Labour Focus on EASTERN EUROPE

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NEW COURSE IN THE KREMLIN?

FRED HALLIDAY ON
CIVIL WAR IN SOUTH YEMEN

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 give 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 organizations 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 materials in ***Labour Focus*** may be reproduced, with acknowledgement. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the view of the editorial collective.

In these ways we hope to strengthen campaigns to mobilize 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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EDITORIAL

WE NEED A NEW HELSINKI

The experience of East-West politics over the past few years has brought a number of lessons home to sections of the European population extending far beyond the Left. It is obvious that Washington wants the arms race and Moscow does not; that Reagan's aggressive policies represent very powerful and deep-rooted forces in American society; that these policies are tending to upset the global strategic balance, jeopardizing the security of both halves of Europe and increasing the risk of nuclear war; that the economic squeeze on poor countries, and Western militarism in Central America, the Mediterranean, Africa and elsewhere, are combining to produce a new cycle of famine and violence. Finally, on Star Wars, the chief bone of contention in current arms negotiations between the superpowers, it is striking that the Centre and Left in Western Europe by and large shares Soviet hostility.

Here in Britain, a bizarre situation has thus developed where even the Liberal Party, let alone the Labour Party, can find scarcely a single important external policy of Washington's that it can bring itself to praise or even publicly support. The Liberals still attack Labour for being disloyal to Washington. The Labour leadership continues to assert its unconditional loyalty to the latter (no member of the Shadow Cabinet has yet dared to suggest there could be any conditions under which Labour might favour withdrawal even from the military alliance, far less from NATO itself). In reality, however, there is no doubt that current US policies have been forcing even lifelong Atlanticists to rethink things.

For the Labour leaders, accustomed over four decades to close collaboration with US imperialism—in Greece and Germany, Korea and Vietnam; over nuclear strategy and over global intelligence-gathering—the Reaganite approach to politics has become a real embarrassment. Senior Washington officials routinely make vituperative attacks on the Socialist parties of Western Europe. This is no mere difference over tactics: the present US administration is deeply opposed to strong trade unions, full employment, nationalized industries, welfare states, detente—in short, to everything that these parties (in varying degrees) have traditionally championed. Washington's view of the future in Europe gives pride of place to the right wing of the parties of the Right, to the Thatchers and Strausses.

It is hardly surprising if all this is driving some of the European architects of postwar Atlanticism to despair—if not to Moscow! And, indeed, it has been to Moscow that some of them have been going. Figures like Denis Healey and especially Willy Brandt have been very active on diplomatic journeys to the East. More recently, West European social-democracy was well represented at the recent 27th Congress of the CPSU. What attitude should be taken to this development by socialists concerned not only to survive Reaganism, but also about civil liberties and political rights in Eastern Europe?

If we are to judge positively the improved relations between West European social democracy and Moscow, this should not be for spurious reasons. For example, the improvement should not be ascribed to any promise of a reform of Soviet domestic life held out by the new Gorbachev leadership: the truth is that the 27th Party Congress gave not the slightest encouragement to hopes for a relaxation of internal political controls or a democratization of the state, despite many signs before the Congress of pressure from below for greater political accountability and cultural freedoms. Similarly, we should not regard as adequate arguments in terms of diplomatic protocol: 'contacts must be maintained, however much we may disapprove . . .' and so forth.

The valid and sufficient justification for inter-party contacts across the East/West divide is more simple and obvious: the fact that the participants may hold common views on certain issues. It is only right and proper that there should be discussion and cooperation when there is principled agreement, or the chance of achieving it, on matters of the highest international importance—such as Star Wars, nuclear-free zones, test bans, chemical weapons, support for Nicaragua or for Namibia and Azania, third-world aid, and so on.

The fact is there is a great deal today on which the Labour Party and the CPSU can agree, above all in terms of stopping the arms race and returning to military detente. The same, indeed, would hold for many Liberals. However shocking this may be to those whose minds have been formed by cold-war categories, the policy record speaks for itself. A huge problem remains, however. What about political repression in the Soviet Union and East Europe—something that is seen by the overwhelming majority of socialists in the West as not merely morally repugnant, but directly anti-socialist?

