waged in all spheres and in every sense.

Within the peace movement itself this struggle means chiefly countering all attempts to relegate the struggle for civil rights in

favour of the supposedly all-important universal and supreme right to life. I do not intend to underrate that right in the least. But the old and all too obvious phrase that no rights will survive a nuclear war is repeated all too glibly and too often. It is bandied about to such an extent that it has become a pacifist slogan whose sense can be understood as no more than the right to survive at any price: even on one's knees. I suspect that I need not convince you that the right to life implies a life of dignity. But the fact remains that there exists an attitude of suspicion to that which was current in all the difficult moments of the great democratic revolutions, i.e., it is better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees! And Dolores Ibarruri is far from being the only one we could quote in this connection.

Ladislav Hejdanek deals with this topic in all its significance (in 'What kind of peace do we actually want?'). He shows that false, bogus, frail peace leads to war. He bases it on the premiss that the great maxims of our civilisation are twice as valid today, and this is true precisely because the very existence of the human race is threatened. We must hold on to these maxims if we are not to allow ourselves to be manipulated up to a point from which there will be no return.

If we are to take the positive results of detente forward we must give political expression to these very maxims. Which also means confronting at the same time all attempts to foist a 'future' that has no future, i.e. the maintenance of the post-war geo-political status quo as a basic condition for peace. Our 'small' change of direction — detente — will fail to develop into a major change if we do not imprint on it issues which attract spontaneous attention and open new horizons. Only in this way will we be able to use the new perspective to develop a new political continuity so that we may create an all-European body of solidarity which will not allow itself to be dragged into any pragmatic network. For the conflict situations are going to multiply along with assertions that no new perspective is required and hence those who promote it are also superfluous. This was always the way with the old politics, and 'there was never any other way'.

Hence the priority to decide what in practice is implied by your own demand that we should act as if a united and pacific, neutral Europe already exists... we must disregard the prohibitions and limitations imposed by any national state ...

I take you to mean that we must look into the very depths of the crisis of European humanity, into the depths of the crisis in the traditional forms of European civilisation which have spread worldwide. We need to do this not in order to dwell on morbid, negative images but rather to see how the significance of Europe for the fate of humanity could acquire a quite new and positive

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character. Once upon a time Europe ruled the world: now the old forms of domination are in ruins while the new ones are rooted in the artificial division of our continent. If we are to affirm in a new manner the central significance of Europe we must understand the move towards European unity (and this includes the Soviet Union) within the global social context.

The world is not an amalgam of nations, states, continents and blocs. It is an entity with its own internal structure. A non-democratic change in Europe would radically intensify the democratic development of the *entire* industrially-developed North — including the United States and Japan. A neo-democratic transformation of the North would release unimaginable amounts of wealth and resources which could be used to tackle the global problems of humanity: it would lay the basis for the emergence and development of a new international economic order which the non-aligned nations describe as new and democratic: it would open the way to the reorganisation of the United Nations (starting with a revision of the Charter as already called for by the majority of members but refused by the main superpowers): it would lay the basis for new and more effective fora for regional and international integration.

This rough outline of a chain reaction of changes is derived from the logic of the internal relations of the world community. The changes in Europe are the trigger and are central to the process as a catalyst, but not even Europe is a conglomerate of states and blocs. It is a specific entity, one part of which underwent a radical change forwards and backwards simultaneously, and now the contradictions of that change have grown so acute that they cry out for a new pattern of development. In the platitudinous language of reformist communism they speak of the need for a change from 'extensive' to 'intensive' economic development.

But the real sign of the times is the Polish crisis. It is not a crisis that is now over, it is not a *Polish* crisis, nor is it just another chapter in the history of crises in the central European states. It is the dramatic beginning of a crisis in the 'geo-political' layout of Europe, which Helsinki was supposed to set its seal on. As Milan Simecka put it well in his contribution to the Prague peace conference (with a wry comment that it is a contribution that 'most probably' will not be delivered): 'The evident crisis of the system of "existing socialism" in Eastern Europe is also a crisis of peace.'

Simecka's sentence also contains an important condition: the prospect of solving that crisis is also a prospect of peace. "Solidarity" in Poland staked it as the aim of its programme: the demand for a *self-governing republic*. This concisely expresses the political form of the new type of development, namely, that this cannot be achieved only through the fundamental economic change that is being called for. It requires a new social climate and of necessity has its own ideological and political dimension (and here I am quoting from the ideas of an official Czech journalist).

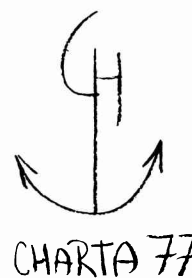
The concept of a self-governing republic or self-governing democracy (democratic self-government) as we are accustomed to call it here, and as others do elsewhere, is not in itself anything new. It is shorthand for the old principle that calls for citizens to have the right not to recognise *above them* any government but one of their own consensus (for a change I paraphrase Karl Marx and Yuri Andropov). We have described post-war history as one of militarisation. But it is also the history of struggle against militarisation. Through it the people of Europe are striving for a government of their own consensus. The critical point that our civilisation has reached is at the same time a new phase in this struggle.

A preliminary condition for its success is the elementary unity of the peace movement. It is not underpinned by abstract principles but by the major controversial issues of today — issues in which spirits purify themselves and fundamental political unity and agreement is achieved. The great protest movement in Poland which encompassed the entire people, but particularly the working class, shook as never before the claim that existing socialism is the expression of the people's real consensus and provides the basis for communist society, as Yuri Andropov claims in his article on Marx. If this claim were based on reality, not only would that protest not have happened but the developments since the attempt to suppress it would have taken quite a different course.

For this reason, a debate on the Polish question within all the various component sections and tendencies of the peace movement

END
Palach
Press Limited

Voices from Prague documents on Czechoslovakia and the peace movement



edited by
JAN KAVAN &
ZDENA TOMIN

Voices From Prague is an important collection of documents from Charter 77 and others, published jointly by END and Palach Press to stimulate discussion within the peace movement. An extract from one of the documents from this collection, a letter to E.P. Thompson from Dr Jaroslav Sabata, is published in this issue of *Labour Focus*.

This pamphlet contains an exchange of letters between E.P. Thompson and Vaclav Racek as well as an interview with well-known Czech writer Vaclav Havel. Dr Jiri Hajek, one-time foreign minister in the Dubcek government, writes on the relation between Charter 77 and the peace movement. He argues for the 'inseparability of human rights and peace, their mutual dependence' and states that Charter 77 is very close in spirit to the independent peace movement. 'Charter 77 refutes,' says Hajek, 'the black and white bloc-approach to world politics.'

A Charter 77 statement on the anniversary of August '68 states that 'it is no coincidence that the events of 21 August 1968 are cited as a reason to doubt the sincerity and genuineness of the peace proposals of the Soviet Union and its allies'. It therefore calls on the government to institute a 'policy of reconciliation' to undo the harmful effects of 1968, to overcome the social crisis and promote detente. Such a policy of reconciliation should include 'the departure of Soviet troops' from Czechoslovakia. Charter 77 welcomes the emergence of the independent peace groups in East Germany and states its solidarity with the aims of the Western peace movements.

Various other articles and documents in this pamphlet make it a very interesting and important contribution to the discussion about peace, European politics and human rights.

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could lead to the formulation of some sort of preliminary basis for an underlying political consensus. First and foremost it is clear that the slogan of self-government cannot be taken as a call for the restoration of pre-war conditions. Fifteen years ago the Czechoslovak crisis demonstrated that pre-war conditions had been overtaken twice. Once as a result of wartime and post-war developments themselves, and twice as a result of the internal development of the contradictory post-war changes. It cannot be helped (and here I address myself particularly to the neo-conservative camp); the fact is: HISTORY HAS NO REVERSE GEAR! There is no future in a return to "trusted models" — nor to that which still exists in the West but is itself in movement. The path ahead is an untrodden one and requires tolerance. No party can come to the conference table with the requirement that the rest

should accept that it can provide immediately a foolproof hundred percent certain diagnosis of the diseases being suffered by humanity, as well as an appropriate remedy.

Maybe it is in this connection that we might best address our most important proposal to the participants of the Prague peace meeting, namely, that they should rise above the political philosophy that advances the inviolability of the post-war geopolitical status quo as a condition for consensus. It is an insidious formula which is capable of making the coarsest intolerance appear as a contribution to peace by linking matters that are disparate. It suggests that the demand for more fundamental political change in our part of Europe threatens the territorial layout of our continent and is therefore a call to arms. I know of no genuine representative of the peace movement who would applaud the January statement of the Federal Minister of the Interior Herr Zimmerman, but it is also a well-known fact that nor was he applauded by a majority of the movement's opponents. It is about time there was an end to the practice of deadening the live nerve of dialogue about peace *and* democracy prior to inviting others to discussions about disarmament and peace.

This practice is justified by laws and constitutional provisions, as well as international legal principles, in particular the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. But it so happens that I must agree with you when you state that we must disregard the prohibitions and limitations imposed on us by states. They make totally inept rules for civilized life out of legal standards and concepts. I dealt with this matter in a letter last autumn to Jean Jacques Marie. It concerned our political prisoners, and the circumstances are still relevant in this instance. The Polish political prisoners have made this issue still more topical. It confronts the representatives of liberal reformist thinking (and not only within the communist parties but also the social democratic and bourgeois camps) with an extremely unpleasant question. They deal with peace and disarmament while indulging in a quite peculiar legal nihilism in an effort to achieve a common diplomatic and political language. Of course it is done out of good will as they try and save us from the worst, but it is the steep slope into a dark hole.

Neo-democratic change relies on an unambiguous language respecting the traditional values of European political culture. Of course we are witness to a linguistic Tower of Babel in a matter of democratic principles, but the constitutions of all the European countries, including those calling themselves socialist, embody the principle that the people is the source of power. This is no mere legal concept and formula. It is only in the hand of manipulators that the concept of the people's political will becomes devoid of meaning. In the hands of democrats it is the furnace in which civilisation is offered renewed opportunities to change to a new type of development.

As I have now started to talk about such a development maybe this is the moment for me to distinguish it from what is described as Euronutrality. I see some signs of the latter in your vision of a united and pacific Europe (you do not use the word "neutral Europe"). But a policy of neutrality for western (and central) Europe in its relations with the two competing superpowers will not separate the two giants. The democratic transformation of Europe is only possible as part of a plan that will change the strategic groundplan of the entire world, and hence also the situation of both superpowers within it (and changes each of them at the same time, of course). I am not too keen about a plan based on an utopian vision of a world government ruling a free and united humanity (but this does not mean that I reject the age-old Christian idea of universality — an idea which in modern times inspired the enlightenment and whose legacy is the socialist movement). The gradual integration of Europe through an ever deeper and all-embracing process of democratic and autonomous development "inwards and outwards" has a chance only if it gains influential allies in the camp of both superpowers and in the Third World, China included. As this means "keeping our feet on the ground": i.e. being firmly based on the actual relationships that obtain in our world and the actual standing of our part of the globe within them.

I am convinced that the historical conditions exist for such an "eventual" aim. The charge that it is too lengthy a process with an

uncertain outcome is invalid. We have already started along this path. We are the road makers and can decide the route. All it needs is for us to see the final goal more clearly.

Allow me now to draw your attention to some less distant goals. You wrote that "the 'idea' of communism is more contradictory than it appears: it holds in tension both 'totalitarian' and democratic elements". The quotation marks around the word "totalitarian" are your own (if the translation is correct). Many readers here would prefer to put them around the word "democratic"; unless, of course, they totally reject your thesis for one reason or another. It is possible to reject it from two opposite standpoints. For the neo-conservative, no communism can have a human face, not even Eurocommunism. General Jaruzelski has provided still further ammunition for this attitude: the "human face" of communism is a mask which conceals the leering face of the embodiment of evil — Satan. And then there are the reformist communists. They lack the ability to be self-critical (that is, if they have any critical faculty at all; after all they are "only" reformist communists). They do not understand the contradictions inherent in the particular ideological formation that they represent and which has dominated the political scene on our part of Europe in the post-Stalin epoch.

This is the point I would like to go into a bit further. It is particularly significant on the eve of the Prague assembly. The point is that reformist communism is based on a deep-rooted compromise with conservative bureaucratic practices of a particular ("Stalinist") variety, whose defenders display a systematic opposition to democratic control and hence also hostility to ideas of self-governing democracy. Their retrograde practices are themselves in more and more evident crisis. Furthermore, the compromise with it is itself in crisis. And the centre of gravity of the crisis is changing. Once again less compromising liberal and reformist tendencies and trends are reappearing. The struggle between the various fractions is hotting up.

I have dealt with this topic in order to give you a clearer idea of our political climate. There is a deep-seated reluctance here to establish any relations or partnership with reformist communists particularly since 1968 and as a consequence of the daily humiliation of citizens makes it far too emotional an issue (and you refer to Václav Havel in this respect). The systematic repression of the post-Helsinki citizens' movements has intensified this situation and martial law in Poland has capped the lot. As late as Spring 1981, Mieczysław F. Rakowski was still talking about the arrogance of the regime and at the end of last year stated that the backbone of the political opposition — i.e. Solidarity — had not yet been broken! But whose backbone does he want to break then, since he recognises that the source of the crisis is social protest whose strongest support was, and still is, among the industrial workers? I'm sure you will have heard the joke in which the Polish communists go to Lenin seeking advice and are told: Arm the workers!

Actually M.F. Rakowski himself has been accused of compromise (not of course with bureaucratic practices, but concerning his relations with those critical of them), but in common with many other communists he still drags behind him the ball and chain of anti-democratic traditions. Our own Vasil Bilak (whom you mention) is not well known as a reformist communist but at the recent Berlin conference in tribute to the memory of Karl Marx he declared on behalf of his party that during Marx's lifetime the main issue was to unite the working class, whereas now, at a time when the very existence of humanity is threatened, "the search for unity has acquired a new dimension", hence: People of goodwill unite, to save civilisation!

I do not intend to discuss whether it is less important today to unite the working class... I will limit myself to the remark saying that the above slogan is a good one. As a matter of fact it sounds a lot better than the full title 'World Assembly for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War' (For *what* life and only against *nuclear* war?). And I will ask the question: will the ruling communists listen to the people of good will in their own countries? No, let me be more precise: people of good will who do not agree with their policies but are willing to engage in a political dialogue with them ... At the end of March one of the members of the Polish Sejm (Romuald Bukowski) stated that they proclaim a dialogue but the monologue goes on; that the undeniable and universally recog-

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nised social plurality must become a fact by making it a basis for the co-operation of all — by finding a formula within the framework of socialist democracy such as the idea of a round table open to all groupings within society — formal and informal alike.

Bukowski is only one among many members of the Sejm, and is non-party. Furthermore he was speaking in 'crisis-ridden' Poland. Nevertheless, or maybe precisely for that reason, I will take it as a proof of my credo: that we must beat on locked doors precisely because they are locked; it is necessary to drill patiently through hard planks for the very reason that it takes time; the strategy of dialogue with all potential participants in an all-European discussion is the only way to isolate the incorrigible opponents of any dialogue, the stubborn representatives of an arrogant rule.

I do not agree with the slogan which is also being heard in Czechoslovakia now, namely, that we must end our fruitless policy of dialogue with the government and seek instead to isolate it, and in addition it is the moment to go underground and finish with 'legality'.

On the eve of the Prague peace assembly I cannot help remembering that exactly seven years ago, at a time when the first signs of the Polish crisis could be detected, a meeting of European communist parties ended in Berlin: it endorsed most meticulously all the Helsinki principles, demanded respect for human rights and freedoms including freedom of thought, freedom of belief, religion and conscience; it dwelt at length on the struggle for peace being waged in the West. But not a single mention was made of the internal problems of our part of Europe. Not all the participants agreed with this but the representatives of compromise with bureaucratic practices had their own way. And I ask: must they have the upper hand at the Prague meeting as well? And I answer: maybe the democrats at that assembly will break through the barrier which more democratically-minded communists failed to break through seven years ago? We must fight to win those who do not share the view that they are playing into the hands of the communists but believe in all good faith that it is in the Western interests of peace to avoid 'controversial' topics. The entire post-Helsinki experience provides a powerful argument against liberal pacifist positions and in support of the democratic peace movement. Pacifists are reproached for being the communists' 'useful simpletons'. Maybe, but they are also capable of being revolutionary democrats as well (and certainly the majority are), and they are radicalising liberal-reformist communists who have been scared out of their wits by radical workers.

There is a particularly significant document which could be discussed with the communists: the text of the Prague Declaration of Warsaw Pact countries. This concludes with the proposal for an agreement on the non-use of armed force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. From a detached observer's standpoint one might regard it as a sad epilogue for Helsinki which appears in the guise of a new breakthrough beginning. But our underreading of it is more down to earth. The proposal for a non-aggression pact can be taken in another sense as the opening introduction to a scheme for the step by step dissolution of the military and political blocs. The justification for this proposal is that the situation of discontent does not permit any delay in dissolving the blocs ...

Perhaps agreed. So it is not a question of postponing the dissolution of the blocs indefinitely but instead bringing forward the day. In the light of post-Helsinki developments such a policy can be meaningful and hopeful only if a real political dialogue is initiated in our part of Europe. This condition also implies the highest level of concreteness and commitment. In that respect the discontent does not broach delay!

How they tackle this task is up to the different governments. But the principle behind it has the contractual backing of the Helsinki Final Act. Common sense calls for its respect. The first step towards the dissolution of the military-political blocs should be the dissolution of their military organisations. The Prague declaration reiterates this well-known proposal. The abolition of military organisations (in a militarised Europe): what a dream! But viewed quite soberly it means that in Central Europe there would be no foreign troops — not even Soviet ones. But that means it will no longer look the way it does now. The symbol of the eighties looms so large that even after the Polish events it cannot be ignored. Even a political child can see it. If we are to achieve a

democratic central Europe, this calls for the earliest possible end to the persecution of independent Helsinki-based initiatives. But the ending of repression means considering a new policy towards persecuted groups. Otherwise a new political vacuum will be created along with a further unmanageable crisis which will reverse the development. And what is more, the problem does not concern Central Europe alone, nor can it do so.

The Prague Declaration states that socialism 'also' guarantees the continuous development of democracy. By this it means that in our part of Europe democracy is taken care of indefinitely. There is, however, a correlation between the prospect of dissolving the blocs and the development of political democracy, and this cannot be 'understood' in such an approach to the question of democracy. Europe without military blocs is actually half-way (at the very least) to reunification. The dissolution of the blocs really does mean a radical move towards the reunification of Europe, even if it does not go all the way. It can be assumed that the three steps (a non-aggression pact, the abolition of the military organisations, and the dissolution of the whole blocs including their political organisations) call for a whole series of further interim steps and elements of an international political character which would complement each other. But this scheme depends entirely on how the 'all-European dialogue' will develop *within* our part of Europe. On no account, however, is the disarmament plan the essential element, however well thought through and intelligent it may be. Without the fulfillment of certain democratic political conditions it will remain a dead letter. Detente will not progress. The dissolution of the political-military blocs will not grow out of detente unless a political dialogue is initiated, one that will 'grow' into a new political bloc.

I mentioned my letter to Jean Jacques Marie. I also sent it to our national authorities (more precisely, to the captain who took part with me in what I call a 'police dialogue'*). At the same time I set out in detail my position on the question of a genuine political dialogue stressing the rationality and necessity of establishing a democratic socialist political bloc which would provide a focal point for all the political forces of society ready for dialogue and constitute a sort of standing round table in the sense in which Sejm member Bukowski spoke about at the beginning of this spring in Poland.

This project's realism lies in its respect for the legitimate concern of all the official political groups in this part of Europe to maintain the continuity of positive post-war developments and the equally legitimate concern of society (expressed in different quarters and in various ways) to eliminate that which it views rightly as a brake on democratic development. The political conflict in Poland constitutes a conflict between policies of democratic renewal on the one hand and socialist renewal on the other. This conflict cannot be eliminated with talk about socialism 'also' guaranteeing the development of democracy. The problem has far deeper roots. We could learn something from J.V. Stalin's letters to Churchill and Roosevelt at the end of the war.

So at last we have reached the major issue of 'Yalta'. You are fully aware how controversial it is. And I do not intend to investigate it here. I will just recall President Mitterrand's sentence from the period just following the Polish December: 'Anything that would allow us to go beyond Yalta is welcome, so long as we do not mistake the desire for reality.'

'Yalta' will or will not be at issue in Prague, depending on how you look at it. If we keep our feet on the ground there is a chance that although the Prague government will reject a dialogue with Charter 77 it will not refuse to take part in a dialogue with certain sections of the peace movement (which are engaged in a dialogue with Charter 77 or could be). The reality is an incomplete dialogue. Our common desire is to transform it into a complete dialogue, or in other words an element in a full-blooded all-European dialogue.

There will be enough people at the Prague meeting who will be in a position to consider this from the viewpoint of those 'up there' (taking ourselves as being 'down here'). They do not have to be communists, but it will be an advantage if they are. Because it is they who ought to face the question: Is the slogan 'People of good will unite to save civilisation!' an expression of genuine acknowledgement that the old efforts to achieve unity have assumed new dimensions? Is it an acknowledgement of the mountain of

new experience? Or is it liberal phrasemongering, a tactical manoeuvre or a snare to catch pacifists? If it is a sign of a new appreciation, albeit only slightly so, what consequences will it have in terms of the need for a new and democratic, or at least more democratic, approach towards solving the familiar conflicts with human rights defenders in Czechoslovakia as well as a whole series of less well-known issues related to the unity of the Czechoslovak people (not to mention the communists themselves seeing that many of them are in the opposition).

Should any seek to duck the issue on the grounds that the question of 'isolated individuals or groups' is not a *political* matter we would remind them of the Polish lesson (if the previous experience of Czechoslovakia does not suffice). But first and foremost we must say to them: to propose a Pact on the non-use of armed force and the maintenance of peaceful relations while refusing peaceful relations and a dialogue with one's own people and indeed sending them to prison for holding contrary views means proposing to sign a worthless piece of paper. The Helsinki Final Act exists. It is time there was serious consideration of the causes of the constantly deteriorating situation. Unless they are identified and eliminated the proposed Pact will be useless.

Dear Edward Thompson, I would hate to give the impression that I seek to shift the blame for what is happening here onto someone else. My prime concern is that such a question should never arise. I want our activity to be based on principles that are common to the extent that the practical conclusions will emerge naturally.

My basic premiss is that the old policy of detente is in crisis but has yet to be superseded by a new democratic peace policy. Five years ago Carola Stern (in a quarterly which she edits jointly with Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass) considered the possibility of relating the struggle for peace to the struggle for human rights. She dedicated her article significantly to Willy Brandt. She fought honourably with the dilemma of how to save the old policy of detente while not letting up in the struggle for civil rights and liberties. She sought to explain why President Carter's human rights

campaign lost momentum. She concluded that the struggle for human rights is a long-term goal whereas in the short term humanitarian issues hit the headlines: help for the victims of human rights violations, efforts to ease the situation of those who suffer. Since the struggle for human rights in all its breadth challenges the very foundations of the political power structures in our part of Europe, and touches on the conflicts which result from them, it militates against detente ...

At that very time, we were discussing the prospects for Charter 77. Bozena Komarkova wrote then that a struggle such as ours cannot be waged in moderate terms of opportuneness and effectiveness. It requires the sort of grounding that assisted Jan Patocka in his struggle, the nature of which can be seen in his final message that there are values for which it is worth suffering. Bozena Komarkova challenged efforts to take the easy way out. But she displays something in addition: a profound understanding of the nature of the crisis of our civilisation. Her appeal to us not to fear sacrifice in the struggle for genuine values is fully at one with the traditional values of "European humanism".

I am sure you realise where I am leading: solidarity with us cannot be mere solidarity with people who are victims of certain circumstances. Solidarity must not be motivated simply by humanitarian considerations. Of course such solidarity is important and merits profound tribute. But it is not enough. Carola Stern concluded her study with the affirmation that the struggle for human rights will have to change as the historical situation and its prospects change. Well, that has happened. The historical situation has changed for good. One of the new phenomena is the emergence of the influential autonomous peace movement. We are now faced with the all-important task of formulating a common universal strategy for the democratic transformation of Europe.

I am grateful for every contribution that you and your friends have made to this end.

Yours sincerely,
Jaroslav Sabata,
Krokovskeho 43, 603 00 Brno.

April 1983

Normalisation - will the Pope help?

By Oliver MacDonald

Great political events embracing the experience of millions of people cannot be jeopardised by the indiscretions of some obscure, backroom bureaucrat. But political theatre, on however spectacular a scale it is staged, can. If, as the curtain falls on the last act, a technical error enables the audience to hear Hamlet say that he was pleased after all that his uncle had bumped off his father, a sizeable part of the audience would be left wondering, to put it mildly, what on earth the play had been about.

This tragi-comic fate has almost befallen the Pope's visit to Poland. Regardless of what the Pope may have said or carefully avoided saying, his gigantic audiences, embracing almost a third of the Polish nation, felt they understood what the drama was about. Behind the religious symbols and the poetic ambiguities, they understood the visit as a powerful moral aid to Solidarity. That was why they reserved their thunderous applause for every mention of its name, gave the Solidarity victory sign in their millions, and welcomed the presence of Solidarity banners in their midst. And the fact that the Pope was able to end his visit by meeting Lech Walesa was, for millions of Poles, the climax of the drama. Yet as the curtain fell

and the Pope returned to Rome, *L'Osservatore Romano's* front page editorial offered another, and infinitely bitter denouement, by declaring bluntly that Walesa's role in public life was over and he should retire from the scene. And since for millions of Poles Walesa and Solidarity are indistinguishable, the Vatican's official organ was telling the world that the Pope had gone to Poland not to honour Solidarity but to bury it.

By sacking the author of the editorial, Don Virgilio Levi, the Vatican was able to offer the faithful a swift explanation — the editorial was thoroughly false. But this version cannot be taken too seriously. Don Virgilio, the deputy editor of *L'Osservatore Romano*, is a senior figure in the hierarchy with two decades of diplomatic experience behind him. In his editorial post he would have had infinite experience of the arts of equivocation and nuance. Furthermore, he has been a leading papal expert on John Paul II's *ostpolitik*, with a special involvement in Polish affairs. According to Peter Nichols of *The Times*, Levi was briefed by none other than Fr Stanislaw Dziwisz, the Pope's principal private secretary, on the morning after the Pope's return, enabling

him to write the piece for the afternoon edition of the paper. Afterwards, he refused to retract what he had written. And despite considerable international pressure for the Pope himself to specifically repudiate the idea that Walesa's role is over, no such public endorsement of the Solidarity leader has come from the Vatican as yet. As for the Polish Primate, Cardinal Glemp, he has tried to sidestep the whole issue by declaring, disingenuously, that he couldn't comment on the *L'Osservatore Romano* editorial because he had not read it!

THE CHURCH AND POLITICS

People in the West may wonder why the Catholic Church should find it necessary to become so heavily involved in the details of Polish politics. Part of the answer lies in the Church's own traditional claims for itself, above all its claim that Catholicism is for Poles not simply a religious matter but the very cornerstone of their national identity and culture and that consequently the Church speaks for the nation and preserves and protects the nation. Such claims make it impossible for the Church leadership to respond to recent events by insisting that it is

concerned only with the salvation of *individual* souls and is preoccupied only with preserving its institutional apparatus for that purpose. Its history demands that it expresses, however vaguely, some sort of vision of the nation's future in the present crisis.