The stock response of Western social-democratic leaderships on this issue has been twofold: either demagogic gestures—like Mitterrand playing up to the Washington press corps by 'daringly' mentioning Sakharov's name at a Moscow state banquet—or, more seriously, raising individual cases privately with East European leaders. What is now required, however, and what the Left should be urging, is a more consistent and positive approach, designed to achieve one limited but important goal: the de facto abandonment and eventual scrapping of those clauses in East European penal codes which send people to prison for airing dissenting views ('Anti-socialist propaganda and agitation').

One common objection to the idea of a campaign of this kind is that it could be used to block accords on other issues, such as ending the nuclear arms race. But it certainly should not be used in any such way by us: agreement on one issue should in no sense be made conditional upon agreement on another. What is more, the example of the West German Greens shows that the Soviet leaders too are quite prepared to seek common ground in one area even with people who have sharply criticized them in others. It is natural for them to reject the shamelessly hypocritical

interventions of the cold-war human-rights industry. But there is good reason to suppose that today, given their slim hopes for striking a deal with any current West European government on the central issues in dispute between Washington and Moscow, they will in fact not exclude a priori talking to a West European left that campaigns for basic political and human rights in the East as well as in the West.

What East European governments might very well do, of course, is to reply in kind, by raising the issue of political and civil rights in the West. They might well say to the Labour leaders: 'What about the sacking of striking miners and printers; the victimization of Labour councillors carrying out their election manifestoes; racist police violence; strip-searching in Armagh; millions thrown on the dole?', and so on. But this kind of 'interference in another country's internal affairs', offensive though it may be to the Foreign Office or its parliamentary co-thinkers, should be positively welcome to any socialist or internationalist.

Which brings us to Helsinki. The original Helsinki Agreements implied the interdependence of the peoples of Europe. What is needed today—and what the Western Left should be taking the initiative in proposing—is a bold Charter for Europe East and West, to be hammered out through a new, more profound and far-reaching Helsinki process seeking to go well beyond the narrow limits of the initial protocol. Such a Charter could speak to the vital issues of peace and disarmament. It could open the prospect of unrestricted scientific, technological, economic and cultural cooperation between the two halves of Europe. It could address the question of basic civil and political liberties: rights of speech, press and assembly. And it could contain detailed clauses on social rights too: on the right to work; trade-union rights, including the statutory right to strike; equal rights for women; national and ethnic minority rights; health, welfare, safety and environmental standards; sexual and religious freedoms; and so on.

An agenda of this kind would not, of course, be willingly proposed as a whole either by the ruling parties in Eastern Europe or by the ruling circles of West European social-democracy. It could be the product only of a combination of pressure from below (exerted at a variety of levels, whether by party base or by public opinion, whether via Labour councils twinned with East European cities, or via East-West academic gatherings) and pressure from the 'other side'. In the present world situation, however, each side does have a perceived material interest in at least part of such a charter.

It could be objected that a new Helsinki process is not feasible, because the US government, a central actor in the existing Helsinki arrangements, would not contemplate any such development. But perhaps the Brandt-Honecker draft treaty banning new chemical weapons in both Germanies can be a model here: Washington, which would like to deploy such weapons in the FRG, does not approve; so Washington is not involved, and a purely European agreement is reached. The same principle can apply, *mutatis mutandis,* to West European parties of the Right. Minimalist consensus—the basis of the first Helsinki Agreement—has to a great extent broken down in Western Europe, and it is unrealistic to base a new process on hopes for its restoration in the near future. But this simply means that a new Helsinki process must bring tangible benefits for the peoples of both halves of Europe, so that support for it can be firmly anchored in popular majorities that the Right will find difficult to reverse.

For socialists, East and West, the advantages of such a Charter need little emphasis. The object would be not a propaganda campaign, but a search for principled agreement on specific issues through serious discussion. Such a continental debate on the common interests of the peoples of Europe, and the political struggle that would be required to bring it to concrete resolution, could provide a durable foundation for healing the wounds and divisions bequeathed by World War II and, at the same time, could revive the prospects for a new detente initiated in Europe. A campaign for a new Helsinki of this kind would be an excellent way to mark the centenary here in Europe of the great international movement of labour for the eight-hour day that began in the spring of 1886.

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With the present issue of *Labour Focus,* we are introducing two new sections which will become a regular feature. The first is devoted to East-West relations and the peace movement: the articles below by Pirec and Palavršić, reprinted from Yugoslav official periodicals, are an interesting indication of the rethinking of habitual positions that is today occurring in both halves of Europe, as a consequence of the world economic crisis and the aggressiveness of current US policies.

The second new section will contain articles on the Communist world as a whole. It will thus extend beyond Eastern Europe, both to the non-European post-capitalist states and to third-world countries or parties broadly aligned with the Soviet Union (or other Communist states). We are pleased to be able to launch it with Fred Halliday's informative analysis of the recent upheaval in South Yemen.

This issue of *Labour Focus* inaugurates a collaboration with the London publishing house Verso which will assist our return to regular appearance. The journal will henceforward come out three times yearly, in May, September and January.

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Please note the new addresses for subscriptions and for editorial correspondence.

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SOVIET UNION

NEW LEADERS, OLD PROBLEMS, NEW SOLUTIONS?

In an interview with Labour Focus *Zhores Medvedev discusses Soviet domestic prospects*

I Personnel

Just a year after Chernenko's death, we have many new faces in the Soviet leadership, in fact a new team, backed by a party congress and supported by many new recruits to the Central Committee. Could you first take us behind the glib media phrases about the new leadership and assess their background, beginning with Gorbachev himself?

What is peculiar about his background is that there is nothing very remarkable about it, nothing which marked him out as someone about to achieve important results, even in a field in which he considered himself to be an expert.

He graduated in law from Moscow University, but never worked as a procurator or lawyer or in any field relevant to his profession. On graduating he immediately started professional Komsomol work and later moved on to party work in Stavropol Krai, an almost entirely agricultural region, apart from a small amount of light industry and food-processing. Gorbachev apparently decided that an agricultural qualification would be important for his promotion in such a region, so he took a five-year correspondence course in agricultural economics and graduated in 1967. This enabled him to claim expert status and so qualify as party secretary in a grain-producing region. So when he became a Central Committee secretary, he was put in charge of agriculture.

He replaced Kulakov, who died in 1978 either from a heart attack or from being forced to commit suicide. Kulakov had been a powerful figure, comparatively young at 60 when he died, a member of the Politburo as well as a CC secretary and the man in line to succeed Brezhnev. Brezhnev was ill at the time and the Brezhnev group had no successor ready: Chernenko was not then ready, while Kirilenko and Suslov were too old. But it was Kulakov who died, and Gorbachev took over his responsibility for agriculture.

Kulakov had been fairly successful—agriculture had been doing quite well up to 1978. Gorbachev's first agricultural campaign was in 1979 and the results were very poor. This could have been accidental, of course, due to the peculiarities of a given year. But 1980 was also very bad and 1981 was a disaster: only 155 million metric tons of grain was produced—70 million tons short of the plan—and from then on Soviet grain production figures were classified.

The centre of Moscow

Andropov gave him much more power, so that he would have more authority to deal with the problems. With Andropov's death Gorbachev became second in command, still in charge of agriculture. Yet agriculture still performed very badly. 1984 was a new disaster and the Soviet Union had to import 55 million metric tons of grain, the highest grain import ever recorded for any country and higher than the amount the state was able to procure domestically through Agroprom and from the grain market. Since becoming General Secretary, Gorbachev has still retained overall control over agriculture: 1985 output remained as bad as the previous year, indeed slightly lower in per capita terms.

Thus, in the particular field where Gorbachev has had the chance to prove himself, there has been no improvement, only decline. He has tried very hard, introducing new methods, new approaches, new intensive technologies, new investments in mechanization and construction, increasing salaries and bonuses. But the result of all this has been no improvement in output, only higher production costs per ton of grain, making agriculture a larger burden on the state in economic terms.

Previous leaders have always been able to buttress their authority with claims of past achievement: Stalin had his victory over the Party oppositions, his claimed great success for collectivization and above all, of course, his war victory; Khrushchev had his Virgin Lands scheme, which was largely successful; Brezhnev had been in charge of the Virgin Lands programme, and had special responsibility for overseeing the space programme. But Gorbachev, as of now, has had no record of success in any field of policy.

Do you think, then, that apart from his evident tactical skills as a politician, he lacks competence?