But other more recent factors have drawn the Church far deeper into the political arena. The elevation of Cardinal Wojtyla of Krakow as Pope brought about a basic change in the orientation of the Church leadership. Until that appointment in 1978, the Polish church had been run from Warsaw by the autocratic Primate, Cardinal Wyszynski. During his thirty year ascendancy, Wyszynski neither endorsed Communist rule nor sought to stir up the urban population in a struggle to change the political order. Instead he fought tenaciously to ensure that the Church remained entrenched in its traditional base, the peasantry, and to preserve and extend, through negotiation with the regime, the Church's institutional rights and privileges. But in times of crisis, Wyszynski was always ready to appeal for calm and in practice buttressed the regime. He understood that political calm within the society was a precondition for calm and unity within the Church itself, enabling him to impose iron discipline under his rule. As for the Vatican, Wyszynski showed not the slightest inclination to adapt his own view of what was good for the Polish Church to the edicts or requirements of Rome.

Wojtyla, a Vatican loyalist made a Cardinal in 1967 soon after Wyszynski had declared his lack of enthusiasm for Vatican 2, wanted to bring the Church into the centre of the concerns of the urban population — workers and intellectuals — and was ready to stimulate urban protests and movements for political change, provided that these movements would accept Church authority. And in pulling the Church more under Vatican control, he also wished to make Polish Catholics more western-oriented. As Archbishop of Krakow he played an important, if back-room, role in encouraging and protecting the intellectual opposition in the late 1970s, and his visit to Poland in 1979 was designed to take Poland's urban centres by storm, pulling previously non-religious layers around the Church and encouraging the whole nation to change the status quo. Between that visit and the death of Cardinal Wyszynski in May 1981 the tension between Primate and Pope was evident. Wyszynski's patent alarm at the August 1980 strike that threw up Solidarity and his efforts to maintain some distance between the Episcopate and the labour movement (while seeking, behind the scenes, to steer Solidarity away from radical programmes for change) contrasted with the Pope's inclination to claim Solidarity as, so to speak, his own creation, and as a fundamental feature of Polish reality.

GLEMP AND THE POPE

With Wyszynski's death, the balance of power between the Episcopate and the Vatican was profoundly altered. The new Primate, Glemp, though groomed by



Could he replace Walesa?

Wyszynski to carry on his approach to political management, lacked the authority to steer events, within a Church which saw the Pope as its supreme leader. As a result, the Church was drawn more and more heavily into the political struggles of 1981 and 1982 and its already strained unity was increasingly disrupted as conflicting political currents emerged within it. And having embraced Solidarity, the Pope could not easily repudiate it. He therefore left that task to the unfortunate Glemp. Throughout the period of martial law, the Pope ensured that he was not closely associated with Glemp's political manoeuvres, restricting himself in his public utterances to hints that he was fully committed to Solidarity's cause.

Yet for the bulk of the Church establishment in Poland and for the Vatican bureaucracy, the rise of Solidarity was very far from welcome, and the imposition of martial law by General Jaruzelski was by no means an unmitigated disaster. Solidarity was an evident alternative source of authority for the Polish people to that of the Church and its very existence implied that solutions to people's problems should be sought in this world rather than in the hereafter. Moreover, however much the Church leadership may have spoken about human rights during the 1970s, Solidarity's programme of democratic self-management

was entirely alien to the spirit — and the letter — of the Church hierarchy's own pronouncements. The hierarchy could not accept that democratic ideals should permeate the state without passing through the portals of the Church.

But perhaps most fundamental of all, while the Church in Poland was not, in fact, an oppressed institution. In an ideological sense the hierarchy may have been at odds with the status quo, but not in a social or institutional sense. Prosperous, expanding their field of activities and able to carry out their religious activities without serious disruption, the Church hierarchy was at bottom a deeply conservative force and one that was well aware of the benefits that it gained from being able to operate as an independent institution within a Warsaw Pact state. The nationalism of Solidarity was directed towards changing Poland's internal and external relationships dramatically, while the nationalism of the hierarchy, however similar its symbols and terms, was deeply conservative, seeking above everything to preserve Poland's existing external relationships and viewing Solidarity as a potentially anarchic threat to the benefits of the status quo.

The Polish government was well aware of the real state of opinion within the Church leadership when it opted for martial law. In the last days before 13 December

when the discussions between Jaruzelski, Glemp and Walesa broke down, the Primate moved openly into a position of neutrality, calling on both sides to moderate their positions, and on the first day of martial law he issued a strong appeal to the workers not to resist the security forces in order to avoid bloodshed.

Under martial law, Glemp has sought to give the impression of being on the side of the popular demands against the government while opposing the methods of the Solidarity underground. During the first months, for example, he indicated the need for Solidarity's eventual restoration as well as urging a swift release of the internees and an end to martial law itself. But such demands did not, in principle, set him against the government itself, for Jaruzelski also declared his desire to achieve these same objectives. Thus, the only difference between the two sides could be over matters of emphasis and timing. Seemingly secondary, but in reality fundamental, were his differences over the methods of the underground movement. For Glemp opposed every call for demonstrations and strikes, in other words every serious attempt to resist the government. His own methods were those that generated calm and social peace and reconciliation, in other words created the situation which the military authorities themselves desired.

The Primate's most difficult moment came after the outright banning of Solidarity last autumn. After it, and after Glemp's refusal to make any outspoken defence of Solidarity, opposition to his policy boiled up within the Church itself. A month later, in November, the government eased the pressure on the Church leadership by releasing Walesa, offering a relaxation of martial law and promising that the Pope could come to Poland in June. And since then, Glemp has been able to make the Pope's visit the centre of attention within the Church, insisting that everything should be subordinated to preparations for the visit, calling upon the faithful to turn their minds from other concerns onto the visit itself. At the same time, he has become openly hostile to the Solidarity underground, describing it as 'a movement without a programme or a perspective'.

WALESA TRIES OUTFLANKING

Both the government and, no doubt, Glemp hoped that repression, internal divisions and demoralisation within the Solidarity underground would lead to its decline and disintegration last winter. The failure of the underground to be able to respond to Solidarity's banning did indeed lead to a profound internal crisis within the movement. But Walesa's release was to give the movement a new lease of life.

Many within the underground feared that Walesa might allow himself to be used for the Church leadership's project. There is some evidence that elements within the government were toying with the idea of allowing some sort of Catholic union to arise and were ready to allow Walesa to play some role in establishing it. On 4 December,

Walesa had written to Jaruzelski in which he called, not for Solidarity's restoration but for 'pluralism of trade unions'.

On 14 December he issued the text of a speech he had been planning to make on 16 December, the anniversary of the shootings on the Baltic in 1970. The speech was a very carefully written text which had evidently been discussed in Church circles. 'We are not for overthrowing the authorities,' he said. 'We accept the political realities created by the world and by history.' And then he went on to make the following enigmatic but significant statement: 'In the past we have taken many things on ourselves as a union, as a social force. It is now time for this great social movement, this great river which took into itself many unsolved problems of different social circles, to divert itself into several tributaries and flow peacefully towards the aim.' This could, at the very least, be interpreted as a suggestion that instead of seeking to revive Solidarity, the movement should press for a series of more limited, partial objectives. And he listed these as trade union pluralism, self-managed workplaces 'based on economic logic', independent organisations of artists and scientists and independent organisations of youth.

These demands closely match the concerns of the Church leadership. The Episcopate supports the strengthening of plant autonomy and plant self-management and in its statement of 24 February it urged that effective trade unions, 'taking into consideration the good of the state', are allowed; and it also called for effective associations for 'the creators of culture and art'. It further emphasised the importance of strengthening the existing Catholic youth organisations, which have in the recent past been sources of controversy between the Church and the government.

Concern within the underground that Walesa might be ready to subordinate Solidarity's interests to those of the Church was openly referred to by Zbigniew Bujak, the Warsaw underground leader in an interview in December (published in *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 36). He declared, 'What we can and ought to expect from Lech, and ask of him, is that he maintain the ideals which August created, despite all obstacles. These can be listed briefly: first, the demand for free trade unions, the struggle for an independent, pluralistic trade union with the right to strike, while new values have been created here such as no union in other countries knows: a solidarity strike, a representative strike, or generally speaking, a trade union with a territorial structure. Within this structure is contained the idea that first of all we, first of all the world of labour, sit down at a table and decide what is owed to whom, and only with these decisions do we go on to negotiate with the authorities. Solidarity created this by giving to individual branches and trades the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the situation and needs of other branches and trades and taking into mutual consideration these needs.'

Bujak then went on to raise the other basic demands that should be fought for —

a decree on censorship that enables people to express their beliefs, the broadcasting of mass on radio and TV, a social minimum income and cost of living supplements, and 'control of the entire militia apparatus and judiciary, as an expression of the struggle for the rights of people and civil liberty'. And he concluded by directly pointing to differences with Church circles: 'At the present time, there are in circulation versions of Christian trade unions and the idea is growing of linking together various Catholic adherents into a one-party movement and giving it seats in the Sejm. These are ways out that might be taken. Only we must ask ourselves whether this manner of proceeding would not betray the values which it was possible to build through August and Solidarity, and if this can be done by others, then all the more does it depend on us, Solidarity activists, and on Lech Walesa, to demand the preservation of the ideals of Solidarity and of August.'

Differences between Lech Walesa and the Provisional Co-ordinating Commission of underground Solidarity (TKK) surfaced again at the end of January after the TKK had published its programme statement on 22 January (published in this issue below). On 29 January Walesa issued a statement saying that he disagreed with the TKK's continued support for the idea of a general strike against the government, and he added that although he shared the same objectives as the underground leadership, 'they have their programme and I have mine'.

But however much these programmatic differences may have persisted, Walesa made a dramatic change in his tactics in March. He heralded this turn when he attended the trial of Anna Walentynowicz on 9 March and told a Western correspondent, 'we must take a more resolute stand. Our arguments apparently have no effect on the state. I will follow a tougher line ... We will protest. We will carry out demonstrations, hunger strikes and strikes. We do not want to damage the economy, but we have to exert pressure. We have no other choice. My letters remain unanswered and our people are in prison.'

The significance of these remarks became clear at the start of April when Walesa astonished the country by declaring that he had just spent three days in discussions with Solidarity's underground leadership. Simultaneously the TKK issued a brief statement confirming the meeting and saying that 'the present situation in Poland was discussed and a common approach was agreed'. The crucial result of the meeting was its call for demonstrations on May Day, a call that Walesa indicated he supported.

By taking this step, Walesa was running directly contrary to the line of Cardinal Glemp. While the Primate was seeking to use preparations for the Papal visit to urge calm and social peace, Walesa was using the same period for demonstrations to exert the maximum pressure on the government. And while Glemp was dismissing underground Solidarity as 'struggling for the sake of struggle', Walesa was throwing his enormous authority behind the underground struggle. The timing of the Pope's visit had

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been designed to ensure that it occurred after people had become used to living without Solidarity and were coming to see it as a distant memory. Yet Walesa's turn was designed to make the Pope's visit appear to the population as a lever for strengthening the efforts of a revived underground. On 26 March Glempl had hailed the country's tranquility as a great achievement: 'The relative calm which we are enjoying at this moment, and which may lead to a more permanent calm, is, I believe, precisely the result of dialogue (between Church and Government); another result of this dialogue is the decision to invite the Holy Father to Poland.' But the May Day call shattered this 'calm'.

The May Day demonstrations were a notable success for the underground. The Government acknowledged demonstrations in twenty cities and said that the total number of participants was 40,000. For the underground even this result would have been satisfactory, but unofficial estimates as well as those by foreign correspondents put the numbers of demonstrators at over 100,000. Such a turnout could not have seemed possible in the immediate aftermath of the debacle of the TKK's strike call last November. The demonstrations and the combative posture of Walesa thus ensured that the Pope's visit could not be pitched as a pilgrimage to the scene of conflict after the battle for Solidarity was over. It would be a visit to the battleground while the struggle continued.

JARUZELSKI'S STRATEGY

Before turning to the visit itself, we must turn to the concerns of the government itself and its strategy for 'normalisation'. It would be a serious error to view the Jaruzelski government as having no strategy for normalisation other than reliance upon its military and administrative apparatus of control. Many commentaries in the West on the Polish crisis have suggested that Jaruzelski could choose only between the so-called Kadar-ite road to normalisation as in Hungary after 1956 or the Husak road in post-invasion Czechoslovakia; and such commentators have gone on to point out how both these earlier paths appear to be unviable in Poland. Yet enough experience of the Jaruzelski regime has been gained to show that there is also a Jaruzelski road to normalisation, adapted to Polish conditions and with some chance, however tenuous, of success.

The objectives which the Jaruzelski government has set itself in its drive for normalisation are limited to two fundamental political tasks: first the elimination of Solidarity as an organisation and as a programmatic tradition from the future course of Polish history; and secondly, a readiness on the part of all the most influential figures in the various social groups to co-operate with the new order or retire altogether from the political scene. Jaruzelski may still be a long way from these objectives but he has achieved some successes along the path towards them. He has greatly restricted the organisational scope of the underground



But can they paint Solidarity out of the picture?

and persuaded the bulk of the working class that it is very dangerous to involve itself in the underground's activities. Secondly, he has persuaded the great bulk of the politically sensitive intelligentsia to consider the battle for Solidarity's return to be a lost cause, even if he has not persuaded them to take the next step and openly co-operate with the political institutions of the regime, such as PRON.

The main political idea in Jaruzelski's normalisation drive is that all Poles have a common interest in preserving the present Polish state structure, since anything else would lead to national catastrophe, and the preservation of the state in turn requires the liquidation of Solidarity. At the same time, the government has insisted that it is ready to accept the reality that very few Poles are committed to official Marxism-Leninism and that quite a number do not consider themselves to be socialists. Consequently, the regime is ready to make entry into the fold conditional only upon *acceptance* of the existing order, not upon ideological endorsement of communism. The key institution that it is attempting to build in order to consolidate its alliance with non-socialists who accept socialism is the PRON.

In the field of political and social reform, the Government equally insists that it is ready to take account of popular concerns provided that Poles are ready to reject Solidarity and democracy as unrealistic. Once the population accepts the existing state structure, the government insists that it will carry out, from above, many of the changes demanded during the Solidarity period: it points to the fact that it has not abolished self-management in enterprises and decentralisation of economic decision-making. Its information policy is much more frank than under the Gierek period; it has, at least on paper, preserved some elements of university independence and as far as the writers' union is concerned, it claims to be bending over backwards to

preserve it, provided the union makes changes in its present leadership. In the judicial field, the government is seeking to present itself as punctiliously legalistic and concerned to allow some real judicial independence, and as for the peasants, they have been given renewed guarantees about the inviolability of private agricultural property.

But above all, Jaruzelski has devoted enormous efforts to win over the Church hierarchy to effective co-operation. The government's only dividing line on Church activity is that priests must not engage in giving political assistance to the underground resistance. Otherwise, the Church has been offered even greater scope than it enjoyed before Solidarity emerged: an unprecedented number of permits for new church buildings have been granted, the Church has been given new tax concessions, the extra rights that the Church gained in the Solidarity period have been maintained and the government promises to provide full legal recognition of the Church's role in society.

It is impossible to underestimate the fundamental importance of the Church to the government for the entire success of Jaruzelski's normalisation strategy. Barring the Solidarity leadership itself, there is only one group in Polish society with the authority to persuade a large part of the industrial working class to bury for good and all the programmatic tradition of Solidarity. And that group is the Church leadership. And if the price the regime must pay for gaining the Church's voice against Solidarity is to encourage a large part of the intelligentsia, the youth and the workers to turn towards church organisations as a channel for their social activities, the government gives every impression of being willing to pay that price.

Against this background, the government did not feel comfortable about a gigantic display of popular enthusiasm for the Church during a Papal visit. Two other

considerations were far more central: first, after Walesa's militant turn in the spring, the government feared that the Pope's visit could be transformed into mass demonstrations for Solidarity; and secondly, the government was concerned about the real stance of the Pope himself. Was the Pope ready to help stabilise the existing state or not? Or as Jaruzelski has himself repeatedly put matters, 'the only consideration that concerns us is whether there is good will'. For Jaruzelski, the Pope could say what he liked about human rights, about the need for dialogue, or about the past, even the recent past of Solidarity's open existence, provided only that it was clear that the Pope was talking about the past and not the future.

THE POPE'S VISIT

The Pope's actual speeches were, despite Western press coverage of them, on the whole positive from the Government's point of view. With great skill, the Pope managed both to mention all the taboo areas of popular experience — August 1980, Solidarity itself, Rural Solidarity, repression and brutality — and at the same time suggest that Poles had much larger tasks and horizons than such phenomena. Instead of suggesting, Glomp-style, that the Church stood apart from Solidarity, somewhere between it and the government, the Pope suggested that Solidarity actually belonged to the Church! August 1980, in the Pope's vision was simply the moment when the workers came over to Christ, with 'the Gospel in their hand and a prayer on their lips'. Consequently, if Solidarity was merely a part of the whole, rather than everything in itself, the task of Poles was to dedicate themselves to the whole cause, not one partial aspect of it. And this general cause was the cause of nationalism and Catholicism, according to the Pope two sides of the same coin (impossible to be a patriot without being a Catholic, and vice versa).

This ingenious ideological formula would then enable the Church leadership to steer its followers away from Solidarity towards 'the national good' and the Pope also implied what the occasion might be for the decisive consignment of Solidarity into the nation's past: the final end of martial law and an amnesty for political prisoners — events widely expected to occur on Poland's national holiday, 22 July. And at the very end of his visit, the Pope seemed to endorse the government's own key idea that Poles should accept and seek to strengthen the existing state structure of the Polish People's Republic.

But what was very negative for the government, and indeed for the Church hierarchy and the Vatican bureaucracy, was the evident display of mass enthusiasm, not simply for the Pope but above all for Solidarity at the huge gatherings that the Pope addressed. The language which the crowd used to express their support for the Pope was the language of Solidarity. At times the supposedly religious gatherings were transformed into political demonstrations for Solidarity. Whatever the reason for

this — whether it was due to the absence of a liturgical equivalent of a cheer, or whether it was an authentic expression of popular support for Solidarity's restoration — it must have alarmed both the Episcopate and the Vatican diplomats present, and disturbed the government. And it may have been to counter this development that the Pope's entourage felt it necessary to publish such a brutal editorial dismissing Walesa the day after the Pope left Poland.

IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS

At the very least, the Papal visit has shown that a deal between the government and the Church is possible as far as both sides are concerned. Any idea that the Pope is in principle opposed to the line of Cardinal Glomp on this central issue of normalisation can be ruled out. But the visit has also illustrated and indeed re-enforced the central problem that such a deal involves. For a deal to stick it would at some stage have to become public and involve the public consignment of Solidarity to the past by the Church. And the Pope's tactics of making Glomp pay the full price for the Church's collaboration with the government, enabling him to present himself as Solidarity's true friend, have been reinforced by the Pope's refusal to give Glomp so much as a public pat on the back during the visit. Thus the inescapable result is that the Pope must himself now become ever more drawn into the political arena in Poland insofar as no deal becomes public; while such a deal now would require the Pope's personal endorsement.

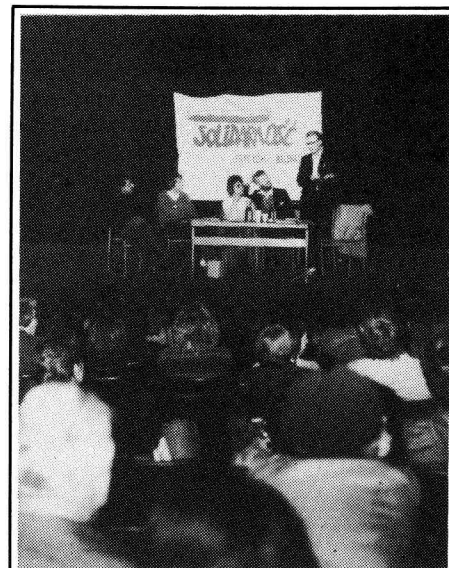
At the same time, the two other main actors in the Polish drama, both just off stage during the visit itself, will now have a major part to play in settling whether a deal can be accomplished and Jaruzelski-style normalisation proceed swiftly. These are the Soviet leadership and Solidarity's underground leaders along with Lech Walesa himself.

The Soviet leadership will, of course, view the Polish crisis from a different angle and within a longer-term perspective than Jaruzelski. It will be extremely wary of the stability of its principal East European ally being dependent not simply on Poland's domestic church hierarchy, but upon the Vatican. There is unquestionable concern in Moscow about Jaruzelski's strategy on precisely this score. The Soviet leadership might therefore exert enough pressure upon the Polish government to make the final programmatic details of the deal unpalatable to the Pope.

Secondly, the Solidarity underground faces a threat to its entire future and its existence. Some sections of the underground would be ready to denounce the Pope for carrying through such an agreement, but the movement could be seriously divided on the issue. Enormous pressure is likely to come down on figures like Walesa and Bujak to respond to an amnesty and the final end of martial law by abandoning the underground and winding up the resistance movement. Such an action would, of course, entirely free the hands of the Vatican to make whatever agreement it wished. And this

pressure on the underground leadership could be combined with threats from the Church that it would stamp out the activities of rank-and-file priests who have hitherto given considerable material aid to the families of Solidarity activists and who have turned a blind eye to the underground's use of Church facilities.

Thus the next few weeks are likely to be decisive in determining the course of Polish politics for some time to come. Despite the government's attempts to insist endlessly that neither Walesa nor the underground has any political significance, the entire course of events is likely to be determined by the decisions taken by Solidarity on its next step. If it is ready to call for further public demonstrations on 31 August and if the impact of the Pope's visit on the popular mind is to strengthen support for these demonstrations, a deal between Church and state will become much more difficult to achieve. But such a call for new mobilisations would be made in the teeth of opposition from the entire Church leadership including the Vatican. And if the underground and Walesa choose to bend to that pressure, it is difficult to see how the underground could survive as a credible force for many months longer.



On 24 April some 250 people came to a meeting called by Labour Focus at the Rio Cinema in London in defence of Edmund Baluka. Speakers included the writer and author of the film 'Three Days in Szczecin', Bolek Sulik (pictured above speaking to the meeting), Tariq Ali and Paul Foot. The meeting was followed by a showing of 'Three Days in Szczecin' and of Andrzej Wajda's 'Kanal'. Anna Paczuska, who chaired the meeting, explained the importance of Edmund Baluka's case and urged those present to spread news of it and gain protest resolutions and telegrams from trade union and Labour Party organisations.

At the end of June the court in Bydgoszcz sentenced Baluka to 5 years in jail. Fact sheets on the case can be ordered at 50p for a hundred, plus 30p p&p; so can campaign postcards (see p. 36 for a reproduction of one of these) at 8 for £1 plus 30p p&p. For these or for more information write to Anna Paczuska, c/o Bookmarks, Finsbury Park, Seven Sisters Rd., London N4.

DOSSIER



Official peace rally in front of the Church of Our Lady in Dresden. The ruins of the church are a monument to the destruction of the city by allied bombers

The Peace Movement

Since the start of independent peace groups in Eastern Europe in 1981, Labour Focus has been seeking to bring news and documents from them to our readers. In this issue we devote attention to the largest and most diverse of these movements, that in the GDR. We would also like to recommend the book by John Sandford, *The Sword and the Ploughshare*, published by END, for those wishing a fuller account of the movement in the GDR.

By Gus Fagan

The demonstration of over 5,000 mostly young people in Dresden in February 1982 announced to the world the existence of East Germany's unofficial peace movement. The event was commemorated this year on Sunday 13 February by a peace gathering in the Catholic Cathedral in Dresden attended by over 3,000 youth from both the catholic and evangelical community. Not far away, in front of the Church of Our Lady, where last year's unofficial demonstrators had held a silent candle-lit vigil, the regime organised its own official demonstration for peace, security and against the stationing of US missiles in Western Europe. It was attended, according to *Neues Deutschland* by 'more than 100,000 inhabitants of Dresden'. At this official gathering the President of the Peace Council of the GDR, Professor Günther Drefal spoke of 'the unity of the peace movement which fights side by side with the party of the working class and with our

government for peace and disarmament'. He also warned that the peace council and the government would 'protect this unity and not allow it to be undermined by anyone'. But despite similar warnings and some of the harsher measures to which the regime has resorted in the past year the independent peace movement appears to be a growing and increasingly important factor in the political life of the GDR.

SWORDS TO PLOUGHSHARES

The swords to ploughshares badges, symbol of the independent movement, have become very popular among GDR youth despite the attempts of local police chiefs and headmasters to forbid them and harass wearers. Since February 1982 there have been a number of other unofficial peace demonstrations, probably the biggest being in Potsdam in June which was attended by about 3½ thousand. A great deal of attention has been focused on the university city of Jena where the authorities have attempt-

ted rather forcefully to repress what appears to be a large and well organised community of young peace activists. The independent movement continues to find its organisational focus within the evangelical community although it has become clear in the past year that the church is the instrument and mediator of a much broader social movement. This has provoked conflict between the church and the regime as well as within the church itself.

WOMEN FOR PEACE

In October 1982 a group of GDR women sent a letter to the GDR leader Erich Honecker. The letter was signed initially by over 150 women and was in response to a new law on military service passed by the East Germany parliament on 25 March (see *Labour Focus* vol.5, 5-6). The new law allows for women between the ages of 18 and 50 to be conscripted into national service in the event of a general mobilisation. The signatories to the letter declared their refusal to be included in military conscription: 'We women consider army service for women not as an expression of equality but as a contradiction to our being women'.

One of the signatories of the letter was Katja Havemann, widow of the most prominent GDR dissident and life-long socialist, Robert Havemann, who died in April 1982. In a letter to friends in the west in December 1982 she says that the letter has found a large



15. This was also the scene of last year's first unofficial peace demonstration.

enters its second year

echo among GDR women and that many more have joined the protest in recent months. By the beginning of December 1982 over 300 women had added their signature to the letter.

Although the authorities have refused so far to answer the letter and have responded instead by questioning and threatening the women involved, their right to take such an action is guaranteed by Article 103 of the GDR Constitution which says: *'Every citizen can make representation to the people's representatives by means of letters, proposals, complaints etc., or to their deputies or to the state and economic institutions. No disadvantage can arise from the use of this right.'*

In an interview given to the West Berlin *Tageszeitung* in December 1982 one of the women involved described how in many parts of the GDR women came together to discuss the effects of the new law. Many complained individually to the authorities and gradually circles of women came together. It became one of the main topics of discussion among GDR women in the summer and autumn of 1982. 'I think I can speak for the majority of my women friends when I say that our motive is not one of general opposition. We don't want to play into the hands of 'the west' or the 'class enemy'. We quite consciously did not go to the western media to make our opposition known. For months letters have been writ-

ten and signatures collected. But until now nobody has answered, the government is silent, the SED is silent, the only response has been to occasionally take someone in for questioning.

The Catholic Church Speaks Out.