He is competent, but within certain limits. Brezhnev was a part-time leader, who could do nothing without his advisers. Gorbachev is far more energetic and tries very hard, but his policy horizon has stretched no further than the limits of the existing system. All his efforts in agriculture were devoted to proving that the established system of strictly centralized planning of agriculture can work successfully and productively. This approach was limited and was bound to fail. He tried to be a more or less traditional party man, a traditional type of leader, telling people what to do and how to do it—the old method of pressure from the top. His pressure was certainly more to the point than, for example, much of Khrushchev's pressure on agriculture in the late 1950s. Yet in many cases it was counter-productive. He did not seem to realize that built into the present system of agricultural management are many negative elements that prevent the system from working effectively.

The impression you give of Gorbachev is as a twenty-years-younger version of Brezhnev, a party bureaucrat rather than a technocrat full of

new policy ideas.

This is true, though he is a cleverer man than Brezhnev. His political style is in some ways reminiscent of Khrushchev's, with his walks through the streets, visiting factories and restaurants and talking to people. Brezhnev never did this: he preferred Potemkin villages. But Khrushchev was much more genuinely courageous, ready to take enormous risks. He had lived through the terror and survived, and was ready to tackle truly dangerous characters like Beria. Gorbachev has not achieved power through those kinds of conditions; he is a much more cautious type of person, with the limitations of a typical apparatchik, lacking Khrushchev's radicalism.

The second most powerful man in the new team would appear to be Ligachev, who seems to embody the new puritanism within the leadership. What is his background?

Ligachev occupies the place as chief ideologist formerly occupied by Suslov. He is a very independent figure, not Gorbachev's man, promoted by Andropov, and very powerful. His biography is brighter than Gorbachev's, though similar. He also was a Komsomol secretary, in Novosibirsk. But he did better, moving straight into the organizational department in Moscow in the Khrushchev period. Then in 1965 he was sacked by Brezhnev and sent off as party secretary in Tomsk, while Kapitonov was put in charge of the centre. Ligachev languished in Tomsk for 18 years, without promotion, until Andropov brought him back. Unlike Gorbachev he is a puritan and a very strict ideologist, fully committed to the party's historic goals and role. He is probably a more competent ideologist than Suslov, better educated and more experienced in the ideological field.

Ryzkhov, the new Prime Minister, on the other hand, is surely a technocrat, as are many of the other new leaders.

Yes, he is. Until 1975 he worked in industry as a chief engineer. He graduated from the Ural Polytechnic and became director of Uralmash. He then became a member of the government as deputy of the Planning Commission, and was appointed a CC Secretary only three years ago. He will understand much better than Gorbachev the needs of industrial managers, what they require for success, and he will try to defend their interests. I doubt that he will feel the need to seek Gorbachev's advice on economics problems, for it is only in the last year that the General Secretary began to learn the workings of the industrial economy. It is very possible that tensions may arise between the two men, similar to those between Kosygin —a very knowledgeable economic administrator—and Brezhnev. Three times Kosygin wanted to resign because of his differences with Brezhnev over economic priorities. Unless Gorbachev is prepared to give Ryzhkov a free hand, the same sort of conflicts may arise.

How do you rate these new, younger technorats?

The most brilliant generation of technocrats in Soviet history were those who came to prominence in the Stalin period, often at a very young age. Then there were people like Mikoyan, a very skilled economist who acted as a kind of trouble-shooter, moving into branches facing crises. In the 1930s there were severe problems because the food-processing industry had not been developed. He moved in and established a system for the industry which has remained basically unchanged to the present day, though the quality of its output has declined since Mikoyan's time. Ustinov, the People's Commissar for armaments during the war also did an excellent job. And Nikolai Voznesensky, who organized the war economy between 1941 and 1945, was a brilliant theoretician and practical administrator (to the extent that Stalin became very jealous and had him shot in 1949). The enormous pressure to produce results in order to survive produced people of this sort—Zhukov was another example, or Kurchatov in the atomic industry.

The people who rule now are not of this technical calibre, they do not give an impression of being unique or irreplaceable. They have had to move very slowly, step by step up the ladder, before reaching high positions well into middle age.

The impression, nevertheless, is that in contrast to the endemic clientelism of the Brezhnev period, when promotions were determined as much by personal connections as by qualification, Gorbachev is attempting to stress technical competence in his cadre policy.