Another indication of the growth in popular protest was the public statement by the GDR's Catholic Bishops at the beginning of 1983. The Catholic Church in the GDR has never since 1945 involved itself publicly in political issues. It has always seen itself, with its 1 million members, as the church in diaspora, unlike the 7 million strong evangelical church which established a decisive *modus vivendi* with the regime in the mid-seventies, seeing itself as a church 'not alongside, not against, but within socialism'. During the past year, while the question of peace was a burning issue in the evangelical community the Catholic hierarchy remained silent. But a growing dissatisfaction among its own youth prompted the hierarchy to make a decisive break with its tradition. In a pastoral letter read out in all Catholic churches in the GDR at the beginning of January, the Catholic bishops speak out decisively in support of many of the demands of the peace movement.

The Bishops declared their opposition to nuclear weapons since a war fought with such weapons is 'in every case immoral. In no war, for whatever reasons it is carried

out, is the use of nuclear weapons justifiable'. The Bishops also give their support to women and pacifists who are demanding a 'social peace service' as an alternative to military conscription. 'We express our respect for all those who refuse military service on religious grounds ... We also plead for some alternative form of service. The longing of our youth for peace should not be treated with suspicion but with openness and trust.'

This official backing from the Catholic hierarchy has led to an increase in the number of joint actions undertaken by youth groups of both churches. The peace action in the Catholic cathedral in Dresden in February of this year is just one example.

AN AUTHENTICALLY EAST GERMAN MOVEMENT

The developments in East Germany have not been brought about in any direct way as a response to the western peace movements but are rooted in specific problems and conflicts in GDR society itself. Principal among these is the popular resentment to the growing militarisation of daily life, in the schools, the kindergartens, the factories and in public displays. As Katja Havemann points out in her letter children in kindergartens are encouraged to play with military toys. School students and apprentices must undergo pre-military training. Children in the Pioneers (GDR equivalent

PEACE MOVEMENT IN THE GDR

of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides) are given weapons training. The new military law of March 1982 strengthens the regulations according to which enterprises must train workers in civil defence. The increasing emphasis on military education, especially in the schools, has provoked much unhappiness among parents and a growing opposition within the church communities.

A social peace service as an alternative to military training has been a long-standing demand of many people in the GDR and over the years an increasing number of young people have been imprisoned for refusing military service. The GDR law allows for a conscientious objector to serve as a 'Bausoldat' (construction soldier). Although not carrying arms and working on construction sites related to the military, the young conscriptee still must wear military uniform and live in barracks with the other soldiers. The Bausoldat alternative is not allowed for reservists, i.e. for those who have once done regular military service.

In addition to those deeply-felt and long-standing conflicts there is a heightened awareness in the GDR of the dangers of nuclear war, an awareness which is partly the result of the official propaganda of the regime which has constantly emphasised the danger of war. But it is also partly a result of the particular situation of Germany where the German people as a nation confront each other from two hostile military camps.

The ex-dissident Rudolf Bahro, now one of the leaders of the Greens in West Germany, is very active in the west in building solidarity with the GDR's independent movement. According to Bahro, in a recent article in the West German magazine *Der Spiegel*, the parallels and the simultaneity of the peace movements in both parts of divided Germany are not the result of cross-border influence but rather have 'common causes that have to do with the special fate, the peculiar political and geographical situation, the specific traditions and psychic characteristics as well as the historical guilt-complex of the Germans. These work, of course, on both sides of the border and, in so far, the processes both here and over there are basically part of the same thing.'

ARRESTS IN JENA

The events which have attracted the most attention in the west took place in the city of Jena. This old and beautiful city, with a population of 100,000, is the city of the firm Carl Zeiss, famous for its optical precision instruments, glass products and pharmaceuticals. Jena has a highly qualified and socially conscious working class. In the June 1953 uprising it was the workers at Carl Zeiss who gave leadership to the revolt in Jena.

There was a strong reaction in this city against the invasion of Czechoslovakia by East German and other Warsaw Pact forces in 1968. There was also a very active opposition from Jena to the forced exile of the poet and singer Wolf Biermann.

Campaign to Release Imprisoned East German Peace Activists

We publish below a list of peace activists currently serving sentences in GDR prisons which was handed to us by East German exiles in close contact with the independent peace groups. *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* is circulating prominent British peace campaigners, socialists and trade unionists with the text of an 'Open Letter to Erich Honecker, Chairman of the State Council of the GDR' demanding their release. Copies of the letter can be obtained from: Günter Minnerup, 24A Bellevue Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight.

Peace Activists Held in East German Jails

(The following information has been provided by reliable sources in close contact with independent peace groups in the German Democratic Republic.)

1. **PETER KNÖTTNER** (25), arrested November 1982, sentenced to 3 years and 6 months imprisonment.
2. **PETRA KNÖTTNER** (25), arrested November 1982, sentenced to 2 years and 10 months imprisonment.
3. **BERND DEWARD** (21), arrested on 4 November 1982, sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.
4. **FRANK FISCHER** (33), arrested January 1983, sentenced to 2 years and 6 months imprisonment.
5. **CHRISTA FISCHER** (33), arrested January 1983, sentenced to 2 years and 6 months imprisonment.
6. **REINHOLD KAUCZOV** (30), arrested January 1983, sentenced to 2 years and 8 months imprisonment.
7. **REGINA KAUCZOV** (28), arrested January 1983, sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

Biermann, as well as the late Robert Havemann and the exiled writer Jürgen Fuchs have had, over the years, strong links with Jena and have done much to bring popular protest there to the attention of the western media. Jena is also a university city with a very active network of counter-cultural groups, loose circles of avant garde artists, evangelical peace groups, and young people who find themselves outside the official framework of both party and church institutions.

Jena came to public attention in December when youth in that city attempted to organise an official action for peace in the city centre. The militia were out in force and a number of demonstrators were arrested. This was on Christmas Eve 1982.

But already before December Jena was the scene of open hostility between the police and young workers and intellectuals who were linked by their interests in the peace movement as well as rock music and art. An issue that arouses particular bitterness is the case of Matthias Domaschk,

8. **PETER NOWICK** (25), arrested on 29 November 1982, sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

9. **CHARLIE SCHEITHAUER** (appr. 40), singer and songwriter.

All the above were found guilty of 'treasonable communication of information not subject to secrecy' (GDR Criminal Code, Para. 99), and are currently imprisoned in Cottbus. With two exceptions, all the above were employees of the Evangelical Church in Cottbus. Peter and Petra Knöttner have one child, Frank and Christa Fischer two. They and their friends have publicly supported the slogan 'Swords into ploughshares' and produced posters against military toys and for human rights.

On 1 February 1983 lorry driver **REINHARD LINZKE** was arrested in *Apolda* for refusing to participate in an exercise for army reservists.

Since 20 October 1981 the stagehand **UWE KELLER** (28) has been imprisoned in *Brandenburg*. He was sentenced to 6 years and 8 months for 'anti-state agitation and ridiculing the GDR' by a military court in Leipzig, where he was then serving in a 'construction unit' (unarmed, for conscientious objectors) at an army hospital near the city. As a poet and songwriter, his participation in events such as the East Berlin 'Blues Mass' had long made him unpopular with the authorities, and he already served a one-year sentence in the late 1970s. Uwe Keller is at present a patient in the Psychiatric Department of Brandenburg Prison following a reported suicide attempt. He is being kept drugged.

24, a well-known peace activist in the evangelical 'Young Community' in Jena. In April of the previous year Domaschk was taken in for questioning by the police in Gera. Just before his release 2 days later the police claim that Domaschk committed suicide in his cell. This account is rejected by Domaschk's friends in Jena who point out that at the time he was not depressed but was in fact making plans for his wedding. To mark the anniversary of his death another activist, sculptor Michael Blumhagen erected a monument over his grave in the cemetery in Jena. Blumhagen was immediately called up for national service, refused and was sentenced to six months imprisonment. At the end of December he was expelled from the GDR. Another friend of Blumhagen was the young worker Roland Jahn from the large VEB Carl Zeiss works in Jena. In August Jahn had rode on his bicycle through Jena with a Polish flag on which he had written 'Solidarity with the Polish people'. Jahn was arrested in September and in January of this year was sentenced to 22 months in prison.

PROBLEMS FOR THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The militancy of the independent peace movement is creating problems for the evangelical church in its relations with the state authorities. The church is not willing to end the special relation it established with the state in the 70's but it feels itself constrained to defend the interests of its members who as Christians have become engaged in the peace movement and in opposition to many policies of the SED. The church doesn't feel itself helped by the hard and unyielding attitude of the regime nor by the attention devoted to it in the western press which portrays it as leading an opposition to the communist authorities.

The church leadership has made attempts to be conciliatory. In March of last year the Federation of Evangelical Churches published a statement in which it describes its own peace actions as complementary to rather than counter to the state's efforts, with which it stated its basic agreement. In June 1982 a meeting was held of church leaders and the official Peace Council but peace movement supporters such as Rainer Eppelmann and Bishop Krusche did not attend. The Church Synod in September officially disclaimed the wearing of the Swords to Ploughshares badge since it was, although legal, regarded as a provocation by the state. In January the Church leadership in Thuringen wrote a letter to the accredited representatives of the western press disclaiming any responsibility for the peace demonstration which was organised by young christians in Jena on Christmas Eve. The letter provoked a bitter response from many Christian pacifists. A growing number of church leaders, however, support the independent movement and the evangelical church remains the main organising focus for the peace activists as well as being their main mediator with the authorities.

Since the peace demonstration in Jena on Christmas Eve fourteen other people have been sent to prison, many for 18 months. It was in response to the hard line taken by the state authorities and the attention given to it in the western press that the evangelical church in Thuringen wrote the letter in January disclaiming responsibility for the demonstration. On 17 February the West German paper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* published a letter from eighteen young Christians of Saalfeld and Rudolstadt in the region of Gera near Jena. The 18 strongly denounce the letter of the Thuringen church leadership. 'We have contact with Jena and we know of the events there,' they write. 'We are ashamed of the words of our church leadership.' The 18 young people go on to criticise the church's silence over the massive wave of arrests and imprisonments in Jena, over the death of Domaschk ('his death threatens us all'), over the expulsion of Blumhagen. 'There is a border beyond which silence is guilt. Already in recent German history Christians were confronted by this painful choice.'



Schwertler zu Pflugscharen (Swords to Ploughshares): the badge of the unofficial peace groups in East Germany.

RESPONSE OF THE REGIME

The official East German news agency ADN on 14 February denied the repression of the autonomous peace movement: 'In the GDR not a single citizen, critical artist, worker or youth have been arrested because of their activity for peace.' Which is true, of course, only to the extent that none of those imprisoned were actually charged with 'activity for peace' but in most cases with hooliganism or, in the case of Roland Jahn, 'disrespect for a national symbol' (the Polish flag). The official denial by the GDR authorities came after leaders of the peace movement in West Germany and other prominent individuals published a statement condemning the repression.

The statement, signed by the popular leader of the Greens, Petra Kelly was entitled: 'Why we call for the release and freedom for the Jena peace workers' and stated: 'The peace movement needs encouragement in order to fulfill its tasks. And it is encouraged when it sees that in other countries too an end to the military threat is being actively worked for. Therefore we cannot be indifferent when we see that other men and women that work for peace have their fundamental democratic freedoms taken from them. We demand not only their release but a lifting of all limitations to their work in the peace movement.'

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

At the end of February 1983 all the peace activists arrested in Jena were released. In March about 80 supporters of the independent peace group participated with their own placards in an official demonstration to commemorate the bombing of the city in 1945. They were attacked by plain-clothes police who tore up their placards. About 200 citizens in the city signed a letter to Erich Honecker protesting the way the demonstrators had been handled. (We produce the letter below. See page ??.)

Members of the independent peace groups have been under strong pressure to emigrate to the west and in May the first group of 10 arrived in West Berlin. At the time of writing 22 have been forced to emigrate in this way. It is likely that more will follow.

CONCLUSIONS

The various individuals and groups in Jena do not constitute an organised movement. The number who openly identify with and take part in the various unofficial peace events is estimated to be about 200. There is plenty of evidence that similar, if smaller, groups exist in many other East German cities. For instance, in the first group to be forced to emigrate to West Germany, there was a family from Weimar. But on many issues, from militarisation of education in the schools to conscription of pacifists and stationing of nuclear missiles in Europe East and West, there is a significantly large echo of support in the population of the GDR for the policies put forward by groups like those in Jena and Berlin. That is why the authorities have reacted so strongly against the Jena group.

It would be a mistake to regard the members of these peace groups in the GDR as dissidents in the traditional sense of the term. Even on the issue of peace there is a large amount of agreement with the policies of the regime. For instance the East German Government has officially accepted the Swedish proposal on nuclear-free zones and has publicly offered to declare the GDR a nuclear-free zone. Like the regime, the peace activists are vigorously opposed to the stationing of new missiles in Western Europe. There is no indication whatever that the peace activists are in any sense anti-Soviet or anti-socialist.

The Protestant Churches became the focus for a lot of the peace activity because, indeed, many of the young activists are Christian. But this has caused as many problems for the Church authorities as it has for the Party. It would be wrong to see in this Christian peace activism some religiously motivated campaign against the communist regime. The conflict between the Church and the state, especially on the question of education and conscription, is to a large extent quite independent of the nuclear debate.

A very significant aspect of the emergence of the independent peace groups in the GDR is the way they have brought to the forefront the question of the relations between the two Germanies. Any discussion of peace must confront the arrangements resulting from the post-war division of Europe. But this question goes right to the heart of the existence of the two separate German states. Any *popular* movement for peace in Germany must become, by its own inherent dynamic, a challenge to the existing arrangements in both East and West Germany. There is a large amount of agreement between the German peace groups both East and West around the demands for a withdrawal of foreign forces from German soil, the demilitarisation and possibly neutralisation of Germany. It is the view of Rudolf Bahro, in an article reproduced in this issue of *Labour Focus*, that 'the second post-war generation in both parts of Germany, fascinated by the eco-peace complex, carries within itself the perspective of national reunification'.

The Peace Movement, the Cold War and Germany

By Rudolf Bahro

(Originally published in German under the title 'The Peace Movement in East Germany', this article was translated for Labour Focus by Gus Fagan.)

The swing in public opinion which we have experienced in West Germany since the mid-seventies is significant in itself. But it is only when we place it in relation to what is going on in East Germany today that we can understand the historic dimension of the change that Germany is now going through.

While here in West Germany there were many who, first with enthusiasm and later with disillusionment, were on the lookout for an East German parallel to Solidarnosc, over there in East Germany a completely independent movement was getting itself underway. Two recent publications* give us some idea of where this movement is going.

Both texts reflect a living reality whose roots go as far back as the '60s. And it is truly a movement, when we regard the real substance, the unfettered awareness that lies beneath it, and when we don't let our view be distorted by criteria of organisation and countability.

The initiative comes from different forces and accents the questions differently from what I, in my time, would have expected. There are no marxist 'dissidents' like myself or Robert Havemann were. Although they take up our ideas, their starting point is different.

While in prison in East Germany I read an evangelical family reference book (I believe it was called simply *Information*). It was in the spirit of that book that Bishop Hempel spoke when he said at the Dresden peace forum in February 1982, with regard to the relatively limited possibilities for action: 'When the church is at the centre of things, meditating and doing good, it always acquires a new lease of life'.

I had the impression, it's not just 'the church' that this applies to. Perhaps here is an approach, although not so analytic, to the problem of the competing industrialised societies which is still deeper, more basic than that of my book, *The Alternative*. Where I had reached the point of establishing problems common to East and West, this other ecumenically inspired approach takes this as its starting point.

The key to the whole thing is to be found in another small book published last year, *Concrete is Concrete: Critique of Civilisation in the GDR*, a critique of civilisation developed in this evangelical milieu in the GDR. The forces brought together in this protective milieu of the Church are presented here as an especially pure expression of new forces which are attempting to overcome not only the East-West politico-military opposition but the whole confrontation between the two systems altogether.

In their view the East should no longer attempt to 'catch up with and surpass' the West, as has been the decisive currency since 1917. For the ecological and peace movement in the GDR the country is already sufficiently well off — perhaps, in comparison with the third world, too much so. And when they criticise their own institutions they do so not on the model of western democracy, but on the criterion of human need in terms of which every political order must legitimate itself.

This book, and one of the others directly concerned with the peace movement, is published by the same 'edition transit' whose goal is to get away from 'this corridor, a few metres wide and hundreds of kilometres long, which lies across the country' (the transit route to West Germany) and to begin to take cognisance of real life as it is in the East.

Both of those books (*The Peace Movement* and *Concrete is Concrete*) concentrate on the documents and seldom reach beyond

the milieu of the church. The third one, however, (*Swords to Ploughshares*), gives a more descriptive account and adopts a wider view since it goes beyond the Church milieu and makes clear that the church is only the instrument, even if an important one of a more profound social movement.

Everything in all three publications appears to me to be absolutely authentic, while the accounts, commentaries and introductions by West German authors are an accurate portrayal of the reality of the situation.

Although we seem to be talking of a numerically small network, the fact that it communicates within a socially accepted intellectual framework which is both extremely vigorous and widespread makes it better organised than we might imagine.

Its significance cannot be grasped by comparing the 300,000 demonstration in Bonn in October 1981 with the Church's peace forum in Dresden in February 1982. For not only does this ignore its qualitative character, but even quantitatively 5000 in the GDR represents just as much as 60 times that number over here.

Up to now the people who have come out publicly are those whose political and christian commitment is such that they are willing, for the sake of their own independence, to sacrifice any normal career in the GDR. If the threat were once removed, then we would very soon see, over there as well, demonstrations of 100,000 people (for a population of 17m) probably not in one place, but, more effectively, in almost every part of the country.

The core of the movement is representative of tendencies that have a hearing deep within the patriotic section of GDR youth. From the 12th or 13th year, when thinking begins and naive adaptation ends, the hollowness of the official ideology becomes more and more clearly understood.

The specific relationship of church, peace movement and state in the GDR, which is quite different from what is found in the other East European countries, is very well analysed and instructively presented in *Swords to Ploughshares*. It is very important that the balanced 'division of labour' between grass-roots radical movement and protecting or mediating church should be maintained. Of course in many cases it is the same people who combine these roles.

Quite clearly there are Church people whose first commitment is to the idea rather than any institution, and we shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that it is those who want to directly attack the GDR state who are the most radical.

Without the impulse, not entirely negative, given by the GDR itself, the Church over there never would have done such a turn-about. At one time the state celebrated Münzer against Luther, but now it has begun to feel much more at ease with a conservative Lutheranism than with the spirit of Münzer.

An ideological competition with the GDR leadership is being developed which, although not as extensive as in the case of the Polish Church, could be compared with it if it were not for the fact

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Wolfgang Buscher/Peter Wensierski/Klaus Wolschner/Reinhard Henkys, *Friedensbewegung in der DDR. Texte 1978-1982*. Scandica-Verlag, Hattingen 1982 (an anthology of documents from church sources with introduction and commentary).

Klaus Ehring/Martin Dallwitz, *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen. Friedensbewegung in der DDR*. Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek 1982 (contains some documents but is mainly a survey of the issues and events in the GDR independent peace movement).

that the GDR Church is as advanced in its ideas as the Polish one — for understandable reasons — is backward.

Decisive in this respect was the Church's decision in the 70's to accept the reality of the GDR: to become a Church 'not alongside, not against, but within socialism'. Only on this basis could it assert the claim to serve society 'not only in the private but also in the social and political sphere'.

(...) Because of its religious intensity, combined with political astuteness, this evangelical conception has a potential scope which we should not underestimate. It is only a question of time before the moral leadership now coming from there exercises influence over large sections of youth and over all those politically involved.

Just as we cannot understand the peace movement in West Germany without keeping in view its 'green' component, so is it also in the GDR. If we think of the upheavals in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, then in spite of all similarities, there is the obvious difference that nowhere else did the opposition carry the banner of the ecological and peace movement. Only recently, in Hungary, is there a certain parallel.

In the meantime it has become generally understood that the logic of world armament can only be broken out of by forces who place themselves beyond the competitive power struggle of both industrial systems and who no longer see in industrialisation the primrose path to freedom and social justice. If there is any country in which the preconditions for such a movement exist, then surely it is Germany, East and West. It may seem surprising at first sight, but it is only an apparent paradox that Germany is the first country in which the bipolarity of the post-war world order is losing its ideological inevitability.

In spite of appearances and obvious interactions, developments in East Germany have been brought about not from West Germany, at least not in any immediate or direct way, but by a genuine deposition in the GDR. In the final analysis the parallels and the simultaneity of the two movements are to be explained by common causes connected with the special fate, the peculiar political and geographical situation, the specific traditions and psychic characteristics, and the historical guilt-complex of Germans on both sides of the border.

This national identity, which is now re-emerging for the first time as a historical factor, produces an initial response among many of wanting to suppress it.

Beneath the surface, I have found the differences in behaviour between East and West Germans less extensive than I had expected. For instance, I have noticed that at least half the people who make their careers via the CSU in Bavaria or the SPD in Bremen would have made them in Leipzig via the SED. Wensierski and Büscher were very much to the point in their editorial introduction to *Concrete is Concrete* when they spoke of the oppressively broad middle section of both societies.

If I am not mistaken, however, the initiative on both sides is gradually passing to forces who have only seldom had a say: in 1517-1525, in the lead-up to 1813 and 1848, in the Social Democracy from Lassalle to the period of the anti-socialist law, then briefly in 1918.

In the East even more so than in the west, its form appears to be largely stamped by the earliest 'national' tradition — the Protestant tradition of which the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the model.

On another level, which is perhaps even more important than the joint intellectual effort (certainly as far as its mass character is concerned), rock music is a very strong link synchronising feelings.

In *Der Spiegel* (33/82) Wilhelm Bittorf, talking about the blockade of the nuclear weapons base at Grossenstingen, quoted one of the field officers about the protesters: 'Those are the same types they have over in the GDR.' And that's exactly the case. For the first time since the partition, and in spite of the apparently unbridgeable conflicts between the systems, we have on both sides of the Wall opposition movements in which the motivations and goals are the same.

Each movement opposes its own power structure but not in the name of the other. Rather, they regard both establishments as two sides of the same coin: of what is, in the final analysis, one an-

tagonistic system which has to be overcome in its totality.

Someone in the GDR wrote to someone in West Germany: 'We will do it together.' They have the same ideas about the character of the problem and about its solution. This potential for an all-German peace movement means that the second post-war generation in both parts of Germany, fascinated by the 'eco-peace' complex, carries within itself the perspective of national reunification.

For all those who haven't gone beyond the world-view typical of the post-war period, the experiences described in these books will have a very irritating effect. The rupture is deeper than it was at the time of the end of Adenauer's German policy. What can we do with an opposition movement in the other German state which wants neither the West nor a reformist struggle for power within the system but, instead, turns out to be the twin of our own pacifists and greens?

Just three years ago, when we both came over, the conservatives' reception for Nico Hübner showed what they thought of opposition in the GDR, and what they expected from it. He had refused military services there, in conformity with the West's Berlin policy, but once here was immediately ready to 'defend freedom'.

Of course, you can still find this pro-western opposition in the GDR, just as you can still find pro-Soviet 'peace fighters' over here. But on both sides these attitudes are becoming visibly anachronistic. Nothing can come of them. Without freeing itself of the simple black-and-white model (we are good, you are bad) which conservative forces in West Germany wanted to impose on it, to guide its struggle against the East German state, the Church in the GDR would never have achieved the influential position it presently occupies. The distancing of itself from vulgar anti-communism gave the Church the possibility to resist the absolutist claims of the state ideology.

Ever since 1965, the GDR Church has asked its conscientious objectors 'to clarify and test their consciences as to whether, as citizens of the other German state, they would accept national service'. But less than ever do they now expect a 'yes' answer. The evangelical attitude to this question has brought forth a political initiative, while very little has been forthcoming from those over there who are admirers of the free West. Just as we have very little over here from those who are admirers of eastern socialism.

(...) The self-righteous on both sides work together as they always have done, defending their respective inner-political privileges. But now, more than ever, they can be confronted with the unnerving reality that their respective self-images have become more and more similar.

On the other wing there are also many who find it difficult to come to terms with the developments in the GDR. During the Prague Spring and afterwards there were plenty of intelligent people in the West who became somewhat self-critical: we have talked a bit too much, too loud and too openly about what is happening to our eastern neighbours; we have interfered. It's true that there was a certain interference and the secret services didn't sleep. But these people meant more than that, because they were basically demanding that we should abstain altogether. And this, of course, was very much in accord with the interests of the functionaries on the other side.

Should we behave as if we didn't know what was happening? The power apparatus doesn't stop newspapers, doesn't invade Czechoslovakia or have Poland occupied 'by the Poles'? The GDR, because of its exposed position, has the most active state security service in the world. No one should seriously believe that we could belatedly pull the wool over the eyes of the leadership over there.

They are quite aware of the danger, and we shouldn't imagine they have forgotten it just because there are some signs that, after more exact calculation, they would find it better to latch on to the new pacifism. There is a certain lineage here: Thaelmann — Ossietzky — Bonhoeffer.

Here perhaps lies the key: the first thing that both conservatives and the left think about with respect to the opposition in the GDR is the advantage that the West might draw from it. The difference between them is that the one is for and the other is against the West drawing such advantage. So one has to decide whether the peace movement in the West should contribute to the destabilisation of the eastern bloc or not.

PEACE MOVEMENT IN THE GDR

But this way of putting the question is false since it is derived from the logic of the bloc system itself. It is assumed as obvious that the destabilisation of the eastern bloc can, in the final analysis, only strengthen NATO. In other words, one does not reckon with the possibility that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact might be dependent on each other for their stability, and that the disintegration of one bloc would entail, or at least promote, the disintegration of the other.

Where will this moral conflict lead, which has now begun in the GDR between Christian ecological pacifism and the state? In any case it is one thing to reject, as the GDR Government has now done, the social peace service as a substitute for conscription in the armed services; it is quite another thing to destroy the network that has built itself up over the whole country. Of course the state security is well aware of the links and it could cut them mercilessly.

But that won't happen. To the extent that this network involves not just political goals, but also questions of life, morality and faith, it will prove itself to be indestructible and to a very great extent even unassailable. Its time will come. We can't predict now in what way this will happen. It is more likely to come on the wings of a dove than with a fanfare of trumpets.

For us West Germans the task is to create the most favourable conditions. If the West German peace movement limits itself to its immediate material goals (stopping the missiles), then the concern

shown for us by the movement in the East will surely decline. But of course that is only in the short term. At a deeper level the long-term perspectives of the Western ecological and peace movement is of great interest to people in the GDR, where the overall political situation has greatly deteriorated.

Since Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-82, the GDR has progressively lost the secure hinterland that linked it to the Soviet Union. Economically they have to put up with being ground between the rising price of raw materials and declining sales, (ie. declining possibilities of Western technological imports). The reserves are no longer there, and no new impulse can be expected from the Soviet Union.

In this situation an initiative by new political forces in the West, breaking through the structure of the cold war, could have effects as far as Moscow itself.

An intra-German dynamic could be the lever which so changes the consensus in both German states that their hostile images of each other break down and disarmament becomes possible. For the blatant militarisation in the GDR is promoted not to convince the population of the need for new weapons systems (such things are not discussed in the eastern bloc, the new weapons are simply put on parade when they are finished), but precisely because the concept of 'the enemy' is needed more than ever to hold the state together.

Jena's Independent Peace Movement Christmas Eve in Jena

By Jürgen Fuchs

(The following article is an extract from an open letter by Jürgen Fuchs to END. Fuchs is a well-known East German writer who was forced into exile in Berlin in the late 1970s. Translation for Labour Focus is by Paul Edmondson.)

Yesterday I received an eye-witness account from Jena which moved me deeply. I should like to quote from it now because you ought to know what happened in this East German town on 24 December 1982:

'Several days before the event, people were already being summonsed and arrested ... We were told time and again that no unauthorised demonstrations were permitted ... Two weeks before Christmas in the youth club we had decided that it might be a good idea not only to exchange presents on Christmas Eve and to talk about the "Festival of Peace and the Family" but to do something positive. We wanted to demonstrate publicly that we believe in real peace without weapons. We planned to congregate in "Central Square" near the Church of Peace at 2.00 pm to observe a minute's silence. It was to be a quiet gathering without placards or leaflets, which are banned in any case ... It was publicised by word of mouth. On hearing about it, the authorities began to panic and started to talk of a national demonstration with church leaders taking part — we should have been so lucky! Many comrades were interrogated by the security police several days beforehand, and on 18 and 19 December things started in earnest. People were warn-

ed that they had better not dare set foot in the town centre on Christmas Eve. Proceedings were initiated against some of them under Paragraph 139, "Pursuance of a Criminal Act", and Paragraph 220, "Public Self-Abasement". The interrogators have their methods: they twist what you say when you try to explain something to them. That is their way of instilling fear and applying pressure. At Schott, Zeiss and Jenapharm there were factory meetings at which workers were warned against engaged in subversive activities.

'From 7am on Christmas Eve the police took control of the railway stations and the approach roads. Young people "of a certain appearance" were turned away and if they refused to go they were arrested and held 'in safe keeping' until well into the evening. Hundreds of policemen, mainly in plain clothes, were drafted in. Their parents will have cursed them — but not to their faces on that particular day. Such incidents also engender hatred ... The superintendent went to the town council in an attempt to mediate. He advised the authorities to take the opportunity to talk to us, but was angrily rebuffed with the reply: "We don't talk to law-breakers". Such incapacity for dialogue, such stubbornness and fear. But of what, I ask myself?

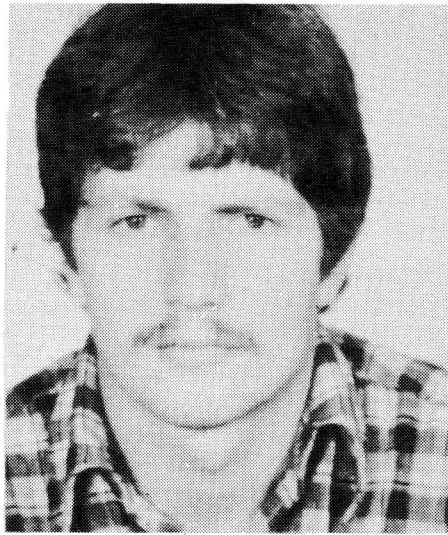
Anyhow, at 2.00pm several families with prams succeeded in making their way through to the Church of Peace. You know the Rubs, the artists, well they were there, along with thirty or forty others, no more. All the rest had been turned back or suc-

The city of Jena, scene of a radical young workers' group in the late 1970s, has been one of the most active centres of the independent peace movement. We publish below news and documents from the peace group there.

cessfully intimidated. Everywhere there were plainclothes police with loud-hailers and cameras taking endless photographs. As Frank Rub was pulling his camera out he was surrounded by two men who demanded his film and began manhandling him. He ran into the church and locked his film in the vestry ... We will have to wait and see if any of the pictures came out. It was really bad, really disgusting ... as well as absurd. The police and security forces demonstrated and we didn't get a look in. Ute Hinkeldey, a social worker with two children, was called on at home by the 'firm' during the early hours of 24 December. They brought an ambulance with them with the intention of putting her two small children, who are not yet at school, into a home "for the duration of the interrogation". Her parents, who happened to be there at the time, got so angry with them that they went away again. Such are the methods they employ! They are obviously not satisfied with having already deprived many of their citizenship in previous years and having expatriated whole circles of friends.

'Michael Blumhagen, who was in prison until recently for refusing to become a reservist — he, like the Leibners, is also now in West Berlin ... They tore his house down during the summer while he was in prison in Unterwellenborn. It makes me so angry! Roland Jahn and Manfred Hildebrand, who both signed the 'Berlin Appeal', were arrested. They had both spoken up for Blumhagen. Roland rode through the town on a bicycle brandishing a small Polish flag,

and for that they hauled him in. They are now trying to extract a testimony from Beate Sonntag, a young woman who used to be a market gardener. They are trying to get her to incriminate the two men and to name the person who 'pulled the strings' ... they have got their eye on Lutz Rathenow. You personally, together with 'foreigners', as well as those involved in the peace movement, are enemies in this context ... Ingo Güter, a 23-year or 24-year-old printer, has been sentenced to 2 years for total non-cooperation. It's all part of the same syndrome, you understand. And if one looks at other towns in which people live then it becomes clear what they are about. Where will it all end? ... If we are not even able to observe a minute's silence here on Christmas Eve ... In England tens of thousands of people clasp hands and encircle a nuclear base. Absolutely magnificent! But if I were to imagine that happening here ...! No, we are not going to give in! 10 people are often as significant as 10,000, but all the same it is depressing and makes me furious. Hardly a day goes by without the papers carrying a major article on the peace movement in the



Jena peace activist Roland Jahn

West ... People do things differently over there ... And then that business on Christmas Eve! But don't misunderstand me; it is perhaps all part of the process. We will not give up, but it is not going to be easy ...'

Dear friends, the above needs no comment from me. Please pass this letter on to CND and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, to the Dutch Inter-Church Peace Council and to our friends in the USA. Please help these people in East Germany! They are part of our common cause. And it is not a matter of 'burdening the peace movement with questions of human rights'. The success or failure of the peace movements in both East and West hinges on getting rid of the missiles, preventing war and opening prison-cell doors! I lost my East German citizenship for being a writer who wrote what he thought. I have been involved for many years with the question of peace and will continue to be of service by reporting between Jena, Berlin and London.

Perhaps the '2nd Conference on European Nuclear Disarmament' to be held in West Berlin in May will provide a good opportunity to discuss the whole matter. And on that anticipatory note, swords into ploughshares!

"For a real peace without weapons"

(This is the title of a 'position paper' drawn up by a group of young workers from Jena who participated in the peace demonstrations of November and December. It was first published by the West Berlin left-wing daily Tageszeitung and was translated from the German for Labour Focus by Günter Minnerup.)

The following demands and thought on the topic of peace were drawn up by citizens of Jena through joint discussion. We do not want to put forward utopian demands, we are looking for practical chances of peace for our country.

- the curriculum in schools and other educational institutions should include information about 'construction brigades' (unarmed military units for conscientious objectors, ed.).
- the voluntary nature of participation in Civil Defence and the GST (*Gesellschaft für Sport and Technik*, a paramilitary organisation, ed.) should be guaranteed. We are against making it obligatory through clauses in apprenticeship contracts. Those who do not want to take part must not be punished, either directly or indirectly. The CS and GST, too, should provide information about conscientious objection.
- military instruction in schools should be replaced on the syllabus by peace instruction (cf. Pfarrer Eppelmann's 'Letter to Erich Honecker' of 7 July 1981). This could consist of: non-violent conflict solution, sociology, law, problems of partnership and family life, child education, coping with aggressions, pedagogical and ecological problems, etc.
- an end to the production of military toys and the promotion of 'peaceful' toys; fewer automatic and more lifelike, 'humane' toys. Our children shall not become robots or soldiers!
- application of the Law on Construction Brigades (...). Especially recently there have been repeated rejections of applications (to serve in the unarmed units, ed.) and several proceedings in military courts are imminent.
- everybody should have the opportunity to serve as a 'construction soldier', even when called up as a reservist. A reasoned

withdrawal of the oath must be possible where conflicts of conscience are involved.

- introduction of a 'social peace service' without a test of conscience. Such a service should not be subordinate to the NVA (National People's Army, ed.), but to the respective social institutions.
- no women in the NVA! Civil employees, too, should work without uniforms or ranks (cf. the women's letter to Erich Honecker of autumn 1982)*.
- fathers of two or more children should only be called up as volunteers. As long as that is not so the call-up dates should be discussed with the families in order to avoid conflicts and crises (severe problems for children and wife — e.g. in the case of pregnancies, illnesses, etc.).
- all military and militaristic propaganda and recruitment campaigns shall cease! No glorification of the soldier's life! Enlightenment about the 'language of war' and the preparation of war.
- abandonment of all demonstrations of 'military strength'.
- the wearing of peace symbols must be allowed (e.g. the 'Swords into Ploughshares' badge and symbols of the international peace movement).
- promotion of the peace movement in the GDR. All thoughts and opinions that advocate peace and provoke reflection should have publicity. Debates, meetings, and discussion circles should be possible even without official permission. We also want to enter into direct and personal contact with the peace movements of other states (with END, CND, IKV, the Russell Peace Foundation, and others in East and West, including, for instance, the 'Dialogue' peace group in Hungary).
- we stand for a nuclear-free Europe and wish to participate in the 'Second Conference for European Nuclear Disarmament' in May in West Berlin.

Jena

November 1982

* Published in *Labour Focus*, Vol. 5, Nos. 5-6.

PEACE MOVEMENT IN THE GDR

“Protect our rights, Mr Honecker”

(On 18 March this year about 80 supporters of the independent peace group participated under their own placards in an official demonstration to commemorate the bombing of the city in 1945. Despite previous assurances that they would be allowed to participate, plain-clothes police attacked the independent contingent and tore up their placards. The following day the independent peace group contributed their own wreath to an official ceremony to commemorate the anniversary, complete with the ‘Swords into Ploughshares’ symbol, but were again pushed aside by police and their wreath was removed. Labour Focus has photographs of these events, but these are unfortunately not of sufficient quality for reproduction in this issue. We shall try and get better ones for inclusion in the next issue. We publish below the texts of two letters of protest sent by about 200 citizens of Jena to Erich Honecker, Chairman of the State Council of the GDR. The translations from the German are by Günter Minnerup.)

Dear Chairman of the State Council, Erich Honecker!

We are writing this letter to you in deep shock over the events at today's peace demonstration which took place at 16.00 to mark the 38th anniversary of the bombardment of Jena by British and American planes.

Among the participants in the above-mentioned event, in addition to the workers from the municipal enterprises, the students, university members and schoolchildren, were we, young Christians and those not tied to any denominations who strive primarily for international disarmament and the banning of ABC weapons in a peace circle.

We attended the demonstrations with our hand-made placards on which we gave expression to our desire for peace. The slogans were:

Peace For All

Renunciation of Force

Against the Militarisation of Life

Make Peace Without Weapons

Our small formation, including women and small children, took its placards to the market square, where all participants were assembling. Our circle peacefully gathered in order to listen to the speakers. Suddenly several persons began to grab our placards. They moved against us with brutal force and insults. As even our children were greatly endangered — one child, for instance, was pushed to the ground while the placards were taken — it was impossible for us to continue to take part in the peace manifestation.

Shouting ‘Get the children to safety’ we left the square.

Because of the provocation directed against us we were unable to commemorate the victims of the air raid terror and to be counted for peace in the world.

The measures taken against us disrupted the event, the citizens witnessing this peaceless incident were shocked by the manifestation of violence. Following your proposals on the topic of peace we would like to ask you, and expect, that you take steps to ensure that the perpetrators of the violent provocation directed against us and our desire for peace will be brought to justice.

We will make this letter available to the public during today's peace service held by Bishop Leich in the Peace Church in Jena.

Signed by about 200 citizens of Jena

18 March 1983

Dear Chairman,

Still shocked by yesterday's events which we described in our letter to you of 18 March 1983, we have again been obstructed in our demonstrations for peace. We are therefore forced to write to you again.

Our minute of commemoration in honour of the victims of the air raid on Jena, which we notified to the responsible authorities on 8 March 1983, was banned on the grounds that we should participate in the peace demonstration on 18 March 1983 and the wreath-laying ceremony on 19 March 1983. We joined the procession of the citizens of Jena on 19 March 1983 and put down our wreath at the memorial with the inscription ‘In respectful memory — Jena Peace Community’ and the peace symbol ‘Swords into ploughshares’. While we stood silent in commemoration, the words on our wreath were made illegible by several persons in plain clothes. At the same time we were pushed aside by policemen. We see not only the victims of the air raid on Jena of 19 March 1945, but also the measures taken against us as reminders of the importance of defending peace.

Dear Chairman of the State Council!

With this letter we are making use of the opportunity to address you as chairman of our state and draw your attention to the events. We expect, and ask, that the desecration of our commemoration and our peace manifestation will not remain unpunished.

Signed by about 200 citizens of Jena

19 March 1983

Women in Peace Movement

Interview with activist

(In the last issue of Labour Focus, we printed the text of a protest petition against a new law allowing the military conscription of women in the event of war, addressed to the Chairman of the GDR State Council Erich Honecker, and signed by over 300 East German women (‘Hundreds of Women Make Pacifist Protest’, Vol. 5, Nos. 5-6, p.39). The following interview is with one of the signatories of that letter who has to remain anonymous. It first appeared in the left-wing West Berlin daily Tageszeitung and was translated from the German by Günter Minnerup.)

Do women in the GDR really have to fear conscription into the army?

The new Military Service Law for the first time incorporates this possibility, without any previous discussion or information. The women have not been consulted at all, and that has annoyed many of them here. In a ‘state of defence’ or the event of a mobilisation any woman between 18 and 50 can now be called up. According to Clause 3 this applies already to the preparation for a state of defence. But what exactly is the ‘preparation for a state of defence?’ Theoretically this already applies today since socialism is

permanently carrying out ‘preparations’ for the defence against imperialism ... There is no further definition or legal clarification so that it is up to the leadership to decide our call-up at any time. We are living in complete uncertainty in this respect.

The GDR praises itself as the republic of emancipated women — women in uniform as a further step towards equality?

That is all we needed — men deciding that for us. We women have always been the sufferers in a war ... what are we to bring up our children for now? To be used as cannon-fodder in the next war, and all of us with them? Are we to see it as our task now even to participate in its preparation? We no longer believe that the cause of peace is advanced by yet more people joining the army when yet more weapons are being built without any open discussion about alternative ways of safeguarding peace. Perhaps a public debate over all these questions is the only remaining chance of preventing the next war.

Has it not already started in the GDR?

Certainly, there are peace groups or informal meetings in which

this plays an important role almost everywhere. There's no organisation, but many are involved and there are an increasing number of those who no longer want to leave their fate in the hands of some official body. People have this awful feeling of impotence and fear, of helplessness ... In some places women have got together and said to themselves: we have got to do something, things cannot go on like this. That began as early as last summer. Quite a few sent off individual petitions against the Military Service Law, and it took off from there. It was not just young women, either, but also those who still remember the last war, from all walks of life. The discussions were not just about peace, but also about what each of us can do, about psychological, social, and very personal problems. How we cope with our fear, including the fear of difficulties over our activity.

Are there such difficulties?

How do such things go over here? There is only one reaction to any independent movement in the population: fear of opposition, so the State Security has to be involved, people have to be inter-

rogated or arrested so that it all stops again quickly and the others are scared off. This has happened to some of the women who had signed the petition. But we are not interested in general opposition — I think I can say that for the majority of my friends — we do not work for the West, the 'class enemy' as they call it. We have consciously avoided publicising our cause via your media. Petitions have been written and signatures collected for months here and now the whole thing is probably known throughout the GDR and, of course, a whole lot of people on your side know about it, too. I also know of women who did not pass on their petitions out of fear. Some did not sent off their personal petitions so that the state would not fall back on the cheap argument that this was something inspired by the West. But up to now no-one has received a reply, our government is silent, the SED is silent, and temporary arrests have been the only reaction. Apparently the men need so many weapons because they have no courage. No courage to speak to us, no courage to explain their policies, to confront our questions. But we do want to talk about it, and with them, too. For we are the victims of their policies.

A letter from Katja Havemann

(The following letter by Katja Havemann, widow of Professor Robert Havemann, to Lilo Fuchs, wife of the exiled East German writer Jürgen Fuchs (they both now live in West Berlin), was first published by the West German magazine Der Stern. Katja Havemann is one of the signatories of the East German women's petition against the new Military Service Law. The translation from the German for Labour Focus is by Peter Thompson.)

Dear Lilo,

Our letter to Erich Honecker has found great support. It has been signed by many women in the GDR, in addition, that is, to the over 150 original signatories from Berlin, Dresden and Halle, who wish to make it clear that for them any possibility of compulsory military service for women is quite unacceptable. They believe that the daily tangible militarisation of our country is inconsistent with the desire for peace so often expressed by our political leaders. In every West European state protest by women against the further rearmament of both East and West is growing. It is claimed, however, in one example by a superior of one of the signatories, that for us to oppose military service for women here would cut the ground away from under the feet of the western peace movements.

I believe that such ridiculous ideas have already been dismissed by the positive reactions of Petra Kelly and other representatives of the western peace movements. We know full well that the struggle against the inclusion of women in general military service exists also in the Federal Republic. The intentions of politicians and generals who propose and implement such laws are dangerous and their arguments lack credibility.

For us the premise that peace can be preserved through military deterrence has long been a false one. It is not, however, merely general uncertainty about the world political situation or abstract paranoia that spur us to action. It is much more the fact that at last it is becoming generally accepted that violence cannot be used to solve political conflicts and that if it is then it will mean the end of the world as we know it. All the well-worn arguments about aggression and defence, the differentiation between just and unjust wars are so feeble. The experiences of our parents' generation alone serve as potent warnings to us not to accept the idea that war is a credible method of solving disputes.

Women are perhaps more sensitive in their opposition to the ideological preparations for war which are so evident today. We resist the attempt to educate our children into a 'Friend-or-foe' way of thinking and the tendencies towards hatefulness and aggressive behaviour which accompany it. In state run nurseries the use of military toys is pushed with particular enthusiasm. In school young pioneers take part in field exercises and battle manoeuvres and practice for war. In practical work subjects they build functional model tanks which then roll across playgrounds.

In military science lessons the more senior pupils are taught how to protect themselves from a nuclear attack. Military officers



Children parading in model tanks. Opposition to the militarisation of education and daily life is an important element of the GDR peace movement.

come into classes to recruit professional soldiers. Recently a new regulation was introduced that no apprentice in the GDR will be able to learn any trade unless he is prepared to participate in pre-conscription military training.

I'm sure you realise that these are only a few small examples of a kind of upbringing which cannot be conducive to the ability of people to embrace peace. I know many teachers who have serious problems of conscience because they have been instructed to encourage a certain quota of people to become professional soldiers.

My daughter Franziska is now in her fourth school year, she was instructed a few days ago by her teacher to remove from her jacket a patch with the words 'Justice, Disarmament, Peace' on it. She refused and was supported most strongly by her school-mates. Teachers are quite correct in recognising parental influence in such behaviour but they continue to react so negatively to that which encourages us.

Five weeks after sending the letter, over 50 of the signatories were visited in their homes by representatives of various state institutions, in order that they might discuss the matters raised. This is in itself encouraging for, as you know, in the past any similar protests have received only repression as a reply. For this reason these women now hope that the long sought after public debate on all these issues can indeed be attained.

With warmest greetings,
Yours, **Katja Havemann.**

By Günter Minnerup

In the early 1960s the Ulbricht leadership of the ruling East German SED (Socialist Unity Party) used to send squads of Free German Youth activists up to the rooftops to redirect television aerials tuned into West German TV channels. Today 'Dallas' and Bayern Munich — as well as a number of politically more sensitive items — are beamed into the living rooms of Potsdam and Halle without crude reprisals, of course. But perhaps Erich Honecker would be grateful right now for any suggestions as to how the reception of West German radio could be suspended for a while. For in the last few weeks he has been the — one suspects — rather reluctant 'star' of a rock music hit sweeping both German states.

The record, currently being played incessantly on all West German stations and no doubt being recorded diligently on thousands of East German tapes, is an updated version of the old swing number 'Chattanooga Choo Choo' performed by the Federal Republic's leading rock singer, Udo Lindenberg. There may seem nothing unusual about this, as the taste of East European youth for Western rock music is well-known and by now well-accepted by their regimes. In the GDR this acceptance has gone so far that the pop music programmes put out by East German radio have become a cult among many West German owners of cassette recorders and East German rock bands have indeed become commercial successes in the FRG. But this one has a story to it.

Udo Lindenberg is not just any old 'Top of the Pops' performer. He has a well-deserved reputation as a rock politico, having sung for years about the alienation of young people from the established

Cognac for Honecker

Pardon me, is this the special train to Pankow?
I've to go there, got to go to East Berlin
I've got something to sort out with your supreme chief
I'm a talented singer and want to perform there with my band

I have a bottle of cognac with me that tastes very nice
to be sipped quite informally by me and Erich Honecker
and I shall say: ey, Honey, I'll sing for little money
in the Palace of the Republic, if you'd only let me
all the silly pop music monkeys are free to sing there
to perform all their crap there
only little Udo, only little Udo
is not allowed, and we don't understand that

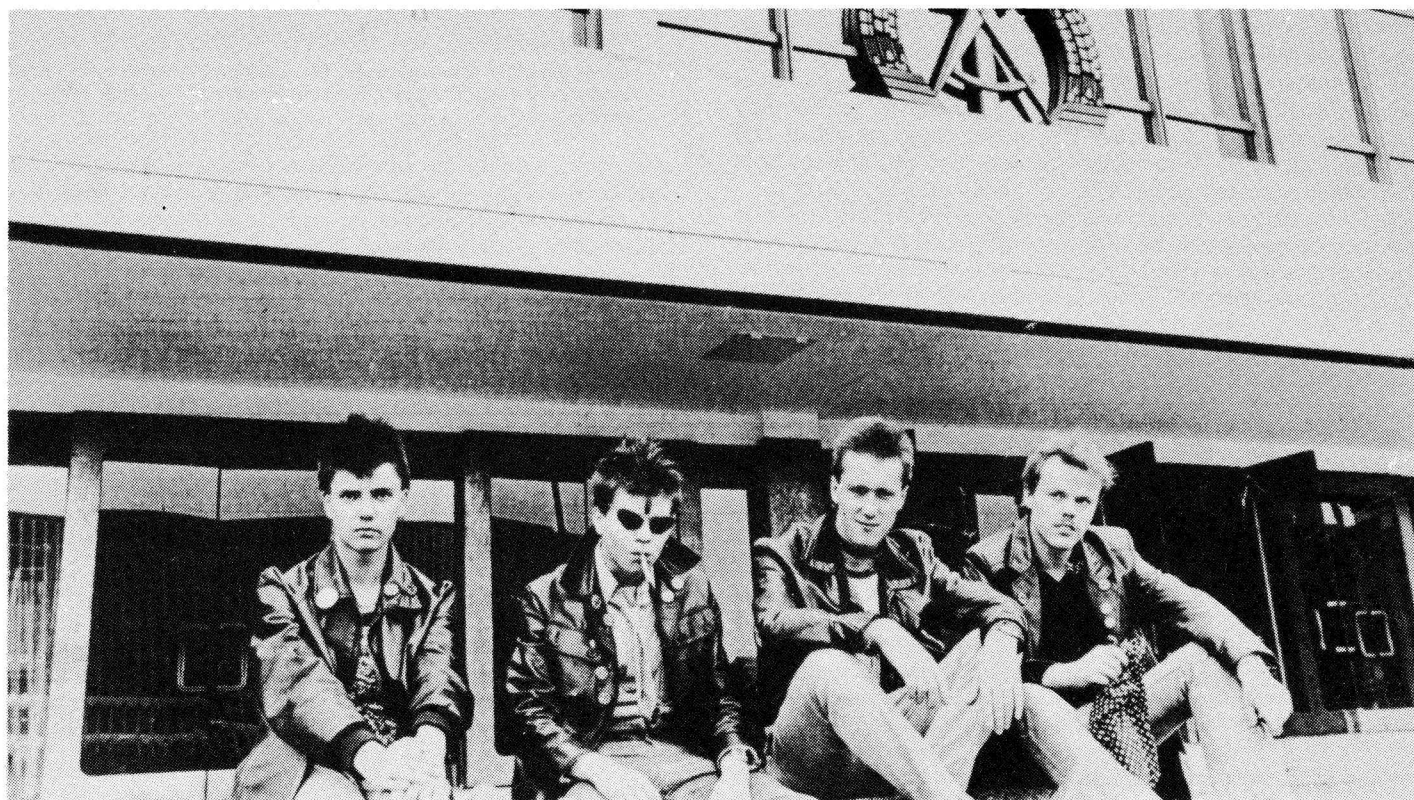
I know for sure that I have so many friends
in the GDR, and every hour they get more
oh Erich, are you really such a stubborn soul
why don't you let me sing in the workers' and peasants' state?

Honey, I believe that you are really quite a swinger
somewhere deep down you are really quite a rocker
and secretly you like to wear a leather jacket
you lock yourself in the lodo and listen to Western radio ...

bourgeois values and life styles, the opposition to nuclear power stations and the peace movement, and he has been one of the foremost campaigners for the Green Party this year in the Greens' travelling election show. His records have been extremely popular among critical (and not so critical) East German youths for a long time, but all efforts on his part to be allowed to perform in the GDR — as many other West German pop stars churning out unpolitical love songs have been — were repeatedly rebuff-

ed. His version of the 'Chattanooga Choo Choo' — entitled 'Special Train to Pankow' (Pankow being the government quarters of East Berlin) — can be roughly translated like this:

At the end of the record, a Russian voice instructs 'Comrade Erich' — in Russian — to give Udo Lindenberg permission to undertake a concert tour throughout the GDR.



East German youth 1983. More and more youth are becoming alienated from the official values.

Samizdat under seige

By Bill Lomax

In the last issue of *Labour Focus* we reported on the escalation of police harassment of samizdat activists in Budapest. Since then it has become clear that the Hungarian regime has taken a firm decision to do all it can, short of political trials and imprisonments, to put a stop to oppositional activities and independent publishing.

Hungary's democratic opposition, however, has refused to be stifled and is fighting back against the new drive to silence them.

'WE'RE NOT SHUTTING DOWN!'

With these words Gábor Demszky, editor of Hungary's independent publishing house *AB*, has declared that despite a new series of police raids and confiscations, Hungary's samizdat publishers refuse to be silenced. Moreover, this defiant declaration appeared at the beginning of 1983 in the first issue of a new opposition broadsheet — called *AB Tájékoztató* or *AB Information Bulletin*.

The *AB Bulletin* carried reports of police raids on 14 December 1982 when László Rajk's samizdat bookshop and five other Budapest flats were raided and duplicating equipment and large amounts of samizdat material seized. This was the first occasion when police had been authorised to enter László Rajk's flat. The confiscated material — well over 150 samizdat titles valued at close on half a million forints — filled two mini-buses and one estate car.

László Rajk together with the two editors of the *AB* independent publishing house, Gábor Demszky and Jenő Nagy, were taken into police headquarters for questioning. So were five other people detained in the course of the raids, amongst them Bálint Nagy, Miklós Sulyok and Géza Buda. But no charges were brought against them and they were all released in the early hours of the morning. The police action had been reported on Budapest radio at the very time it was being carried out, and the following day the Party paper *Népszabadság* also carried a brief report.