Promotion by personal connection is not by any means ended. Gorbachev has given important posts to friends who have no qualification for the job. Take, for example, Murakhovsky, who has been put in charge of the new consolidated committee that oversees the whole of agriculture and also appointed First Deputy Prime Minister—a post giving him the right to bypass Ryzhkov and report directly to the Politburo. Murakhovsky has had very limited education, at a teacher's institute; he has no agricultural qualifications; he is a bureaucrat, not a technocrat at all. Gorbachev met him in 1955, when he returned from Moscow University to Stavropol. Murakhovsky was then already a Komsomol secretary, more senior than Gorbachev, and gave him a job in the Komsomol apparat. They have been together ever since. When Gorbachev became a CC secretary in Moscow, he got his friend the job of Stavropol first secretary, jumping over three or four other people. The same pattern has been repeated now.

The same pattern applies to Razumovsky, the new head of the Organization Department, in charge of cadres, a very high and important job which should be held by a CC secretary. Yet Razumovsky held the job without even being a member of the CC. He is an old friend from an Ispolkom at Krasnodar in the Kuban, who was then promoted to the job of Kraikom secretary.[1] He was Gorbachev's ally in the struggle against the corrupt Brezhnev crony Medunov.

Or again, the new Minister of the Interior replacing Fedorchuk has no experience whatever in the Ministry. His sole qualification for the job is his personal friendship with Gorbachev, from his time in Stavropol. This is a strange way to make top ministerial appointments. The same pattern applies to Yakovlev, the new head of the Propaganda Department of the CC. He has a reputation for being more liberal. He was sacked from the department twelve years ago by Brezhnev. He had been producing sophisticated ideological articles, Suslov became very jealous, picked an argument with him and had him packed off as ambassador to Canada. Yet we cannot assume that Gorbachev has appointed him because of Yakovlev's supposedly liberal outlook. His promotion comes from the personal friendship he established with Gorbachev during the latter's visit to Canada in 1983. Gorbachev brought him back, made him chief of some sort of Institute, used him as his adviser for his British trip and has now made this 62-year-old head of Propaganda.

All these are examples of a very traditional method of making top appointments.