REGIME ATTACKS

Three days before the police raids, the changeover to a new phase of repression had been signalled by the Party daily *Népszabadság* in an article by Péter Rényi, assistant chief editor and close friend of Communist Party leader János Kádár. In tones reminiscent of the darkest periods of Stalinism and the Cold War, he attacked the dissidents, naming the writer György Konrád in particular, as agents of Western imperialist forces seeking to undermine the socialist order in Hungary.

The time had come, Rényi declared, to draw the line between those who offer 'objective, critical observations', and those who engage in 'hostile political activity'.

Many now felt the regime's decision to



Kadar at 70.

move over to an all-out assault on the opposition was related to international factors. On the one hand, Yuri Andropov, former KGB chief and a person who, as Soviet Ambassador to Hungary at the time, had helped to suppress the 1956 revolution, had just succeeded to the leadership of the Soviet Party. On the other hand, Hungary had just secured new Western credits totalling over 600 million dollars. The regime, it seemed, might now be more concerned to please the new Soviet leader than to worry about keeping up its 'liberal' image in the West.

In fact, however, the decision to call a halt to the ever growing activities of the opposition had been taken many months earlier. It was only the measures to be employed that had remained in dispute. Initially in June attempts had been made to intimidate the opposition by irregular, and illegal, methods of street harassment. (See *Labour Focus* Vol.5 Nos.5-6, Winter 1982-3.) When that failed — and also called forth protests from leading figures of Hungarian culture — the authorities prepared themselves for more sophisticated, but no less effective methods.

A special report prepared over the summer for the Cultural Section of the Party's Central Committee suggested efforts to marginalise the influence of samizdat and isolate the committed oppositionists from wider circles of the liberal intelligentsia whose criticism could still be tolerated. Starting in the autumn, regime spokespeople began to act on the basis of these recommendations and to prepare the ground for the later police actions.

The new line was heralded by Minister of Interior István Horváth in his annual report on security matters to the Hungarian Parliament on 8 October 1982. Referring to the

growing activities of groups he described as hostile to socialism, Horváth declared that the state had both the power and the determination to act against them. The time had now come, he declared, to distinguish between those well-intentioned or misled critics who were amenable to discussion and debate, and the committed opponents of the regime against whom the full force of the criminal law might have to be deployed.

A week later leading representatives of Hungarian publishing and cultural life were summoned to a briefing session with Government and Party representatives, headed by Central Committee secretary György Aczél and Deputy Minister of Culture Dezső Tóth, where they were warned against allowing the expression of opposition views in their forums. Certain magazines and films, as well as individual dissidents, were picked out for particular criticism, while some of those present now called for more determined police action against the opposition.

When Rényi too entered the fray, with his article entitled 'The Gloves are Off' on 11 December, the stage was finally set for a new wave of police repression.

EVICITION

The immediate reaction of the opposition to the police raids of 14 December was to insist on carrying on with 'business as usual'. But when László Rajk tried to open his bookshop again the following Tuesday 21 December, it was again the police who were his first visitors. The flat was searched once more and further samizdat material confiscated, but this time no-one was taken in for questioning. Once again no charges were made. The week after that, 28 December, the police refrained from entering Rajk's flat but stopped many people in the street who were going there and checked their identity cards. Subsequently, several of these individuals were called in for questioning by the police.

When even these measures of intimidation failed to close down the samizdat bookshop, the Hungarian authorities issued László Rajk with a notice to quit his flat by 15 January 1983, on the technical grounds that he was renting two municipal flats in Budapest but was entitled only to the one, that previously occupied by his mother Júlia Rajk up to her death in September 1981, but which was not so centrally situated as the one he had been using as a bookshop.

When László Rajk ignored the notice to quit, the authorities proceeded to compulsorily evict him. On the early morning of 26 January the street in central Budapest where he lived was sealed off and a large municipal removals van arrived in the company of a sizeable police escort. Rajk himself and others present in the flat were detained by the police while all his belongings were forcibly removed and transferred

HUNGARY

to the flat in the Hankóczy street previously occupied by his mother. Those detained were released once the removal was completed.

NEW TASKS

The police actions of December 1982 and January 1983 not only represented a new phase of state repression, they also marked the end of a certain phase of the opposition's activity too.

Until then the opposition's strategy had been to act freely and openly, avoiding all forms of conspiratorial or clandestine activity. Relying on the assumed immunity of individuals such as Rajk, and on the regime's reluctance to jeopardise its 'liberal' image in the West, many dissidents felt confident they were safe from police repression. They paid little attention to developing any organised infrastructure or acquiring any significant social base.

Already in Summer 1982, however, in the third issue of the opposition journal *Beszélő*, János Kis had called on the opposition to rethink its strategy in the aftermath of the military coup in Poland. Things would now never be the same again, he argued, and the opposition must prepare itself for new tasks and new responsibilities. (See János Kis, 'The End of the Post-Stalin Epoch', in *Labour Focus*, Vol.5 Nos.5-6, Winter 1982-83).

In *Beszélő* No. 4, issued shortly before the police raids in December, an anonymous critic writing under the pseudonym *Outsider*, took up Kis's challenge and replied that the real trouble with the opposition was that it had for too long remained confined to an exclusive and privileged intellectual stratum that often seemed more at home in offering advice to the regime than in seeking to work together with the people. (See this issue for the text.)

An opposition worthy of the name, contends *Outsider*, must reject the tradition of compromise that has characterised the Hungarian intelligentsia ever since 1945, must base itself on the popular heritage of the 1956 revolution, must be prepared to develop more serious forms of clandestine organisation and to seek its allies not in the reformist intelligentsia but amongst the working people.

NEW VENTURES

In the first months of 1983 the Hungarian democratic opposition has certainly done its utmost to fight back against the new wave of repression, and the independent publishers have even managed to make good some of the losses suffered in 1982.

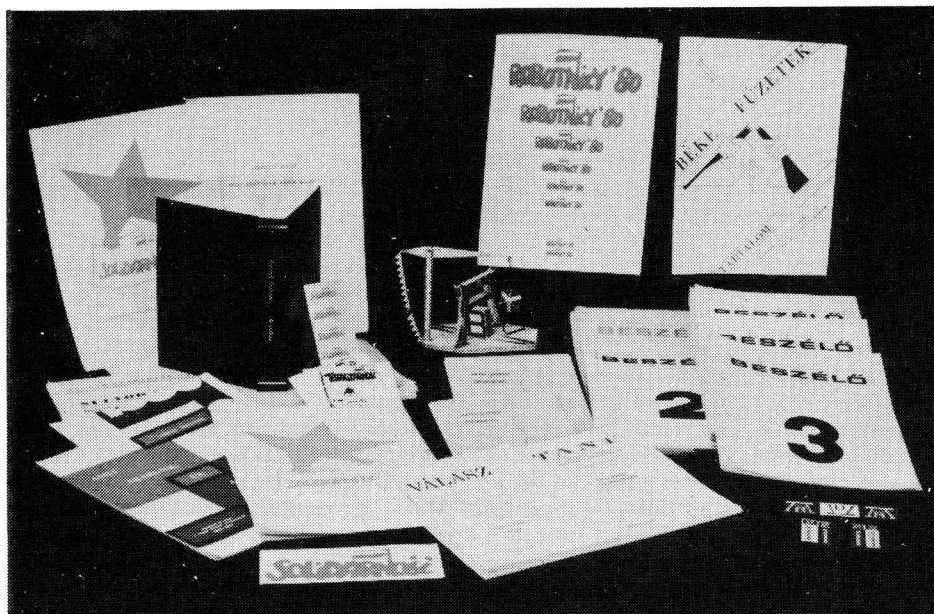
In January the first issue of the *AB Bulletin* appeared, carrying an announcement that the samizdat bookshop would reopen at the customary time on Tuesday evenings at Rajk's new flat in the Hankóczy street. The Monday evening Free University sessions also recommenced with a series of lectures on the lesser known writings of the political thinker István Bibó given by the young historian Sándor Szilágyi.

One of the publications confiscated in the police actions of the previous year had been an anthology of literary essays and

graphical illustrations entitled *In Black* and compiled and edited by Ferenc Kőszeg and Gabriella Lengyel. The anthology, in a finely-presented limited edition to be sold to raise funds for SZETA, the Foundation to Assist the Poor, was now successfully reprinted and publicly released at an unofficial launching attended by over a hundred people on 12 February 1983.

Also in February appeared the second issue of the *AB Information Bulletin* carrying reports not only on the denial of human and civil rights in Hungary but also on the police actions against representatives of the Hungarian minorities in Romania and Czechoslovakia.

In March a new issue of *Beszélő* was published — this time a special double issue No. 5-6 to make up for the numbers confiscated in the police raids at the end of 1982.



Samizdat literature in the 'samizdat boutique'

BESZÉLŐ FINED

The opposition's refusal to be silenced and their determination to defy the regime has provoked new measures designed to muzzle them.

Following police examination of the samizdat materials seized in the course of the earlier raids, four of the editors of the journal *Beszélő* — Miklós Haraszti, János Kis, Ferenc Kőszeg and György Petri — received administrative fines from the Budapest Municipal Council for publishing a journal without the requisite authorisation. The fines of 4,000 forints each could be converted into 20 day prison sentences if not paid.

By imposing these fines, the Hungarian authorities were hoping to put *Beszélő* out of business without having to charge its editors with political offences. Indeed, they could even assert that they had no objection to the contents of the journal, only to people undertaking commercial activity without permission and running a private publishing company without a licence.

In reply, the editors of *Beszélő* decided to pay the fines, but at the same time they have now submitted an application for a licence to operate legally. While their request has little chance of being granted, by

their action they have demonstrated their willingness to comply with the legal regulations.

NEW POLICE RAIDS

That the regime is not simply concerned with commercial proprieties and legal technicalities, however, has been demonstrated by a new wave of police raids and street harassment of samizdat activists.

Tuesday 29 March saw yet another night of police raids in Budapest. Not only the new site of Rajk's samizdat bookshop, but also the homes of *AB* publishers Gábor Demszky and Jenő Nagy, *Beszélő* editors Miklós Haraszti and Ferenc Kőszeg, and SZETA activist Ottilia Solt, were raided and searched by police in the most large-scale operation yet mounted against the opposition.

Once again large quantities of samizdat

material were seized and confiscated — many copies of the new, double issue of *Beszélő* No. 5-6, the latest, third number of the *AB Information Bulletin*, and the SZETA literary anthology *In Black*.

The six people whose homes were raided were held overnight by the police for questioning, and told that they were suspected of committing offences in contravention of the press laws, of producing and distributing literature without permission. Charges, they were told, would probably be brought against them. These could result in a court prosecution and penalties of very heavy fines if not imprisonment.

The police action, however, did not come to an end with that night's arrests and confiscations. Three days later the flat of *AB* publishers Gábor Demszky and Jenő Nagy was raided and searched once more, and the following Tuesday the raids were repeated at the homes of László Rajk, Demszky and Nagy, and Ferenc Kőszeg, and further quantities of samizdat once again seized and confiscated.

In the course of the raids, names were taken of around 100 people present in the flats at the time or visiting the samizdat bookshop. Subsequently, most of these people have been called in by the police for

questioning, as well as a few others who had not been present during the raids but who featured as authors of some of the samizdat literature confiscated.

Since then, not only has a strong police presence been maintained near the flats of known dissidents, whose homes continue to be subject to random police searches, but those more prominent in samizdat publishing have been subjected to constant street harassment. On the slightest pretext their cars are halted, or they are stopped in the street, their bags or briefcases examined and any manuscripts immediately confiscated. Even aspects of last year's more irregular harassment have reappeared, and both Gábor Demszky and Miklós Haraszti have had occasion to discover their car tyres have been slashed in the street.

KÁDÁR

The scale and severity of the police actions, far surpassing anything seen in Hungary for very many years, have made it clear beyond any doubt that the action was the result of a serious decision taken at the highest levels of the Hungarian Party leadership aimed at bringing an end to the opposition's activities.

This was finally confirmed in a speech delivered to the Spring plenary session of the Communist Party Central Committee by First Secretary János Kádár at the beginning of April. The raids, Kádár declared, were not an arbitrary or independent police action but were carried out on the direct instructions and with the full support of the Party leadership.

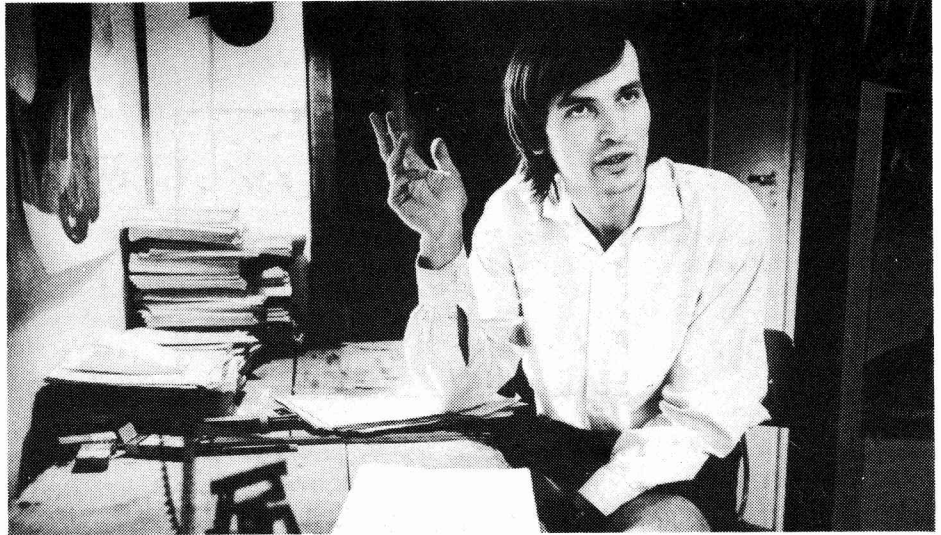
At the same time Kádár is said to have insisted that there was no need for trials or imprisonments of dissidents — that by using legal technicalities and police harassment their lives could be made so unpleasant that they would be forced to cease their activities.

Opposition spokespersons like László Rajk, while recognising the regime's determination to act decisively against them, are sceptical of Kádár's claim that a great success has been scored against the opposition. After all, the independent publishers had been operating quite openly, and made no secret of where their publications were available. At the same time, the police action has not succeeded in finding their duplicating equipment, and thus eliminating their printing capacity.

Even since the latest actions, new samizdat publications have continued to appear — amongst them a documentation of cases of the denial of human rights in Hungary, and also a reproduction of the minutes of one of the last legal meetings of the Hungarian Writers' Union in December 1956 — while a new, seventh issue of *Beszélt* is already in process of production.

THE END OF HUNGARY'S TOLERANT REGIME?

In the face of their continuing defiance, the regime is not likely to abandon its determination to put an end to the opposition — at least so long as it feels it can still be seen in the West to be dealing with its dissidents in a more civilised way than happens in the other



Samizdat activist Demsky

countries of the Eastern bloc. Hence the reluctance to bring political charges or to incarcerate its opponents, and the attempt to force the samizdat publishers out of business by commercial restrictions and legal technicalities.

The regime, however, is now set on a course that can only lead to an intensification of harassment and repression.

At a time when both the military coup in Poland and Andropov's succession to the Soviet leadership have resulted in a tightening up throughout Eastern Europe, the Hungarian regime cannot afford to appear to be too far out of line in its toleration of criticism and dissent. The assault on the opposition is thus needed to caution and intimidate the far wider circles of the reformist intelligentsia.

As the dissident writer Miklós Haraszti explained in a recent interview: 'About 1,000 copies of *Beszélt* are printed. Each is read by about 20 to 30 people. ... We say what all the reform intelligentsia think.'

In the present situation it is not just the future of the opposition that is at stake, but also the relative liberalism that has characterised the Kádár regime itself for the last ten years.

With Kádár turned 70 and increasingly showing signs of his age, and now in power for over a quarter of a century — longer than any other ruler of Hungary in the 20th century — there must be increasing doubt as to whether the more tolerant regime that has come to be so closely associated with his name will be able to outlive him — or whether Hungary will once more revert to being just another orthodox satellite in the Eastern bloc.

STOP PRESS

As *Labour Focus* goes to press we have learned from Budapest that the six samizdat publishers — László Rajk, Gábor Demszky, Jenő Nagy, Ferenc Köszeg, Miklós Haraszti and Ottilia Solt — suspected of having committed offences against the Hungarian press laws, have been informed by the authorities that they will not now be prosecuted.

This does not, however, mean any relaxation in the regime's efforts to repress the

democratic opposition and the movement of independent publishing in Hungary. The Government remains determined not to permit the opposition and the samizdat publishers to continue their activities on the same scale as they have been doing for the past few years. Harassment of samizdat activists, and intimidation of their wider circles of supporters, is likely to continue.

The Hungarian opposition continues to need the active help and support of democrats and socialists in the West and the British labour movement in particular.

English Lecturer Expelled from Hungary

On 27 December 1982 the author of this article, Bill Lomax, a lecturer in sociology at the University of Nottingham, travelled by train from Vienna to Budapest in possession of a valid visa issued by the Hungarian Embassy in London at the beginning of November 1982. He was admitted into the country, and during the regular passport inspection on the train his passport was stamped for entry into Hungary. Shortly before arrival at the Eastern railway station in Budapest, however, he was detained by two passport officers and ordered to leave the train with them. After being held for two hours at the Eastern railway station, he was accompanied back to the Austrian frontier on the next train to Vienna.

No explanation for the expulsion was given by the Hungarian authorities — neither to Bill Lomax himself, nor to the British Embassy in Budapest who protested to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry about the incident.

This is the first instance for very many years of a British citizen (other than former Hungarian nationals) in possession of a valid visa being either refused entry or expelled from Hungary. Bill Lomax feels that his expulsion represents just one aspect of the new official line against the dissidents — and that similar treatment can now be expected by other writers and journalists if they publish accounts of political and intellectual repression in Hungary.

The Role of Dissident Intellectuals

(The debate around János Kis's article 'Thoughts on the Future' (published in Labour Focus Vol. 5 nos. 5-6) continues in the Hungarian underground press. The recent issue of Beszélő carried five articles that take up the issues raised by Kis. The writer and Lukács student István Eörsi looks at the various reform proposals coming from both inside and outside the official institutions and suggests that it is not so easy to determine who is exactly oppositionist, reformer or revolutionary. Emil Kürthy compares Poland and Hungary and warns the Hungarian opposition against attempting to apply Polish tactics in Hungary. The literary critic Csaba Könczöl warns against illusions in a compromised opposition. According to Pál Szalai a democratisation of Eastern Europe can only come about if there are simultaneous democratic mass movements in a number of countries, accompanied by movements inside the Party and to a certain extent tolerated by the Soviet Union. The Opposition doesn't need an ideology — as suggested by Kis — but a plurality of ideologies.)

But one of the more interesting and provocative articles in Beszélő No. 4 was that written by an oppositionist under the pseudonym Kivül Alló — the Outsider. We reprint this article here. It is translated for Labour Focus by Gus Fagan from the Austrian journal Gegenstimmen No. II/4.)

There are certainly problems with the 'opposition'. Namely this, that it doesn't exist. Therefore I put the word in inverted commas. I think that a social group should be called an opposition under the following conditions:

— Firstly, if it can be regarded as a real social group. In other words, when its activity is determined by common interests, a common goal and common ideals.

— Secondly, when this activity is really oppositional, in other words, when it is *unambiguously* against official ruling politics.

— Thirdly, when, as a social group, it is a factor which from every point of view has to be taken into account. In other words, that theoretically the possibility exists that the state power will be forced to reckon with this social group as a factor.

If these preconditions are not fulfilled, then a group may be called oppositional in ordinary parlance or may be designated as such in exclusive circles of friends — which is what often happens, as we know. However this has no social meaning. My experiences show that the very small layer of Hungarian non-conformists still haven't broken out of this exclusiveness — in spite of the foundation of SZETA and the technical reproduction of samizdat.

I must emphasise that I regard none of these initiatives as superfluous. I only wish not to exaggerate their significance.

There are three closely related factors which are decisive in maintaining the social weight of the Hungarian opposition at zero:

The first is that the 'opposition' has no regular or organised contact with the working class. Those who call themselves 'dissidents' are, from A to Z, intellectuals.

The second is that the dissident intellectuals up to now have shown no express desire to understand their *intellectual* role, or to change their behaviour and thus put themselves in a position where — if it were required — they could make contact with the working class. At the present time I think that the dissidents would be incapable of making such contact, even if they really wanted to.

The third is that there exists today a complete uncertainty as to whether, *at this point in time* it would be appropriate to try to make contact 'below'. To express it more crudely, they still haven't decided for whom they want to draw swords or to whom they want to give advice — to the authorities or to the people. This either/or may seem simple at first glance, but it is to this question that a firm answer must now at last be given.

The opposition's designation of itself as marginalised expresses this unstable situation rather well. From the margin (the edge) you can fall in as easily as fall out. It depends only on which way the wind is blowing.

Today especially, the time has really come for everyone to decide whether they belong to the ranks of the 'third reform generation'² now constituting itself, thereby firmly placing their lives and understanding under the knout of the powers that be, or, whether they place themselves in opposition to this, but for real.

Today, anyone that wants to continue their tightrope dance on the margin, can no longer count on the minimum intellectual interest that there's been up to now, and their civil rights gestures will wither to a commendable and honourable private affair.

Is this lack of clarity present in the editorial conceptions of Beszélő? The publication decks itself in the colours of the 'popular press'. 'Everyone' can write for it, it thirsts for news from 'down under', its style attempts to be accessible to everyone and it sensitively avoids theoretical contributions. But still, its real concern is first and foremost the intelligentsia (exact and detailed reporting on university youth, about Mozgo Vilag and FIJAK³, about the writers union, and so on). Even those articles whose theme is not the intelligentsia (essentially short accounts of unimportant strikes, three-page conversations with a factory worker, news about conscientious objectors, a sociographic piece about the central prison in Budapest etc.), even those articles are directed at the intelligentsia or, to be more exact, at the reformist souls among its intellectual readers. Such an editorial conception is appropriate if based on a previous decision that the primary goal of Beszélő is to expand this layer of reformist non-conformist intellectuals. *From this point of view* the 'Bibo Memorial Collection' — because of its popular-front character — must be viewed as a success.

But every 'oppositionist' must be clear about one thing, that this reformist standpoint (which lies to, advises or pressurises the powers that be) cannot reckon with any affection from the working class. For the simple reason that this standpoint is not all that different from that of the official intelligentsia that work behind the bulwarks of power, whose contact with the people is as spokespeople for the official ideology in the mass media or as ready and willing lackeys of the state power.

For, in the final analysis, this anti-intellectual hostility which is so strong and so widespread among the workers is directed against this useless band of fabricators of ideology. Hungarian non-conformist intellectuals must take this into account. So they must either fall in with the usual practice of 'everything for the people but nothing with the people', thereby casting their glances at the positions of power — in which case they should come out openly for this standpoint. It would also be desirable in this situation to give up the generous nod and wink in the direction of 'the people'. Either they do this or they must attempt in a very fundamental way to understand the components of this anti-intellectual hostility, and, with a proper self-critique, establish how much of this is justifiable as far as the dissident intellectuals are concerned.

Some significance must be attributed to the fact that this elementary antipathy of the workers towards the intellectuals has to do with the intellectuals' privileged position, and this applies to the low-level apparatchik who carries out administrative work as much as it does to the prominence of the upper intelligentsia.

As far as the intelligentsia are concerned the workers make no distinction between conformist and non-conformists. In a somewhat wider context they would agree with Petri and Heine that 'they both stink'. This may perhaps betray a not finely nuanced world view, but that doesn't seem to me to be such a serious fault when compared with the failures of the intelligentsia that I've just talked about. The dissident intellectuals stubbornly refuse to take these facts into account.

As far as I can tell, with the exception of Mihaly Vajda, nobody from among the leading dissidents took seriously Konrad and Szelenyi's book, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* — it didn't even deserve mention. Only some years after it came out was it discussed in a private flat, and then at the request of a younger and more curious generation. The 'authorities' present demonstrated in very superior fashion why the conceptions of this book were totally wrong, why not a single fact in it stood up to historical criticism, etc.

In a word, they established in a very enlightened manner for the studious newcomers — for whom of course every scandal was new — that nothing but wrong conclusions could be drawn from this book. As far as I know none of the leading speakers thought it necessary to make his standpoint more accessible in written form.

To cut a long story short: in the secure camp of Hungarian dissent, Konrad's book was certainly no 'event'. Up to now a

fundamental and open discussion of it has not happened.

Whatever opinion one may have about the basic conception of this book, it is after all the *subject matter* which every dissident intellectual has to deal with: what is the significance of the privileged position of a layer of intellectuals, what is the meaning of the link between the majority of the Hungarian intellectuals and the regime, what is the significance of all this for the growing rage of anti-intellectual hostility?

Now before my readers put this article of mine to one side with the charge that obviously I am not familiar with the *Bibo Memorial Collection*, let me assure you that I am very familiar with it indeed.

Although I regard it as a very important publication I was overcome while reading it by rather oblique thoughts. Although the individual contributions to this collection, from A to Z, see Bibo's intellectual, political and human stature in the fact that this theoretician of compromise didn't in fact many any compromise with this actually existing regime, nonetheless there is lacking in the collection a radical critique of the behaviour of the Hungarian intelligentsia after 1948 when it did indeed make a compromise.

The contribution from Mihaly Vajda however is very enlightening. He argues in his article, with a taste for Lukacsian sophistry, that of course *today* it has become clear that after 1956 the Hungarian intelligentsia made a rotten compromise, and, now that that is clear, such a compromise must be given up. *At that time*, however, there had been no other real perspective. So the tactic of the intelligentsia was not fundamentally one of unprincipled compromise.

I don't want to maintain that all authors in the Bibo collection share Vajda's viewpoint, but in quite a number of contributions one senses a common assumption — very good, very good, of course Bibo always did the right thing, but then he was, after all, an exception, for what would have happened had everyone behaved as he did?

Exactly! What would have happened? At least as a mental experiment it would have been worthwhile to pose this question. In attempting to answer this we might have come to some understanding of the context in which a critical understanding of the behaviour of the Hungarian intelligentsia after 1945 was possible. To make such an assessment one couldn't find a better *criterion* than Bibo — if one is looking in the circle of the intelligentsia. But the dissident intelligentsia failed to grasp this opportunity. *That is the fiasco of the Bibo collection.*

There is, however, another possibility. And whether we avail of this or pass it up could be decisive for deciding whether the dissident intelligentsia is to become a real opposition, without inverted commas, or whether it is to be an advisory council to those in power.

For the criterion of this critique is not to be found exclusively in the intelligentsia, but also in the working class. In fact there are probably more Istvan Bibos to be found among the workers than among the intellectuals.

The justification of the Rajk trial was swallowed by the vast majority of the intellectuals, but was totally rejected by the majority of the workers. Perhaps in some future study of the '50s this fact might serve as a criterion with which to make a critique of the intelligentsia.

After the suppression of the 1956 revolution thousands were executed among the workers, while the intellectuals got off rather more lightly. This is a fact which we shouldn't forget when, in the circles of the dissident intellectuals, it is said that there was no alternative for the intellectuals to the rotten compromise, that the ordinary people (unfortunately) came to terms with the normalisation, that they soon (what could we do?) felt quite happy about it, and that therefore (so to speak) our non-conformity didn't really have much of a chance. Historically, it would be perhaps more truthful if we reversed the formula. In other words: the ordinary people really didn't have any alternative and therefore they were forced to accept Kadarism, but perhaps there was an alternative for the intelligentsia, namely, to draw a clear dividing line within its own ranks, ie. to split. Istvan Bibo wouldn't then have been alone in his stand.

This way it might have been possible to avoid the total domination of the official ideology over the historical consciousness of the nation and perhaps then we wouldn't still be waiting for a proper

history of post-1945 Hungary written on the basis of a coherent system of values.

Perhaps then something more than the 6:36 would play a role in the historical memory and values of popular consciousness.

Such a task would have entailed a greater readiness on the part of the intelligentsia to take risks — at least the risk of a temporary internal emigration. That would have been better, uncomparably better, even if these works for a time had been destined only for the desk drawer. If we had such works now, then we could bring them out, and the Hungarian dissidents would be that much more advanced along the road. Then we wouldn't have any more need for inverted commas.

In the meantime it is both laughable and sad that, apart from the *Hungaricus* pamphlet⁷, the Hungarian samizdat literature has not produced anything of significance in relation to the 1956 revolution. The work of the leading intellectuals of 1968, Agnes Heller and Ferenc Féher, was published abroad and the only attempt at an analytic description of the events of 1956 was that of the English man, Bill Lomax. On the 25th anniversary of 1956 the capacity of the 'Hungarian dissident intellectuals' only went so far as to produce a quite inadequate chronology, a few short documents and an admittedly impressive graphic. After 25 years the work on 1956 still remains at the level of looking for material. While the official mass media drone on in the continuous celebration of its defeat.

Let's imagine, just for the sake of it, that after 25 years there are still those in Hungary — apart from the self-designated dissidents — perhaps even workers and farmers, who, in spite of all the ideological sand thrown in their eyes, still think of 1956 as a revolution. When, by chance, some piece of samizdat lands in their hands, what kind of sympathy does this evoke?

As an incorrigible greenhorn I believe, in spite of all the rebuke that is to come, that all the weakspots in the consciousness of the present-day Hungarian dissidents are, to a great extent, explicable in terms of the attitude that I have been describing. Or, to put it more negatively, after 1945 the Hungarian intellectuals didn't open their mouths too wide because they had too much to lose.

Viewed positively, what this means is that we arrive once more at those damned privileges which our cunning state allows our dissidents to share in. (I promise you, dear dissident-reader, that I am not about to throw more annoying insults on your head.) Then, in the long run, you can go on enjoying your bath only so long as, from time to time, the powers that be throw in a bucket of warm water.

I'll tell you a secret, because perhaps there is someone who hasn't heard this yet: the bureaucrats, among themselves, call this shameful form of hidden official support 'white assistance'. And why deny it? Perhaps it is precisely this which is the existential foundation of the marginalised ideology, in other words, that we allow ourselves to be helped at all in this way. For, after all, we would be crazy if we didn't accept this so long as the form of the assistance doesn't compromise us, in other words, as long as it takes the form of sociological investigations, documenting and reading. In exchange for this — and herein is the silent compromise which the non-conformist section of the Hungarian intelligentsia has made with the state power — we are permitted to put forward our radical views either verbally in exclusive intellectual circles (for instance monthly lectures at the free university) or in writing to a somewhat larger, but nevertheless still intellectual circle. In the framework of this compromise the majority of dissident intellectuals have a professional career, with which they can live in a manner appropriate to their social position as intellectuals. Some of them even still have their party card.

A significantly smaller number don't have a professional career but are given enough freelance work and there are very few indeed who have had their passports confiscated. As long as this compromise stays in place, this is about as far as punishment will go.

However, since the passport, especially the blue one, is uniquely a privilege of the intelligentsia, and since the workers couldn't really be threatened with this, because you can't take away from what they haven't got, we must come to the following conclusion: the only risk that the dissident intellectuals have taken up till now is that some of them, in one area alone, have come down to the level of the 'people'.

HUNGARY

Unofficial Peace Demonstration in Budapest

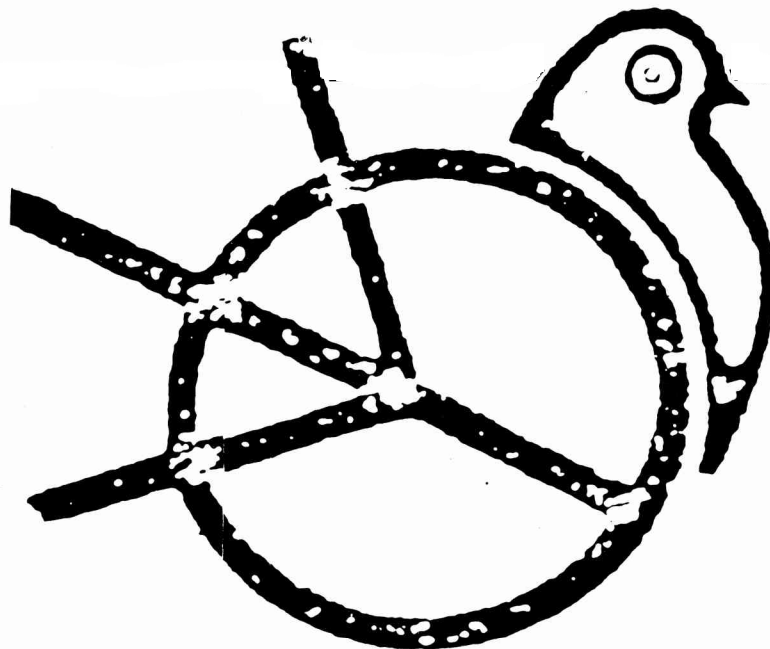
By Gus Fagan

On 7 May the 'Peace Group for Dialogue', an independent peace group in Hungary, organised a public demonstration in Budapest, the first of its kind to be organised by an unofficial peace group. About 450 demonstrators formed a separate contingent in a 10,000-strong official march organised by the Hungarian Peace Council and the youth organisation of the HSWP (Hungarian Socialist Workers Party).

The demonstrators wore armbands with the inscription 'Dialogue' and their slogans were 'All nuclear missiles out of Europe' and 'We still want to live, work, study and love — in 1993'. The police did not interfere with the demonstration.

The Hungarian 'Peace Group for Dialogue' in May also sent a letter to the European Nuclear Disarmament Convention held in Berlin, in which they said they were 'very much troubled by the sharpening differences between Eastern and Western Peace Movements'. The question of what attitude to adopt towards the official Peace Councils of Eastern Europe is a contentious issue in the western peace movements. The official Soviet Peace Council had not been invited to the Berlin Convention. In their letter the Hungarian group questioned this strategy: 'If we are to build a pan-European peace movement, can it be done without the Eastern Peace Councils and Committees? Did you really try to co-operate with them? We think that the Eastern peoples might be reached through this channel.' The group also criticised the hostile image of the Eastern countries publicised by the various western peace groups and stresses the different way in which detente is viewed by independent groups in the East. 'We understand that, viewed from the west, Detente might seem no more than a way of channelling the arms race. But for us it was much more: it brought greater freedom, more communication with the west, a freer press and a sense of belonging again to Europe. Perhaps without it there would be no Peace Group for Dialogue. To risk it is not an acceptable alternative for us.'

The Peace Group for Dialogue seems to be organised mainly among students and teachers in the high schools and universities in Budapest. At the end of their demonstration on Margaret Island (an island on the Danube in Budapest) the group staged a dramatisation of Mass Death in Atomic War.



Peace Group for Dialogue in unique demonstration

Laurie Sparham/Network

'56 Veterans gather for worker's funeral

By Eva Kaluzynska

Two important funerals took place in Budapest on 22 April. One was that of the world-famous poet Illyes Gyula. The other, that passed unnoticed except by some 200 mourners and secret police, was that of Miklos Peterfi, a veteran of '56, who died on 11 April, aged 52.

For oppositionists in Hungary today the second funeral was significant in being the first at which those involved in the struggles of '56 were joined by younger supporters to pay explicit, public tribute to a comrade. Previous attempts to do so on similar occasions had failed after police intimidation.

Peterfi, from Ujpest, a working-class district of Budapest, became a member of the Ujpest revolutionary committee in 1956. He helped organise food supplies for the city during the struggle, and was involved in several actions, including the dissolution of two barracks of secret police and the freeing of political prisoners from the Gyuto national jail. He was among those who initiated the release from jail of Cardinal

Mindzenty.

He was arrested on 12 November 1956, and sentenced to death. This was commuted to life imprisonment, but he did not leave jail until 1969, after being pronounced ineligible for release under the terms of the 1963 amnesty. A six-month suspended sentence for a misdemeanour while a student was counted as 'form' and disqualified him.

In a funeral oration, Imre Meecs, who had shared a prison cell with Peterfi, paid tribute to him in remembering his energy and commitment during the revolution. Peterfi had, he stressed, remained faithful to his convictions until his death.

Up to 50 of those present at the funeral had also been imprisoned in the aftermath of '56. Among them was Sandor Racz, who had been leader of the Budapest central workers' committee. He had received a police summons to a hearing at 10 o'clock that morning near the border, but decided to attend the funeral instead.

Solidarity's new programme

(The following programmatic statement, issued by underground Solidarity's Provisional Coordinating Commission, the TKK, on 22 January 1983, represented a major step in the underground's efforts to find common agreement on aims and methods. It is the first such programmatic statement to emerge from the Solidarity leadership since the declaration of martial law. The document has a provisional character and considerable differences remain on important questions among the Solidarity leaders. Lech Walesa indicated his opposition to the statement's endorsement of a general strike and Zbigniew Bujak, who approved the document, also has reservations on this score, while both the Wroclaw leaders and Bogdan Lis of Gdansk have supported this orientation. The English version of the text published below was supplied to Labour Focus by Uncensored Poland. Its original title was 'Solidarity Today: A Programmatic Statement'.)

There is no doubt now — after a year of martial law and its formal suspension — that the December coup against civil and workers' rights marked the beginning of a new stage in the process of pacification of the nation. The authorities aim to crush all democratic strivings and social solidarity, and they want to base their rule on force and general intimidation to a degree unknown in Poland since the Stalinist era. A totalitarian dictatorship is emerging. Its governing principles include shooting of defenceless workers, imprisoning thousands of people for social activity and hunting Solidarity activists as if they were criminals. This dictatorship is sanctioning a system of terror by introducing regulations contrary to international conventions and commitments accepted by the Polish People's Republic. Lawlessness has become the law.

Democratic reforms aiming at a renewal of social and economic relations pose a deadly threat to the present system. By ruling through fear, the authorities have condemned themselves to fearing an outburst of social hatred. Today our readiness for concessions would only be taken for weakness and contribute to the consolidation of the repressive system. Society has no other choice but resistance, the only way is to fight the dictatorship.

The aim of our struggle has remained the same: to carry out the programme adopted by the First National Congress of Solidarity, the programme of democratic reforms necessary to put the country on its feet again. The programme presents the ways to build a **SELF-GOVERNING REPUBLIC**:

- in which the authorities would be subject to social control: in factories through workers' self-government, in communes and voivodships through local self-government, in the whole country through a democratically elected Sejm;
- in which independent courts would guarantee the rule of law;
- in which the means of production would really belong to the people and workers would be guaranteed a share in the profits;
- in which cultural education and mass media would serve the society.

This programme takes it for granted that, on the one hand, a renewal of the Republic calls for profound social, economic and political reforms and, on the other, that Poland's geopolitical situation necessitates a gradual introduction of such reforms, so that the basic balance of power in Europe is not disturbed.

A self-governing Republic is not at variance with the socialist idea and its implementation need not disrupt the existing international order. Poland's international alliances do not have to imply dictatorial rule which is generally hated and does not give a chance of development to the country. Moreover, it is a constant threat to peace in Europe.

The programme can be carried out only if the authorities are forced to seek a compromise with the society. Only then will it be possible to introduce reforms and guarantee the right to open functioning of independent trade unions, organisations and

associations representing social interests. It is necessary to work for the abolition of the present dictatorship so that the authorities be capable of concessions and reforms become feasible.

Today social resistance and struggle against the dictatorship should take the following forms:

- non-cooperation or 'the front of refusal',
- economic struggle,
- struggle for an independent social consciousness,
- preparations for a general strike.

These are the tasks confronting a society on the way to self-organisation.

Our main weapon in this struggle is *social solidarity*. We owe our victory in August 1980 and our survival through the martial law repressions to such solidarity. It was born again and again in internment camps and prisons, in factories and in churches, in everyday activities of our movement and during mass demonstrations. Our strength lies in the awareness that we are together, that every one of us is a defender and also needs protection. Therefore no one who suffers repression, imprisonment, beating, dismissal from work — should remain without care and help. It is a moral duty of every one of us. All social groups should demand the release of people imprisoned for social activity and political views. Everyone who contributes to the repression of people will meet with our condemnation.

THE FRONT OF REFUSAL

Refusal to participate in lies, lawlessness and violence is a form of day-to-day struggle against the dictatorship available to all of us. Together we have scored a political victory by a widespread boycott of the trade unions created by the authorities. The boycott has become a referendum showing every day that the people reject the existing rule of violence and terror. It also proves that the place of independent trade unions remains vacant until they are once again legalised — that Solidarity exists and will regain its rights.

The principle adopted during martial law of boycotting organisations and associations which

- demonstrate their support for the present dictatorial system,
- participate in repressions,
- function as surrogates of delegatised social organisations,
- imitate genuine social and political institutions (parties, PRON - Patriotic Council of National Salvation, OKON - National Committee of Salvation, FJN - National Unity Front, etc.)

should become a permanent element in our life. Thus we demonstrate our loyalty to the gains of August 1980, our striving for truth and dignity, our refusal to tolerate lies and lawlessness in social and political life. We will not agree anymore to the farce of elections to the Sejm or national councils. We will not participate in officially organised rallies, demonstrations and celebrations. We will object to being used in the construction of fictitious social mandate for the present system of dictatorship. Let the authorities remain in a political vacuum.

We should use the principle of boycott with discrimination. We can and should take advantage of opportunities for independent activities in the official institutions whose aim is to meet genuine social needs. We should take care, however, that these activities do not serve to authenticate lies and to support the dictatorship. Group codes of conduct should evolve in which a selective boycott would be combined with pointing the ways to worthy and honest outlets for social and occupational activities.

The refusal front is also a front of active struggle. The authorities will probably try to break it by means of blackmail and bribery. Our common aim is to oppose this. Every case of blackmail should become common knowledge, to weaken its effect and to prevent it from being used in the future. There are other forms of defence against bribery: regular money collections, setting up social help committees, demands for benefit and holiday funds independent of the official unions. We must now allow a

situation in which the shame of joining the pro-government unions is the only way out of a difficult financial position.

ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

After 38 years of the Polish People's Republic, Polish society has been brought to the brink of destitution. With rationed food and the lack of medicines and clothing, we have reached bankruptcy. We will have to carry the burden of the 30 billion dollar debt for many years to come. The great national wealth is being wasted in abandoned investments and in factories that do not work at full capacity. Technological backwardness is increasing. The way Polish economic potential is being used becomes similar to colonial exploitation. Wasteful economy in mining has caused dozens of casualties, devastation of mines and depletion of Polish natural resources. Agriculture devoid of means of production is unable to feed the nation. Devastation of the environment threatens its biological foundations.

The martial law dictatorship has only carried out the programme of enormous price increases, with no prospects for economic improvement. This programme, cut off from the market and organisational mechanisms, after one year has brought about a rapid — 36% — decline in the living standards. Already now one-third of the working families live on the poverty threshold. At the same time society must shoulder the burden of supporting a gigantic apparatus of coercion: hundreds of thousands of security, militia, ZOMO (riot police), army and party functionaries who keep the country in submission.

Another price increase has already been announced. It will further impoverish the society, spread misery and threaten to corrode the biological minimum.

The martial law and its regulations preclude the chances of coming out of the crisis. The proposal for a reform based on the principles of independence, self-government and self-financing has been reduced to a face-lift applied to the already compromised system of central orders and distribution, and of militarised key industries. The drastically curtailed workers' rights have created working conditions of semi-slavery, with forced work, administrative injunction to work in a given workplace and the danger of losing a job for political reasons. Under such circumstances an economic reform of self-government becomes fiction. Self-government is unable to function.

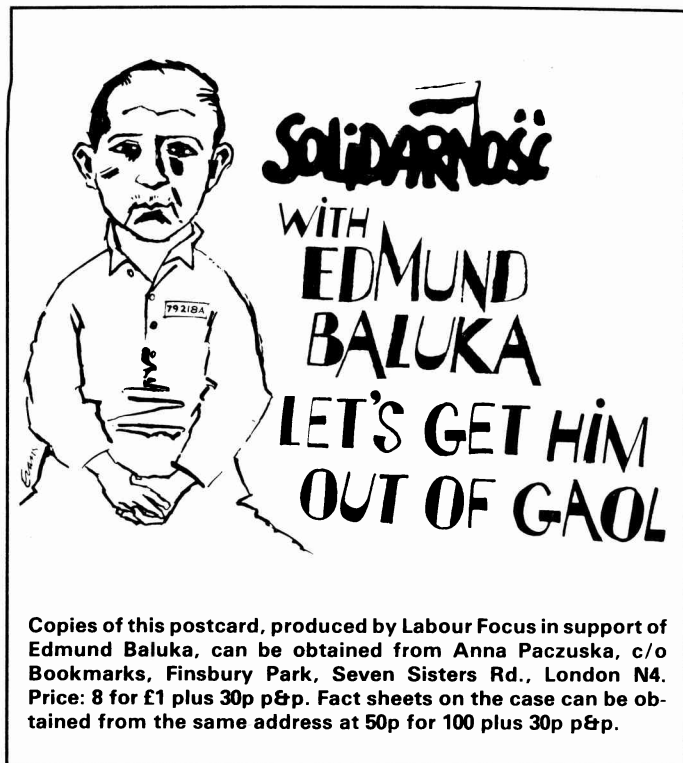
We cannot take the responsibility for the state of the economy. We must, however, try to maintain it at a level which would create the most advantageous conditions for its future reconstruction. We must not allow any further deterioration in living standards. The struggle for survival becomes most important today in the programme of defending basic social and workers' interests. This battle will be fought on every shopfloor and every farm. We will support every initiative to organise farmers for the defence of their rights.

In workplaces we will fight by resorting to all possible forms of pressure, such as:

- applying the existing law to ensure strict adherence to the Labour Code, regulations on employment and wages, work safety, technical norms, social conditions etc.,
- demanding precise information on production decisions and results, on division of wage funds and bonuses, operation of social services, etc., by making public information suppressed by the management, as well as wrong decisions, unpopular regulations, cases of waste, incompetence and repression,
- organising mass protests, petitions, refusing to work overtime, boycotting decisions which restrict workers' rights or cause divisions between various groups. The most effective form of mass protest is an economic strike,
- taking advantage of workers' self-government wherever it can be formed to safeguard workers' living conditions and protect them against repressions. When a self-government is deprived of the possibility of action in this respect, however, it should be a signal to members of workers' councils to resign their mandates and appeal to workers to boycott such self-government.

FOR AN INDEPENDENT SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Solidarity came about as a result of mass protest, out of a common



struggle and work of different social groups. In building it up we overcame the divisions consciously created by the authorities. Constant cooperation of workers, farmers and the intelligentsia guarantees our victory. It was strengthened after August 1980 and since 13 December 1981 it has become the bedrock of our resistance.

The threat to social and political consciousness, to education and national culture, to social morality and civic attitudes, carried by the totalitarian rule, can be counteracted by a politically-minded society which knows its history, appreciates true culture and can resist ideological manipulation. Therefore the main task for today is to propagate independent thought and to break the state monopoly of the written and spoken word, of information and education, of culture and research, of political and social thought. Intellectuals and artists have a particularly important role to play and society expects them to work for the common good. We will support every independent initiative and set up social grants and foundations enabling people to become independent of the dictatorship.

The front of cooperation for the sake of intellectual independence and genuine development of various social groups should unite all sections of society. Through self-education, union bulletins, libraries and independent publications we should endeavour to stimulate social thought among workers and to publicise their opinions and ideas. In the name of social solidarity we are all bound to counteract any attempts to eliminate from public life those circles and individuals whom the totalitarian dictatorship finds inconvenient.

Independent institutions and initiatives, such as: publishing and artistic market, press, radio and independent education — are all our common good. They should be aided and protected because their existence and development give independence to society and prepare it for a life in a democratic and self-governing Republic.

PREPARATIONS FOR A GENERAL STRIKE

A general strike is our most powerful weapon. Mass participation in the actions postulated so far forms an important stage in the preparation of the strike. Its success depends on many factors, of which the main are:

- the degree of social self-organisation and determination,
- general awareness and acceptance of aims,
- international political solidarity.

The same factors affect the degree to which the authorities are ready to pacify workers on strike. So far the authorities — politically ready to use all means in their battle against society —

have found enough strength to break strikes. But they will not be able to maintain this level of readiness for long, for it entails high social and political costs. The time is coming when a strike threat will again become a real weapon, for the decision to use force against striking workers will carry a great threat to the dictatorship itself.

The prospect of a general strike — in our view inevitable — *does not cancel* the programme of evolutionary change of the system; it only shows a way to break up the present dictatorship and to create conditions for democratic reforms.

During preparations for a general strike we must formulate and agree on a social minimum programme — a set of strike demands which would, on the one hand, guarantee further reforms and, on the other, take into account restrictions following from the internal and external political reality.

The Solidarity Provisional Coordinating Committee presents the statement 'Solidarity Today' as a programme for action for our union in the present political and social climate. We have drawn on the heritage of the First National Solidarity Congress and on the 'Self-Governing Republic' programme. The martial law and the delegitimation of Solidarity have brought about a new situation which involves new duties for us.

Programme discussions have been carried out in various circles

and in the independent press. For our part, the Provisional Coordinating Committee and the regional Solidarity authorities have initiated programme groups. In the course of their work the idea of the Independent Society was born and it pointed to the main guidelines for action. We put them forward in the programme 'The Underground Society' (July 1982) and in the statements of the Provisional Coordinating Committee on the present struggle. We address the programme 'Solidarity Today' to the whole nation. It also gives responsibilities to the Provisional Coordinating Committee and the regional and factory structures. But it cannot take the place of a vision of future Poland. This must evolve out of other social and political programmes — we will support such initiatives.

We would like the 'Solidarity Today' programme to contribute to the already formed social self-defence front — a front of resistance and struggle against the dictatorship for the most elementary values in individual, social and national life: for the right to truth, dignity, hope. All people of good will, all democratic forces in the nation — rally around these aims, irrespective of their political opinions and ideology. Pluralism and openness are the hallmarks of the Solidarity movement born in August 1980. We wish to establish understanding and cooperation with everyone who shares the aims of our movement, with every current of social activity which sets itself as its goal a free and democratic Poland.

Repression and Clericalism in Katowice

By Dr James Young

(Dr James Young of Sterling University spent two weeks at the University of Silesia in Katowice last October. His trip was the outcome of an agreement in the spring of 1979 between the two universities to arrange exchange visits of academic staff. The following article about his impressions of the University of Silesia is an extract from a longer account of his two weeks in Poland, entitled 'A Polish Notebook and Western Socialism'.)

When I was given the opportunity to visit the University of Silesia in the latter part of 1982, I accepted this challenge with excitement, scepticism and some apprehension. Although a few Polish academics had continued to visit Stirling after the imposition of the military dictatorship, the Polish authorities did not encourage staff from Stirling to visit Katowice. I had great trouble in obtaining a visa from the Polish Consulate in Glasgow. It was finally issued shortly before I was due to travel to Warsaw, and then on to Katowice, on Sunday 17 October 1982. No one else from the University of Stirling has yet visited the University of Silesia.

I have concluded from my visit that the Polish universities are institutions in which the medieval heritage of Roman Catholicism colours historical, philosophical, sociological and political writing and teaching. Moreover, the heritage of Roman Catholicism merges with an almost mindless State 'marxism'. The thought of Aristotle is, for example, taught in an uncritical and celebratory way. Judged by the high intellectual standards of pre-1917 Western socialism, present-day Polish universities are really institutions in which the dominant mode of thought, teaching and day-to-day discourse constitutes an almost systematised mumbo-

jumbo. As a medieval-like mumbo-jumbo, 19th century bourgeois sociology and a 'system marxism' have merged with an ultra-conservative and very hierarchical university tradition, critical discourse about history, philosophy, sociology, politics and the modern world has been stifled.¹

Though they sometimes function within different buildings in the same cities, Roman Catholic priests and 'marxist' ideologues teach philosophy and history without any apparent conflict over their distinctive interpretations of the Polish past. Even within such an exceptional institution as the University of Silesia, Roman Catholicism and contemporary 'marxism' peacefully co-exist in so far as the Party refuses to criticise the role of the Roman Catholic Church in Polish history or contemporary life. Within the social science departments in Katowice the statues of some of the Patron Saints of Roman Catholicism are to be seen cheek-by-jowl with recent paintings of Stakhanovite-type coal miners.

Being situated in the harsh, physically ugly and austere milieu of Katowice, it is perhaps appropriate that the University of Silesia should possess the largest number of 'marxist' priests or ideological policemen of any university in Poland. Within the university in Katowice, 'marxist' teaching and research in the social sciences illustrates the medieval-like mumbo-jumbo characteristic of Polish universities. An unholy alliance of State 'marxism' and a fat-cat Roman Catholicism allows a medieval scholasticism to stifle the spirit of free intellectual inquiry about the real world. But if the Promethean marxism of Marx and Engels is stifled by an exploitative priesthood within a 'totalitarian' society, it has not been rendered extinct.

The University of Silesia was founded by the United Workers' Party in 1968. In spite

of the extra resources that are allocated to it by a State whose exploitative interests are inimical to the real social, economic, political and *spiritual* needs of the Polish working class, the University's intellectual accomplishments are negligible. Conceived of as an ideological hothouse rather than as a university in any meaningful sense, this was certainly inevitable. Because the Party wanted to have at least one university which would be loyal to the Polish State in times of sharp social tensions, the university teachers who live and work in Katowice were selected for their ideological 'reliability'.

The University of Silesia is incredibly hierarchical; the chief administrator is described as *the Protector* of the university; and the most senior professors, though friendly and courteous, are very conscious of their power. During the fifth day of my stay in Katowice, I had official discussions with the most senior professors of sociology. A lifetime of socialist activity and wide reading in international socialist literature and history was an inadequate preparation for the 'discourse' we engaged in. In response to very simple queries about Polish sociology, the answers were spontaneous, detailed, ponderous, and indeed, indicative of what happens in a society where the human mind is put into fetters.

When I asked these senior professors of sociology about why they — and Polish sociologists generally — seemed to be so uncritical of the Roman Catholic Church, they were visibly perplexed and bewildered. To ease their obvious embarrassment and assist the process of communication, I explained that I came out of a socialist culture in which religion has always been regarded as an agency of mystification. They simply did not understand; and I was told that 'the Church is responsible for morals and culture' and 'the state is responsible for

ideology'. A really strange marxist concept.

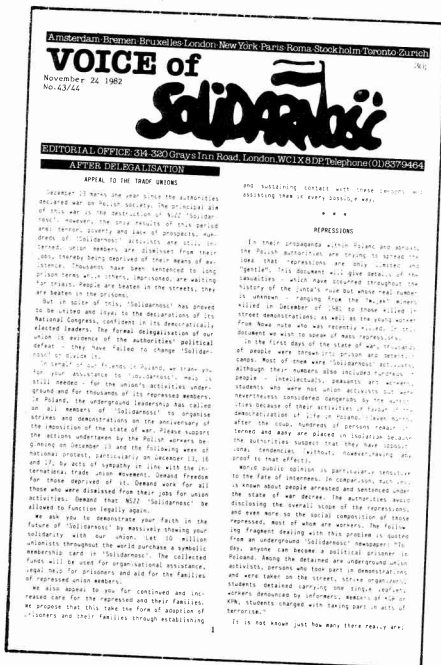
Again and again the continuity of the progressive role of the Roman Catholic Church in Polish culture and morals from medieval times onwards was emphasised. To them, the socialist culture and historical interpretations of the past engendered by the labour movement in the West was a total irrelevance to what was happening, or had happened, in Poland. When I pressed them on this point, they argued that the Roman Catholic Church was the Guardian of Polish history, culture, morals and spiritual life. Consequently, the philosophy taught in medieval Poland was, in their view, 'progressive and democratic'. And this was a 'marxist' interpretation.

This was the context in which I asked my hosts how they as marxists dealt with the Reformation in European history. The response was that 'We discuss it comparatively, that is, we do not discuss it in Britain or Germany'. Then I asked them why there was not a Reformation in Poland. The answer to this question was that 'You do not understand'. 'You see, Professor Young, our Polish kings, nobility and landed aristocracy were so progressive and democratic that we did not need a Reformation.'

If the University of Silesia is an ideological hothouse rather than an institution of higher learning in any meaningful sense, it is not unrepresentative of what is taught in Polish universities. Since the Party priests in Katowice were clearly unfamiliar with the intellectual heritage of modern liberal or marxist historiography, sociology or philosophy, they could only express an involuntary embarrassment when they were asked strange, heretical and utterly alien questions. While the dominant mode of 'marxist' thought and discourse in Polish universities is, in Royden Harrison's idiom, 'an ideology in the strictly marxist sense of ideology as "Necessarily false consciousness"', it is sometimes expressed more persuasively than it is in the University of Silesia.

But whether the dominant 'marxism' as a method of understanding the modern world is used more or less persuasively in Polish universities, it is usually the equivalent of a medieval-like mumbo-jumbo. This is seen in the way Polish academics deal with the sensitive and touchy question of Roman Catholicism in history and contemporary life. From the standpoint of the a priori ideological commitment of Polish 'communist' academics, the whole heritage of Roman Catholicism has always been positive and progressive. Therefore, the classical marxist interpretation of European medieval history is ignored altogether. Or rather it seems to be unknown in 'communist' Poland, except among some of the dissidents in Solidarity.

In a so-called 'socialist' society where raging class struggles are visible, disruptive and yet unreal in the eyes of the ruling elite, it would clearly be dangerous to emphasise the continuity of class struggle in Polish history. Instead of focusing on class struggles in Polish history, the dominant historiography chronicles the story of kings



and queens and the continuity of democracy and egalitarian ethics since the medieval period. This is emphasised, too, in studies of Polish art history as well as in the historiography dealing with the evolution of the modern working class. Indeed, studies in Polish art history celebrate the role of 'the noble attitude of the wise king Sigismund' in commissioning and encouraging Polish art within Wawel Palace in Krakow.

The art treasures in Wawel Palace are unquestionably magnificent; and an authentic socialist government would certainly place a high value on them. But the guidebooks to Wawel Palace articulate 'the necessarily false consciousness' that the exploitative ruling 'communist' elite is attempting to impose on the Polish people. The great artistic achievements of the Polish people in medieval times are attributed to the egalitarian 'interpretation of Aristotelian ethics in the fifteenth century'. Class conflict was conspicuous by its absence; and the intellectual milieu in Krakow was democratic and egalitarian.

In contrast to present-day 'communist' intellectuals in Poland, socialists in the West before 1917 were extremely critical of those thinkers who asserted that 'famine and pestilence' were 'scourges of God, while the scientists were building granaries and draining cities.'

In contrast to the pre-1917 Western socialist method of perceiving medieval Europe, contemporary 'communist' intellectuals offer a fundamentally different account — an account palatable to the Roman Catholic Church — of 'the Krakow milieu of fifteenth century philosophy'. As the Polish art historian, Stanislaw Mossakowski, puts it: 'At the same time, on account of a very specific Polish understanding of the law of nature (ius naturae), both with the university scholars of plebeian origins as well as among some of the most illustrious representatives of the ruling class, to mention Jan Ostrogor, a magnate, a view was born and matured about equality of all

citizens in the face of the law or even a postulate about freedom and equality of all people. 'Nature created all people equal and free (omnes homines genuit liberos et quales) — let us just recall the forceful statement by Jan of Ludzisko in his welcoming address to the king, Casimir IV.'² In citing this evidence to labour movement audiences in Scotland since my return from Poland, I have been told by some Communist Party members that 'the Polish authorities are at least committed to the diffusion of culture and education amongst the workers and peasants'. The crucial question, however, is: 'Education for what?'

No one who visits Poland can ignore the authorities' very tangible devotion to the diffusion of culture and education. Alongside thousands of school children, peasants and industrial workers, often dressed in their working clothes, I visited museums in Krakow, Zabrz, Wielicka and Oswiecim. If 'it may not be amiss to devote greater care to the objective economic factors in the fight for liberation and socialism',³ we cannot ignore the concrete relationship between the process of industrialisation and the character of the culture and education being diffused throughout Polish society by a profoundly undemocratic 'communist' elite.

In contemporary Poland culture and education are conceived primarily as agencies of industrialisation. Social activity and the dominant scholarship are dictated by the 'communist' elite's historic mission to accelerate the process of imposing industrialisation on a recalcitrant commonality. In her well-known book, *Moral Norms*, Maria Ossowska, the Polish sociologist, acknowledges the role of industrialisation in fashioning the comprehensive utilitarian outlook of the present 'totalitarian' elite. As she puts it: 'What is emphasised nowadays in our country are the virtues which facilitate the organisation of social life as well as the practical virtues, which are of such a great importance in a period of intensive industrialisation. Personal virtues are neglected, sometimes as a result of an unjustified antipathy to their allegedly aristocratic character.'⁴ As I discovered in Katowice, honesty and intellectual integrity are, for example, seen to be conditioned by the needs (sic!) of the class struggle.

It is, therefore, clear that the process of industrialisation in Poland is being accomplished within the context of a 'communist' culture conceived in the strictly marxist sense of ideology as a 'necessarily false consciousness'. By focusing on the exceedingly complex relationship between State 'marxism' in Poland and the 'totalitarian' agencies of industrialisation, it is possible to perceive the origins, development and struggles of the commonality for real, democratic socialism, Roman Catholicism or not. Hence the 'communist' elite's re-writing of Polish history; the utilisation of a version of Polish history also acceptable to the Roman Catholic Church; and the inevitable tensions and contradictions between the 'nationalism' of the United Workers' Party and Solidarity's struggle to open up the way for a Polish

road to socialism.

By citing the analysis developed by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* about the progressive role of capitalist industrialisation, an articulate minority of socialists and communists in the West defend 'the actually existing socialism' in Poland. What is seen as decisive is not industrialisation, however; it is rather the existence of State property in a country where the traditional bourgeois and landed elites have been expropriated. If the methods of capital accumulation are, as Marx put it, 'anything but idyllic',⁵ capitalist and socialist countries at comparable levels of economic development illustrates the superiority of 'the actually existing socialism' in 'reducing inequality and improving the quality of life'.⁶ While police tyranny and the absence of democratic dialogue at the official institutional level is not amenable to quantification, it has a profound bearing on tangible inequality in human relationships and the quality of life.

Footnotes

1. 'Gramsci's marxism thus falls into the category I have labelled "Promethean": the marxism that seeks to change the world, as distinct from the "system marxisms" that seek to order and organise it, both intellectually and practically.' Peter Worsley, *Marx and Marxism* (Chichester, 1982), p. 112.
2. Stanislaw Mossakowski, 'Ethos of the Royal Palace in Krakow', *Polish Art Studies. Past and Present*, edited Stefan Morawski (Wroclaw, 1982), pp. 37-45.
3. Andre Gunder Frank, *Crisis: In the Third World* (London, 1981), p. 312.
4. Maria Ossowska, *Moral Norms: A Tentative Systematisation* (Warsaw, 1970), p. 258.
5. Karl Marx, *Capital* (London, 1949), p. 737.
6. Shirley Cereseto, 'Socialism, Capitalism and Inequality', *The Insurgent Sociologist*, Vol. XI, No. 2, 1982, passim.

Let Poland be ... German!

West Germany's new Christian Democratic Minister of the Interior, Friedrich Zimmermann, is nothing if not ambitious. He thinks his writ should rule over half of Poland, as well as the GDR. During the Federal election campaign in March he insisted that Germany should not recognise Polish sovereignty over the Western Territories ruled by Germany before the war. And when the Pope visited what he thought was Wroclaw, another German Christian Democrat MP had news for him: 'The city is still called Breslau,' said Mr Herbert Hupka. 'It is the capital of Silesia and it belongs to Germany.' The Minister for 'Inter-German Affairs', Mr Heinrich Windelen, hasn't gone that far. He simply informed a rally of Silesians on 17 June that such matters have been 're-opened' and that he had asked the education ministers in the FRG's state governments to devote more attention to the subject in schools!

Government Sponsored Unions: Where are the members?

(The following table lists most of the main enterprises in the Gdansk-Gdynia area, shows the total number of employees in each enterprise and the number of members, if any, of the new government-sponsored unions in the enterprise. The information was compiled by Solidarity underground activists in the region working in these factories. It shows how effective Solidarity's boycott of the new unions appears to have been. The material was collected in the first quarter of this year and the table first appeared in Polish in April. Our translation is taken from the bulletin of the New York-based Committee in Support of Solidarity, 5 May.)

A Table of the Membership of the New Trade Unions in Gdansk

'The new unions are self-governing (because the government created them itself) and independent (because no one depends on them).'

Nad Stubacha, February 1983.

	No. of Employees	Number of Members in the new trade unions
1. 'UNIMOR' Electronics Enterprise	2500	None. No new trade unions established.
2. Cooling and Refrigeration Factory	750	None. no new trade unions
3. Municipal Park Conservation Authority	650	None. no new trade unions
4. Environmental Protection and Research Centre	30	None. no new trade unions
5. Zarnowiec Power Generation Plant	200	None. no new trade unions
6. Electrical Equipment Plant	1000	?
7. Sugar Refinery Administration	100	None. no new trade unions
8. Office for Roads and Bridges Design	300	None. no new trade unions
9. Office for Restoration of Monuments	600	None. no new trade unions
10. Phosphoric Fertiliser Plant	820	38
11. Cooperative Enterprise for Mechanical Engineering	700	None. no new trade unions
12. Gdansk School of Polytechnic	3700	12
13. Government Machine Repair Shop	5000	None. no new trade unions
14. Gdansk University	3800	38-55 members
15. Teachers in Gdynia	5000	3,000
16. Centre for Naval Technology	630	None. no new trade unions
17. Centre for Marine Import-Export	460	None. no new trade unions
18. Computer Programming Institute in Gdynia	300	None. no new trade unions
19. ZTOB Gdansk	200	None. no new trade unions
19A. PROMOR Gdansk	800	None. no new trade unions
20. Wisla Shipyard	960	51
21. The Konrad Yacht Shipyard	405	12
22. The Lenin Shipyard	14500	88 is the most frequently named figure around 300
23. 'Pilsudski' Repair Shipyard	5000	320
24. Paris Commune Shipyard/Gdynia	10000	100-200
25. Gdynia Port	6500	None. no new trade unions
26. MAGMOR/UNITRA Gdansk	1500	None. no new trade unions
27. 'Famo' Furniture Factory	1500	None. no new trade unions
28. Gdansk Shipping Office	405	12
29. Ship Registration Office	350	None. no new trade unions
30. Naval Engineering Design Office	420	None. no new trade unions
31. POLMO Tczew Factory	2400	None. no new trade unions

The New Unions An Official View

(On 7 March Le Figaro published a summary of a confidential assessment of the Communist Party's efforts to create a new trade union movement. The assessment was contained in a memorandum from the Socio-Economic Sub-Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party Central Committee. We publish below an English version of the Figaro report translated by the Committee in Support of Solidarity, New York, 5 May.)

Central Committee members and instructors were sent to the main enterprises to organise the unions and the party 'took the political initiative in restoring the trade unions'.

While there are trade-union organisations in 28 out of 49 regions or voivodships at half or more enterprises, there are several regions where there are virtually no trade-union organisations (Wroclaw, Tarnow). More important, most trade-union organisations are 'very small' and it is usually 'the party apparatus which has taken the trouble to create the trade unions'.

The courts (which have exclusive power to register or not register a new union and has refused those initiating groups that appear to be made up of workers who want to form genuine trade unions) are having difficulty in registering the new trade-union cells because their petitions for registration do not comply with the law (passed 8 October, severely regulating the trade-union structures). For example, the initiating groups simply do not include the trade unions' adopted by-laws.

A serious problem is that *the commitment of party members to the 'process of forming the trade unions is inadequate'*. Even

where the party is strongly committed (Jelenia Gora is cited), the effect is opposite to the goal sought and the workers remain outside the unions. The effect of the 'socialist youth organisations' is minimal.

The situation is particularly bad at the 'largest enterprises, where Solidarity has considerable influence'. It is also particularly bad among engineers, doctors, technicians, and employees in the scientific and cultural fields, whose 'passive and often unfriendly and hostile attitude toward the new trade union is observed by all voivodship bodies'.

In some cases, the party 'is faced with an entirely different worry' where Solidarity members 'are clearly trying to take control of the new trade unions'. This is especially the case in Krakow (75% of the new trade unions are Solidarity members), Plock (65%) and Cechanow (60%).

If workers were to 'read the report' they would certainly lose all doubts about the independence of the new unions. The report declares that the new unions can be independent of the government administration but not of the party.

It has been learned that the court in Silesia correctly refused to register the trade union of Nowa Ruda miners who 'did not want to abandon a clause on their trade union's independence of political organisations'. The case is to be decided by the Supreme Court in Warsaw. Moreover, a number of initiating groups have already been dissolved voluntarily or because of lack of support.

Finally, the report concludes, 'The creation of the new trade unions is politically guided and inspired by the party bodies and organisations.'

Solidarity Through Mirror of Official Polls

In March and September 1982, the results of government-sponsored opinion polls were published. Despite the fact that the polls were conducted by the authorities, who try by all possible means to show that Solidarity is unpopular, the results clearly showed that the majority of workers held positive views about the activities of the Union and wanted Solidarity restored. Undoubtedly, if the poll had been conducted independently of government interference, the statistics would have shown even more overwhelming support for Solidarity.

1. Views about Solidarity activities from August 1980 — December 1981 (in %)

Views	March	August
	1982	1982
Very good	18	17
Good	52	43
Medium	10	15
Bad	4	4
No Opinion	16	21

2. Positive Opinions about Solidarity according to Age (in %)

Age	March	August
	1982	1982
General	70	60
Under 30	77	69
30-50	70	64
Over 50	63	50

3. Positive Opinions about Solidarity according to Occupation (in %)

Occupation	March	August
	1982	1982
Farmers	62	46
Unskilled Workers	80	68
Skilled Workers	81	68
Office Workers	70	68

4. Opinions on the Future of Solidarity (in %)

Opinions	March	August
	1982	1982
Restore without changes	19	17
Restore with changes	54	51
In general positive	73	68
Create new unions	15	16
No Opinion	12	16

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Charter 77 and Peace — Bad News in Both Blocs

By Oliver MacDonald

The reaction of the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry to Charter 77's attempt to raise its voice during the Prague 'World Congress for Peace and Life Against Nuclear War' during the last week of June was tediously predictable. But the reaction of the British media was altogether more instructive.

On 30 May Charter 77 officially applied to the Congress secretariat to participate in the Congress. In the eyes of the Czech policy

this was evidently the wrong thing for the movement to do: to be true to the Communist Party's line, Charter 77 should have been denouncing the Congress as part of a Soviet strategy to take over the world and should have been urging the West to rearm. Yet the letter of application said no such thing — we reprint it below.

So the police moved into action and began interrogating Charter spokespersons and threatening them with trouble if they

meddled with the Congress. Undeterred two of the spokespersons, Jan Kozlik and Anna Marvanova, went to the Congress steering committee's headquarters on 6 June. They wished to find out about the progress of their application form. In a subsequent letter to the steering committee's chairperson sent on 12 June, they described the farcical scene that ensued that day in the headquarters:

'The department (for handling the com-

mittee's letters) was on the fifth floor. The woman employee in question knew what the matter was about as soon as she heard the names of our spokespersons. She told them who was dealing with it and went to find him. She returned to say that Mr Kupec was in a meeting and offered to go and announce their visit. She returned once more to say that Mr Kupec was on the first floor and she did not know when the meeting would finish, but both spokespersons could wait if they had the time. Jan Kozlik and Anna Marvanova then went down to the first floor where in the outer office they were told that the meeting was ending a quarter of an hour later. Shortly after that the employee from the fifth floor with whom they had already spoken, announced that Mr Kupec had telephoned her with the message that the meeting would be continuing late into the night and that the spokespersons were not to wait.

He resolutely refused to say anything to them, pointing out that he did not even have two minutes to spare. He refused also to fix another appointment for them and told the spokespersons to make one by phone. However he refused in addition to give them the telephone number. When asked by Anna Marvanova if such behaviour on the part of the steering committee was the same with regard to all parties interested in attending the world congress, he replied that he had been caught on the hop by the spokespersons and locked himself in his office.

Nevertheless, the spokespersons managed to obtain a direct telephone number to him and on the following day, 7 June, Jan Kozlik called him. In contrast to the previous day Mr Kupec was amenable. He stated that it was unthinkable to refuse anyone's participation in the Congress. He asked for the telephone numbers of both spokespersons so that he could inform them of an appointment which he was intending to arrange for that same day. However they received no call back until Wednesday 8 June when a Mrs Kristova from the steering committee called Anna Marvanova. She stated that she was calling on the instructions of Mr Kupec who had asked a Mrs Erbek of the steering committee to meet the spokespersons on Friday 10 June at 2pm on the first floor of the building where the steering committee had its office. Anna Marvanova confirmed that the three spokespersons would come to the meeting.

On Thursday 9 June, however, at 4.30, ie just before the end of office hours, Mrs Kristova again called to say that for pressing work reasons Mrs Erbekova would be unable to meet them. When questioned she replied that no alternative date for a meeting had been fixed and that she had not been informed whether the spokespersons would be called back at all.'

Despite this news the meeting ended shortly after that and Mr Kupec came out into the corridor accompanied by a colleague. As soon as they saw the two spokespersons they broke into a run along the corridor. Jan Kozlik caught up with them and asked which of them was Mr Kupec. The one who later turned out to be Mr Kupec replied that he was at a meeting elsewhere. At this point Anna Marvanova and Jan Kozlik went up to the fifth floor to Mr Kupec's office where the person in question shortly arrived.

On 16 June the Charter 77 spokespersons would again hauled in for interrogation, as were the writer Vaclav Havel and former Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiri Hajek. They were told by the police that their application to attend the Congress was a provocation.

Meanwhile the Chartists produced a long letter to the Congress signed by all the present and previous Charter 77 spokespersons (apart from those in jail or abroad). We publish this letter in full below and it gives the lie to any who try to claim that the Chartists are hostile to the peace movement or seeking to divert it from its own concerns.

When the Congress opened on 21 June and the Chartists were excluded, Anna Sabatova's birthday party the following evening became a convenient means by which delegates at the Congress wishing to meet the Chartists could do so. People from CND, Greenham Common, the Greens, the Dutch peace movement and Pax Christi came.

The following morning all the Charter 77 spokespersons were placed under surveillance. (They were still under surveillance at the time of writing at the beginning of July.) And when the Chartists met Western peace activists again in Hvezda Park the following afternoon, the police were waiting. Discussions had continued for no more than 20 minutes when the police moved in and broke up the conversations. The next morning, Friday 24 June, Anna

Sabatova was arrested and interrogated for two hours, then released.

But the most intriguing aspect of the whole story was the reaction of the British press to the Chartists' efforts. When the Chartists' letter to the Congress reached *Palach Press* in London it was translated and offered to both *The Times* and the *Guardian*. Both declined to publish it. Was the issue devoid of news value? Far from it: *The Times* published a substantial text on its centre page — an anonymous article from Prague criticising the peace movement. This was considered more newsworthy.

As for the *Guardian*, it considered the issue important enough to devote the bulk of its letters page to the subject of the Charter and the Congress on Saturday 2 July, letters casually asserting notions such as that Charter 77 is hostile to the peace movement.

Could it be that Charter 77 has become a movement that Fleet Street wants to be seen — especially in conflict with the Czech police — but not heard?

300 in Youth Protest

The first spontaneous demonstration of young people seen in Czechoslovakia since the beginning of the 1970s took place in Prague's Old Town Square at the end of a huge peace rally in June.

As the official march congregated in the Square as part of the World Peace Congress, about 300 of those participating broke away from the main march, shouting 'We want Peace and Freedom' and 'Disarm the Soldiers'. As the police moved in with truncheons at the ready, the young protesters chanted 'We want Peace'. They were forced to disperse and five participants were arrested.

The following morning the five were released and a government spokesperson attempted to dismiss the incident as a piece of drunken hooliganism.

The unofficial protesters evidently had no connection with Charter 77. The incident was reminiscent of repeated break-away demonstrations by young people in Prague in the 1960s at the end of official May Day parades.

(Information made available by *Palach Press*.)

Charter 77 Letter to Peace Congress

(Document and translation made available by *Palach Press Ltd.*)

Dear Congress,

We presume that, like those who are not indifferent to the fate of humanity on this earth and who take the responsibility for that fate themselves, you are better equipped to see the depth of the crisis towards which the world and humanity of today are moving, than those people who only look out for themselves. One of the manifestations of this crisis is that to which you want to dedicate your congress, and which could be called the crisis of peace.

There are many regions of the world which may not be involved in war; but about which it is nonetheless impossible to talk of peace. For example, there is no peace between the people of these regions and their state, that base of every right-minded human community. Where, of course, there is no domestic peace, there is also no certainty of peace abroad: a government which does not

serve its citizens, which is deaf to his/her ideas and elementary rights, or even suppresses them, thus blocking any sort of public control, falls prey quite logically (it being the *raison d'être* of any expanding power) to the desire to extend its circle of interest further and further, which also includes its influence in an 'outward' direction. By suppressing public opinion and civil freedom, such a government aligns itself ever more clearly to the specific horizons of its own interests and pays correspondingly less attention to general human interests, which inevitably begins to endanger all concerned. This is not only because of its essentially expansionist character, but also because the more it manipulates its citizens, the easier it becomes for them to secure popular, albeit unwilling, support for anything that they decide to undertake. At the same time, this necessarily compels the government to exclude from public debate all military preparations.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

But that is not the only consequence: a government which denies the truth about the real state of affairs in its circle of control cannot inspire the trust of other governments — not even in a situation where it is trying honestly, in its own interest, to come to an agreement with them. Political power which lives in a state of constant tension with society is de facto a power in a state of permanent mobilisation. This, of course, cannot prepare the ground for the creation of genuine peace, ie. not a peace which suits only the government itself.

The most powerful forces of this world live in mutual distrust, and negotiations between them are made more difficult than need be as a result. So why do they mistrust each other? Because, knowing everything they do, they have a thousand and one reasons not to trust each other: they know each other better than anyone else — how easily they can get round negotiated treaties, or how long to divide the world into their spheres of influence, to extend them and suppress (at first inconspicuously and indirectly, and then quite openly and brutally) the natural interests of the populations and nations under their control.

There will be no genuine peace without genuine trust and there will be no genuine trust as long as the particular interests (though they are disguised behind conciliatory phrases) of different establishments play a bigger role in politics than does the real good of all people, nations and of the whole world. That fundamental and deep responsibility for humanity on a planetary scale — in political terms the responsibility for the dignity and for a free life of every person — clearly will not penetrate the thinking of states, governments and, above all, superpowers, until it is forced on them by thousands and millions of ordinary people of good will. It is, however, hard for that to come about unless something radical changes in the very structure of contemporary humanity. In other words it will not happen until the people of today break free from the imprisonment of being oriented towards his/her limited individual happiness, walled in by private horizons as it is. This makes them indifferent to the common good, and ultimately this shortsightedness will threaten that thoroughly problematical individual happiness.

We recognise the peace movement to be one of the attempts at bringing about just such a profound change in the orientation of humanity today. Thus it is natural that we too — just like others who are not indifferent to the fate of humanity — should open a dialogue and prepare the way for co-operation with this movement: we welcome it and feel enjoined with it by that same basic desire for a better world. Just that desire compels us, of course, at the same time, to point out constantly all the various deeper aspects of the problem of peace, and particularly those we appreciate most acutely because of our specific experiences.

The connection between peace and human rights has often been emphasised. We do not presume here a connection (be it tight or loose) of two different and more or less independent concepts, rather we mean a single phenomenon and its two elements, a unique and indivisible problem: the crisis of the world. The crisis of this world is the crisis of the responsibility of those in power, which grows from the crisis of human responsibility in general ... This crisis has other, no less important, dimensions, for example, the deepening chasm between the rich and poor parts of the world, or the continuing devastation of nature, our environment and all values hidden on this earth which are being ruined and destroyed so senselessly and in contradiction with humanity's basic interests. To separate any of these dimensions from the whole, whichever dimension it may be, means only to deceive oneself and condemn one's efforts — however well-intentioned — to impotence.

Naturally we welcome all international negotiations on the reduction of arms, and we are pleased by every single success of these negotiations, even those imperceptible, and we are pleased by every new attempt of individual parties to move nearer the viewpoint of others. At the same time, we do not hide our conviction that all partial successes achieved at this level cannot unfortunately be anything more than a contribution to the consolidation of the present ceasefire, a temporary farewell to arms, the calming of hot heads, military dreams and the growth of the defence industry. Such negotiations, however, cannot achieve real peace alone; they can only prepare one of a more favourable condition. They are one of the factors which can — but need not — create an atmosphere in which it will be less difficult to work for peace. Less difficult, but still in no way easy. The basic reasons for the world's sorry state



Václav Havel: 'I consider those young long-haired people who keep demonstrating for peace in various Western cities and whom I saw almost daily while I was in jail, where we were forced to watch the TV news, to be my brothers and sisters.'

will by no means be removed by apparent successes in this field: Life, and we really mean a human, dignified, just and free life, based on mutual respect, appreciation, understanding and an uncompromising determination to put a stop to anyone who threatens it on this earth, cannot be secured by cutting thousands of these fruitful weapons down to a few hundred. For even in the shadow of these remaining hundreds, humanity can suffer just as much, and possibly even more, than in the shadow of those thousands.

Charter 77 is a pressure group which, while being independent of state power, does not fight that power in particular, nor seek to replace it with another. It is concerned with one thing and one thing alone — that humanity should live as far as is possible free and humanely, ie. like people. This can be said in other words: so that one may live in peace. In real peace. That means at peace with oneself, with one's nearest and dearest, one's government and with citizens of other countries. And last but by no means least, with one's descendants. This ideal has brought together over 1000 citizens of our country — people with different opinions and different experiences of life. In this country where your congress is taking place they have already been living, thinking and working for over 6 years, despite all obstacles. This community sees as its legitimate aim to express its opinion on questions of peace. In this context, it considers it its special duty to emphasise at the same time that there is no peace without freedom, and that which we understand to be human rights and that which we understand to be peace are mutually determining parameters, aspects and conditions of a really humane life on earth. Any attempt to save one at the expense of the other — and that includes peace at the expense of freedom — saves neither one nor the other.

Charter 77 is not by any means participating in this congress because it does not want to, but because it cannot. The Charter greets you in this way instead, at the same time enabling you to consider the thoughts of its signatories by enclosing, with this letter, the samizdat collection 'Charter 77 on Peace', put together on the occasion of your congress as a contribution to it. Apart from several Charter 77 documents which deal with the subject of peace, this collection also includes some independent essays by several Charter 77 signatories and people close to it. We ask you to devote your attention to this little addition in the knowledge that, in our own way and with our special problems, we concern ourselves in all seriousness with questions of peace.

We can perhaps all agree that the future of this planet affects every one of us, and because of this we have every right to know what those people who represent us at international disarmament negotiations, are doing for a solution. So, in this last part of the letter, may we suggest to your congress that you include in your resolution an appeal to all governments that they should publish without distortion the precise developments of their negotiations to all people. This means that all parties should inform their citizens thoroughly and objectively of all aspects; not only of their

own suggestions but also the suggestions of other parties; so as to acquaint them not only with their own arguments and statistical information, but — in an authentic and uncensored fashion — with the arguments and statistical information of their partners at the negotiating table. It is difficult to imagine a more modest concession which governments could make to their public — and yet at the same time it would be an act of greater significance than anything else — it would open up this important area of activity to complete control by world opinion. The fulfillment of this request would not only benefit the negotiations themselves but go far beyond this: an important step towards public control of powers which are today so difficult to control. In other words: it would not only contribute to that ceasefire which is at the heart of the disarmament negotiations, but directly onto the path of real peace. That peace is everybody's affair because it is both created and

guaranteed by everyone. It does not benefit one side at the expense of the other, thus opening a life of freedom for everyone. This is a peace reflecting that state of the world and human essence which is — as we firmly believe — our common ideal.

We wish your congress success!

Signed: Jan Kozlik, Marie Rut Krizkova, Anna Marvanova (Charter spokespersons)

Dr Vaclav Benda, Jiri Dientsbier, Dr Jiri Hajek, Vaclav Havel, Dr Ladislav Hejdanek, Marie Hromadkova, Marta Kubisova, Vaclav Maly, Dr Radim Palous, Dr Bedrich Placak, Milos Rejchrt, Dr Jaroslav Sabata (former spokespersons). (Rudolf Battek and Dr Ladislav Lis are in prison; Zdena Tominova is abroad.)

15 June 1983

Prague

Czech Public Opinion and Peace An Interview with Zdena Tominova

OM: Does the demonstration by 300 young people during the Prague Peace Congress mean an unofficial peace movement is starting in Czechoslovakia?

ZT: We know very little about the demonstration by young people, not even who organised it or whether it was really an organised action at all. But it is not difficult to guess where many of these young people came from. In the last couple of years we have had a movement amongst young people focussed on John Lennon and on his message of love, peace and freedom. They took over the Petrin wall in Malostranka in Prague's Old Town and made a symbolic grave there for John Lennon, placing flowers, lighting candles and writing peace slogans and messages on the wall. The movement has little to do with the specific demands of the disarmament movement and is, of course, connected to musical culture as well as to the general sentiment we knew in the 1960s of 'Make Love Not War' — I remember proudly wearing that badge then as a young girl in Prague without quite realising what the words 'Make Love' meant!

But if these very young people were involved in the demonstration, it is also true that among wider cultural circles there is greater contact with the ideas of the Western peace movement. The most sensational expression of this comes from the Jazz Section, which is an official organisation concerned with organising jazz concerts, with thousands of members. This organisation has actually signed the END appeal! Such a move is both a sign of the great cultural ferment in the country — the government has attempted on several occasions to close down the Jazz Section and is engaged in a permanent battle to control the rock music scene — and also an example of the political role of culture in the country's traditions: we could trace this back to the 19th century and to figures like Smetana. So this signature of the END appeal has a very great significance.

OM: One component of the unofficial peace movement in both the GDR and Hungary is Christian pacifists. Is this trend present in Czechoslovakia?

ZT: This is an element, though much weaker than in the GDR where the churches do not face the same repression that they face in Czechoslovakia. Both the Protestant and the Catholic Churches are under tight control by the government, especially the Catholic Church. One effect of this is the rise, especially among young Catholics, of what they call a 'secret church'.

In the Protestant Church, which is much smaller, there has always been more internal freedom. There have been some conscientious objectors, but they have no legal rights, there is not even any replacement service — they simply face jail.

OM: Turning to the Charter, what do you say to those in the peace movement here who

consider contacts with Charter 77 to be a diversion?

ZT: I try to show that the human rights movement in Czechoslovakia and the peace movement in the West are basic allies. Neither need change their own priorities: Charter 77 doesn't have to turn itself into a peace movement and the peace movement doesn't have to become a human rights movement, but they should recognise each other as fundamental allies and partners. The peace movement must understand that the population of Czechoslovakia will never be drawn into the struggle for peace and be won over to the peace movement's aims unless they can gain their basic civil liberties.

And I must say when I speak to the grass roots of the peace movement here I have found no difficulty in explaining this point. Discussions can be more difficult with people who have gone to these countries as guests of the official peace councils and have experienced the wonderful hospitality that these official bodies provide. But this is a problem of moral manipulation.

Charter 77's attitude towards the official Peace Congress was a complex one, but also perhaps the most honest one.

It, of course, understood how the Congress organisers wanted to use the Congress, but it also understood that many sincere, honest people from the West would attend the gathering. So they took the organisers at their word — they had claimed it would be entirely open to all peace loving groups and individuals. So the Chartists applied to attend and did not support a boycott. Their application was an empty gesture, that is not their way of doing things. And apart from anything else they wanted to help show the world that the Western peace activists going to the Congress were not simply the dupes of Moscow.

OM: Many in the West would tend to see a group like the Charter as a fringe group out of touch with the mainstream opinions of the person on the street in Prague. What do you say to that? Do you think the Chartists simply reflect general opinions or is their outlook distinct?

ZT: You touch here on the basic mistake that so many people in the Western peace movements make. They think that these are dissident intellectuals with chips on their shoulders and a basically right-wing standpoint, whereas the men and women on the street are much closer to the peace movement's outlook. This is a very big mistake.

What must be remembered is that the Czechoslovak people feel themselves to be living in an occupied country, under Soviet control. Before 1968 there was never the basic hostility to the Soviet Union in Czechoslovakia that there is now. What anti-Sovietism did appear in 1968 would have quickly dissolved. During those few months when people had the freedom to speak out as to why they didn't like the Soviet Union, it is my deepest belief that by doing so they were at

the same time relieving themselves of these feelings of hostility, overcoming them in a positive way.

Today there is such deep, popular anti-Sovietism combined with an almost racist attitude towards the Russians because they are taken to represent the Soviet Union. So amongst this deeply alienated population it is the Soviet Union and not the United States that is seen as the enemy. The common view is that whoever is an enemy of the Soviet Union is a friend of Czechoslovakia.

What Charter 77 is precisely trying to do is to break down this alienated attitude and in turning towards the Western peace movement to enter a dialogue with it, the Charter is really leading the way within Czechoslovakia in taking the issue of peace seriously. Not everybody amongst the thousand or so signatories of the Charter necessarily agrees with the peace movement, of course. But the Charter alone is seeking a serious, free and open dialogue on the issue of peace.

Lis, in Jail, Very Sick

By Andrew Csepel

Veteran civil rights campaigner and Charter 77 leader, Ladislav Lis, is in extremely poor health in jail after a nine-day hunger strike.

Lis's activities as an energetic Charter 77 spokesperson were cut short on 5 January when he was arrested and charged with 'incitement against the Republic', but he still has hanging over him from 1979 the more serious charge of 'subversion'!

According to *Palach Press*, which is monitoring the case closely, there are fears that this subversion charge will now be used against him to ensure a long sentence.

For the Government, Ladislav Lis has been one of the most troublesome and persistent dissidents in recent years. The authorities are aware that because of Lis's poor health, he may well be unable to survive a long sentence. They have already suggested their intentions by placing Lis, who suffers from acute asthma, in a cell of smokers. Attempts by his wife to secure his release on medical grounds have been refused, because it would require Lis's assent as well. Lis has not been asked. Lis's temporary replacement as spokesperson for Charter 77 is Jan Kozlik, a technical worker from a Prague building firm.

In June Lis began a hunger strike to press a number of demands including a visit from his family. After nine days, strong pressure from his doctor and a promise from a Liberec district judge that his family could visit him persuaded him to end his strike. He is very weak after losing 25 kg. during his six months in detention. Correspondence between him and his family has still not been restored.

Medical Harassment of Petr Uhl

(Petr Uhl, the radical Czech socialist has been in jail since May 1979 because of his role as a moving spirit within Charter 77. He is held in the strict regime prison of Mirov. The following letter from Anna Sabatova, his wife, to Minister of Interior Obzina, was made available by Palach Press.)

Dear Minister,

In 1979 my husband, Petr Uhl, was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment (under para. 98, cl. 1, 2 of the penal code). He is serving the term in the second category prison, Mirov.

My husband is not in the best of health. He has chronic bronchitis and having suffered from tympanitis as a child and as an adolescent, he underwent an ear operation resulting in a severe defect to the hearing of his right ear. An ENT specialist treating him noticed a considerable improvement in his condition which they both agreed was probably caused by a regular dosage of Vitamin B-Complex with mineral supplements. Until November 1982, I was able to give my husband these vitamins during visits once every six months. As the following quotes from my husband's letters can document, the authorities at Mirov began to behave most unreasonably at the end of last year:

From his letter of 18 November 1982:

'I have also been granted permission for the vitamins on the basis of the specialist's recommendation. I have just recently been tested on the audiogram. During the last three tests (ie. over the last year, year and a half) the hearing in my right ear, the one which was operated on, was around 60-70%. Between two, two and a half years ago, it was only 10-20%. I put this radical improvement down to the regular intake of the vitamins. The only prescription I am allowed is for Multibionta Forte made by Merct Darmstadt. I think they come in packs of fifty. I have been prescribed five packs to start with. Can you get hold of the vitamins and bring them next time you visit ...'

During that visit of 29 November 1982 I learnt that the warder had withdrawn permission because the vitamins were manufactured abroad. So in December I got hold of vitamins made in this country and sent them to the address of the Mirov prison doctor with the request that they be passed on to my husband.

From his letter of 3 January 1983:

'You write that you sent a package with Spofavit and some Vitaapinol. By pure chance I learnt that the package arrived on 22



Anna Sabatova with Petr Uhl (next to her on her left) at a Charter 77 meeting before his arrest.

December 1982 but it was addressed to the head doctor, which is hardly unreasonable. Since then I have received not a thing. I was not even officially informed. The ENT specialist prescribed me Spofavit before Christmas.'

The package was returned on 24 December with a note saying that it had been incorrectly addressed. On 17 January 1983 my husband wrote: 'Don't send me the Spofavit because they would not give them to me. Or anything else for that matter. In order to buy the Spofavit they are supposed to be releasing 36 Kcs for me ... and I should have them by next week.' From his letter of 31 January: 'I asked about those unhappy vitamins, which, as I wrote to you, I have had prescribed since December (on the specific recommendation of the ENT specialist) instead of the Multibionta. I had already paid the money from my account but then the prison governor withheld permission so I have not received anything nor will I.' On 13 February my husband wrote: 'The governor withheld permission to buy them with my prison wages (I had already saved and paid the money) because I insisted on sending my complaint concerning the Multibionta and Spofavit to the Board of Control in Prague. (That is the penal system's board of control.) This is not just my impression, it is the official explanation.'

I would have thought that in matters affecting prisoners' health, medical criteria would be decisive and nothing else. In the light of this, Minister, I would ask that you sort this matter out.

Anna Sabatova
Anglicka 8, Prague 2.

11 March 1983

YUGOSLAVIA

"Who works in Yugoslavia"

(The following satirical piece appeared in the Slovene publication, Pavliha, earlier this year. Translation for Labour Focus by Michele Lee.)

Pavliha — the organ of clever Slovenians
Our Study: Who works in Yugoslavia?

Belgrade, Thursday (Ljubo Urajnar). Following the method of many foreign statistical institutes, your fellow worker has asked for a survey to be conducted on who does what in Yugoslavia today. The results are as follows:

population as a whole	22,000,000
of which older than 65	6,700,000
left	15,300,000
of which younger than 18	5,700,000
left	9,600,000
unemployed	2,600,000
left	7,000,000
federal employees	1,200,000
left	5,800,000
republican bureaucracy	1,100,000
left	4,700,000
communal staff	1,000,000
left	3,700,000

speakers	900,000
left	2,800,000
SIS bureaucrats	800,000
left	2,000,000
black marketeers	700,000
left	1,300,000
signators of self-managing agreements	500,000
left	800,000
organisers of congresses	300,000
left	500,000
artists, various	250,000
left	250,000
footballers	150,000
left	100,000
organisers of celebrations	50,000
left	50,000
waiting in queues	25,000
left	25,000
hospitalised or in prison	24,988
left in fact just you and me	2

It follows from the above that the two of us should work harder in implementing the policy of economic stabilisation, should work in fact 24 hours a day. This applies specifically to you since I have had enough of supporting this state apparatus all by myself.

Andropov's discipline campaign

By Rick Hellman

At the November Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, newly-elected General Secretary, Yuri Andropov, outlined stringent measures to deal with the ailing Soviet economy. Firstly, transport, and the railways in particular, would have to be improved — thousands of days and vast quantities of production are lost each year through non-arrival of raw materials. Secondly, there would have to be a nationwide campaign to boost productivity.

'An enormous, and perhaps the cheapest, reserve for growth lies in the strengthening of discipline, order and organisation at all levels of production and management.'¹

Despite speculation about imminent economic reforms, Andropov had clearly opted for making the existing economic mechanism more efficient.

THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

Labour productivity has always been a major headache, but the rapid decline in available reserves of labour coupled with a deterioration of labour discipline, increased absenteeism, frequent changes of job, theft and corruption has led to a drastic fall-off in its rate of growth: under the Ninth Five-Year Plan growth was 34%; under the Tenth it was 17%; and although a 23-25% rise is projected for the current Plan, the first two years have witnessed only 2.7% and 2.1% increases respectively. A staggering 30% of piece workers are unable to meet their present quotas compared with only 4% in 1975.²

Alcoholism is at such a level that an estimated 70% of all crime and 96% of all breaches of public order are committed under the influence of drink.³ The operations of the 'black' economy have grown enormously in a situation of increasingly scarce foodstuffs and consumer goods and services. In response the new Soviet leadership has coupled the campaign for more discipline at work with a drive for greater law and order in society as a whole.

IMPLEMENTING THE CAMPAIGN

Pravda of 27th December, 1982 indicated that infractions of discipline would be met by the power of persuasion and the force of law. Yuri Zhudin, procurator at the USSR Prosecutor's Office, reinforced this point:

"Loafers, bad workmen and people who are fond of strong drink try to hide behind the front rankers ... The might education force of the collective must be directed at changing the psychology of such people, at accustoming them to real labour."⁴

On the more persuasive side, Andropov, himself, put in an unheralded appearance on January 31st at the Ordzhonikidze Machine-Tool Works in Moscow to address the workforce. He emphasises the need for production to keep pace with incomes although only a week earlier Pravda had announced that real incomes had risen by the astonishingly low figure of only 0.1% in

1982. He also indicated that, although not a long-term solution, prices would have to be raised to eliminate "certain distortions and discrepancies".⁵

At a meeting on January 19, The All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions, a traditional vehicle for labour discipline, emphasised the need to introduce brigade forms of organisation and incentives for work while at the same time depriving 'shirkers' of bonuses, long-service awards and other benefits.⁶ Special measures have been introduced in some enterprises: squads have been formed to grab drunks and prevent them reaching their machines; a system of special marks on work passes — black for thieves, yellow for drunks — has been instituted in some areas. Komsomolskaya Pravda reported that in one combine 200 workers had such marks.⁷ In Moscow special police patrols have been rounding up absentees and sending them back to work by blocking shop entrances and examining credentials.⁸ In some factories workers are relieved of their documents at the start of a shift and only get them back when they return.⁹

Many workers are forced to be absent from their place of work because of the lack of services outside of working hours. On January 17, in recognition of this problem, the USSR Council of Ministers recommended the extension of consumer services by increasing their availability to workers directly at their places of work and by lengthening shop opening hours. In Moscow hairdressers are now on a two-shift system from 7.30am to 10.00pm and other shop and repair facilities have increased their hours, including some Sunday opening.

Exhortatory aspects of the campaign have been reinforced by legal changes. On January 1st, Article 209 of the RSFSR Criminal Code dealing with begging, vagrancy and leading a parasitic way of life was amended. Previously, vagrancy and begging were only recognised as crimes if carried on "systematically" and a "parasitic way of life" if carried on "for a protracted period of time". Both of these qualifications have now been deleted. The penalty for a first offence has been increased from one years deprivation of freedom, and special corrective labour centres are to be established. Article 209 is most frequently used against dissidents and those who have violated labour discipline, left their job or are prone to alcoholism.

The higher echelons of Soviet society do not appear immune from the campaign. The Soviet press has carried numerous reports of officials charged with accepting bribes, Ivan Pavlovsky has been sacked for his inept performance as Minister of Railways and more significantly, Nikolai Shchelokov has been replaced as head of the MVD.¹⁰ Under his aegis, the uniformed police gained an unfortunate reputation for corruption. The MVD and KGB are now headed by Vitalii Fedorchuk and Viktor Chebrikov who are both career KGB officials — a departure from the

practice under Brezhnev when both were headed by Party men. This is almost certainly the prelude to a coordinated campaign against corruption and dissidence.

The campaign has been extended to all the Union Republics with varying degrees of success. In the Ukraine, the Komsomol organised special teams to 'raid' factories and construction sites during last December. The aim was to identify guilty individuals and "analyse the causes of the frequent tardiness and idleness at enterprises and the delayed provision of raw materials."¹¹ However, it was later reported that the campaign's response had been patchy.

Nevertheless, initial indications are that the campaign is bearing some fruit. Gross national output for January 1983 was 6.3% higher than the previous year and productivity was up 5.5%.¹² Andropov has immediately stamped his mark on the Soviet political scene but the problems of the Soviet economy are too great to be solved simply by "strengthening discipline" and it remains to be seen if more fundamental reforms are introduced in the near future.

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Four Russian Socialists Released

According to information from dissident circles in Moscow four dissidents whose trial was to have taken place in February have been released from detention. (Details of the arrests were given in *Labour Focus* Vol. 5 Nos. 5-6.) Those released are Andrei Fadin, Pavel Kudyukhin, Vladimir Chernitsky and Yuri Khavkin. All four are left-wing intellectuals, reportedly Euro-communists and socialists and they were arrested in April and June of last year. They were accused of having illegal ties with groups abroad (the Italian CP) and of proposing Euro-communist type reforms in the Soviet Union.

Two of the original six arrested remain in prison. They are Boris Kagarlitsky and Mikhail Rivkin. Rivkin worked in a research institute and Kagarlitsky, who was at one time secretary to Roy Medvedev, was expelled from the Institute of Theatrical Studies in 1982 and is thought to be the editor of the journal *Left Turn* (later called *Socialism and the Future*).

Most of those arrested had held high positions in official institutions. For instance, Fadin had been an adviser to the CPSU Central Committee on Norwegian Affairs and worked in the Institute of World Economy and International Relations. Both Fadin and Kudyukhin had published articles in official journals months before their arrest.

Batovrin leaves for West

In the last issue of Labour Focus we published an Open Letter from four unofficial Soviet peace groups in Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa and Novosibirsk. In May of this year one of the leading figures of the Moscow group, Sergei Batovrin, was exiled to the west. He arrived in Vienna in mid-May with his wife, child and mother.

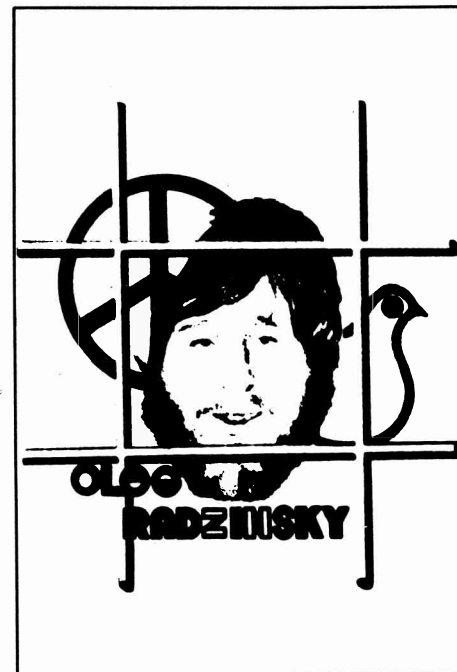
The exile of Batovrin follows months of official harassment of the group, known as the Moscow Group to Establish Trust between the USSR and the USA. In February Batovrin, and another founding member, the mathematician Sergei Rosenoer, began a 32-day hunger strike to protest against the official interference in the groups activities. They decided to fast after the police broke up an exhibition of anti-war photographs by the American Daniel Ellsberg.

Three other members of the Group have

been arrested, including Oleg Radzinsky, son of a well-known Soviet playwright. Radzinsky is presently imprisoned in the Serby psychiatric institute in Moscow.

A member of the Odessa group, Vladimir Kornev, was arrested in April. The Odessa group, which claims to have over 900 members proposes that the Black Sea be turned into a nuclear-free sea of trust and that Odessa and its twin-city in the USA, Baltimore be declared nuclear-free zones.

Two Welsh women supporters of the British Greenham Common protest visited the Moscow "trust" group in May. They also met representatives of the official Peace Committee. The purpose of the visit was to prepare for a larger delegation of 30 Greenham Common women who plan to visit Moscow in the autumn.



To all people of good will

Help me to save my wife and daughter

This letter has nothing to do with politics, it is a humanitarian appeal. I am not writing about the tortures or long-term prison sentences applied by the KGB, but about one case concerning the enforced separation of a mother and her daughter which, in itself, is characteristic of the deliberate, unbearable cruelty of the Moscow totalitarian regime.

My wife, Tamara Samsonova, worked as a professor of Philosophy at Moscow State University. Her father has been a member of the Communist Party for over 60 years and is now a pensioner. Her daughter from her first marriage, Tatiana Maksimenko, gained her undergraduate degree at Moscow University, where she subsequently received a PhD in psychology.

Before our marriage Tamara's family led a 'normal', Soviet way of life. It is true that Tamara suffered a series of unpleasantness at work because of her liberal views, but nonetheless she was 'tolerated'.

But after our marriage in 1970 the life of Tamara's family was totally shattered. Two months after the marriage I was arrested and kept in a psychiatric prison for three years. (This was my second imprisonment. I also spent almost eight years as a political prisoner in Stalin's camps.) Why? Because while I was professor philosophy at Rostov University, I wrote a book entitled 'The Only Solution', in which I stated that there is no socialism in our country because there is no democracy.

My wife was sacked from the university and only with great difficulty was she able to find a new job in the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences.

After I was released, my dissident friends and I established a samizdat journal *Poiski* (Searches), which was based on a democratic platform. We printed several numbers. Four of the young members of the editorial board were arrested, but I was given an ultimatum by the KGB: either leave the Soviet Union or be arrested for a third time. I was forced to leave the Soviet Union in 1980 in order to publish our journal *Poiski* in Paris.

My wife followed me soon afterwards, but her daughter, Tatiana Maksimenko, two small granddaughters, her son-in-law and her old parents remained behind. We have been trying to bring them out of the Soviet Union to visit us in Paris for over two years, but the Soviet authorities refused first my wife's mother and

then her daughter and family. Tatiana and her husband were, moreover, sacked from their jobs. He was told as his mother-in-law had left the Soviet Union for the West, he could not possibly work as a psychologist for Aeroflot. Tatiana, who was working as a psycho-pharmacologist at the Institute of Pharmacology of the Academy of Sciences was simply made redundant. Soon afterwards, however, two jobs were advertised at the Academy and one of them was Tatiana's. The authorities have violated all the labour laws because at that time she was the family's only breadwinner, besides the fact that she was a good worker and a very sound specialist in her field. Nevertheless, the district court in Moscow endorsed her dismissal and the Moscow city court confirmed the decision. Formally she was made redundant, but in actual fact she was dismissed because she expressed the wish of her and her family to visit her mother in Paris. It is now over three years since they last saw each other.

The hearing at the City Court was conducted in the manner in which only political trials are conducted in the Soviet Union, ie it was closed to the public. My daughter's friends were not allowed to enter the court room. Thus, the circle is closed: Tatiana's family has no means of existence.

The Moscow office of UVIR (the office for visas and permits) refused to grant exit visas to Tatiana and her family for the following reasons: 1. The Board of Directors of the Institute of Pharmacology objected to her visiting her mother (which is in itself monstrous, because who can possibly object to a reunion between a mother and her daughter?). It is, moreover, laughable because the Board of Directors had already fired her from her job, but UVIR used the objections of the board to refuse her an exit visa — all this despite the fact that Tatiana is no longer an employee of this Institute.

2. The mother of Tatiana Maksimenko, my wife, left the Soviet Union with a visa for Israel. Therefore she has no right to invite anyone to visit her in France. This argument is no less vile than the former. Firstly, all dissidents, as a rule, leave the Soviet Union with visas for Israel (including Russians and Ukrainians). This is a pattern established by the Soviet authorities. Secondly, after leaving the Soviet Union anyone has the right to live in any country which welcomes him or her. We now live in France and no normal person can argue that we have no right to invite our

daughter to visit us here, in France. Only the henchmen of the KGB can present this kind of nonsense as an argument.

All this has seriously affected the health of my wife. She has already been suffering from severe depression for a considerable period of time and is now the patient of a London-based professor of psychiatry, Dr Low Beer. My wife is in a desperate state of mind. She is unable to bear the pain of the separation from her daughter.

I appeal to you: please help Tatiana Maksimenko. Do what you can to save both mother and daughter, help me in making it possible for the whole family to meet at last.

Please, write and protest.

This is not a complicated case and it is possible to persuade Soviet authorities to allow this family reunion. I firmly believe that no power can withstand the voice of public opinion.

With hope and thanks,
Pyotr Egides

Dr Abovin-Egides, editor of the journal Poiski, member of the joint committee of Soviet political exiles, member of the board of the journal Tribuna, member of the advisory board of the journal Forum.

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117311 Moscow,
Prospekt Vernadskogo
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Please send all your appeals and protests to these three addresses simultaneously (and a copy to my address in Creteil):

1. The presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Moscow
2. The Director of UVIR, 10 Kolpachnii pereulok, UVIR Moscow-Central, USSR
3. The Soviet Ambassador to France, Mr U M Vorontsov, Soviet Embassy, Paris, France.