II Technology & Science

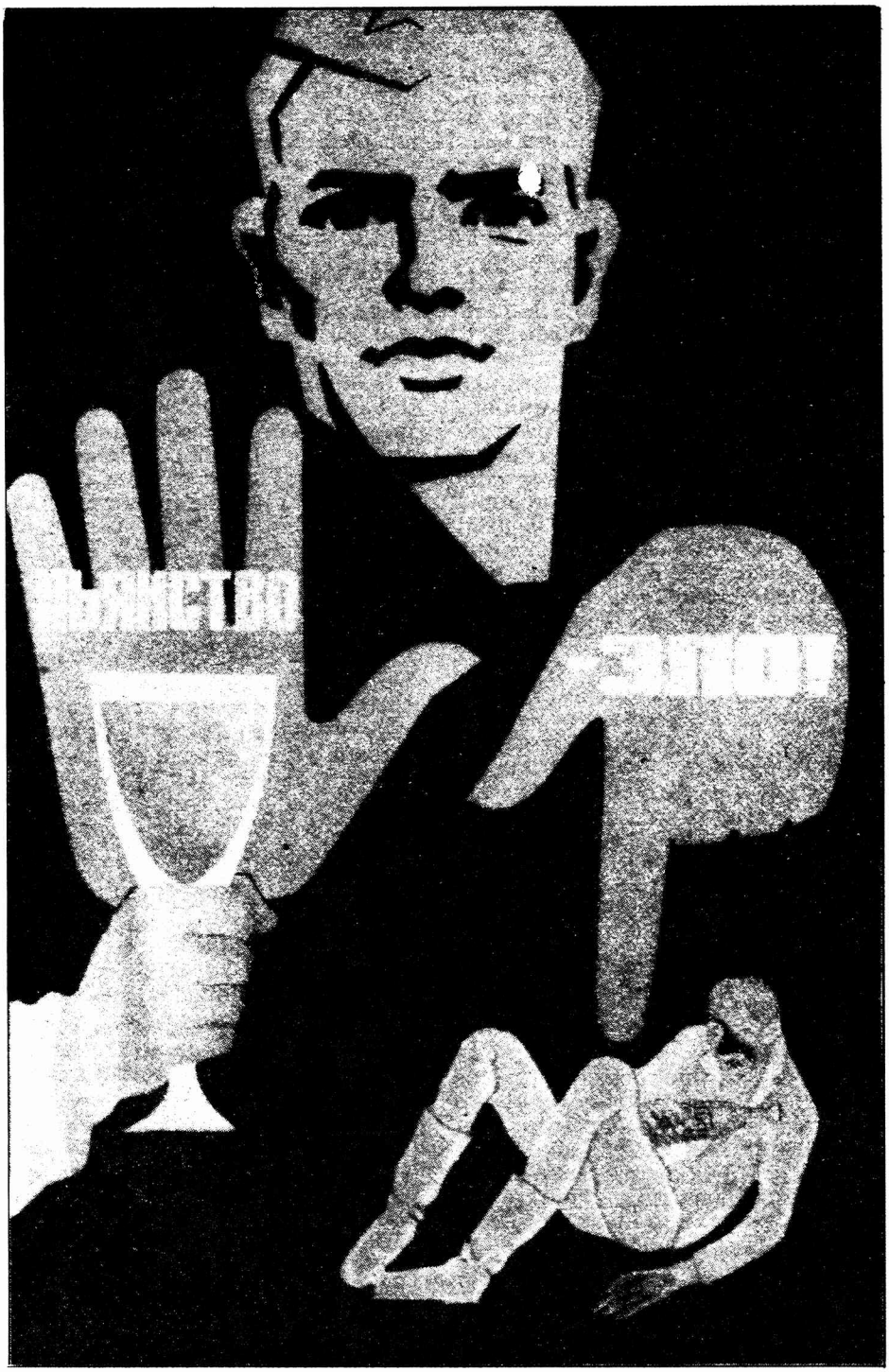
Turning now from personnel to policy, can we begin with a constant theme of Gorbachev's, the need to carry through the scientific-technological revolution and modernize Soviet technology. What are the problems in this area and how is the new leadership trying to tackle them?

In the 1960s, the scientific gap between the Soviet Union and the West started to narrow, so that in my book on Soviet science in 1977 I made some very optimistic prognoses. But in the lats six or seven years the gap has been widening in a number of scientific fields.

I can see this most strongly in my own field of biochemistry and genetics, where a new scientific revolution began in 1973–5. This depends upon the use of a very high level of computer technology and new biological equipment to produce new enzymes, new biochemical products of a very high level of purity. To make a biochemical analysis of a DNA, to present the structure of a gene, you need computerization to find out if the spots have a particular sequence. This has produced very rapid progress, related to thousands of new products.

Yet in the Soviet Union there has been hardly any progress in this field. They now

1. Ispolkom = executive committee; Kraikom = committee of a *krai* or larger province.



The anti-alcohol campaign

depend entirely on foreign equipment and foreign chemicals and enzymes. Soviet scientific managers have pressed the government for help and the government has provided a great deal of extra money. This has been spent on huge buildings, some twenty times bigger than my institute here in London. Yuri Ovchinnikov, director of molecular biology in Moscow, has built his institute with twelve six-storey buildings arranged across a wide space to look like a double helix from the air, with some 6,000 staff. Yet at the last biochemical congress they did not present a single paper, because they are not able to produce at the level required by international meetings.

The problem is partly institutional. You need small biotechnological enterprises employing research scientists, producing a small amount of a one-off enzyme, in a field which depends upon thousands of different enzymes. Each enterprise can be geared to different commercial products. But such small units are not at all popular in the Soviet Union, where all commercial work is differentiated through the Ministries, so that scientists do one thing and high technology does another, and microbiology is mostly oriented to producing proteins for livestock.

We see the same problem in virology. The Soviet Union claims to have no AIDs, but the truth is they have no industry of monoclonal antibodies which could identify the AIDS virus. Evgeny Chazev, who has now gained a Nobel Peace Prize, has built the world's biggest cardiological centre, linked to the Kremlin hospital: a huge complex of seven different institutes. But they cannot carry out many of the coronary operations that hospitals here can do, such as bypass operations, open-heart surgery, transplants and so on. The same story can be told in the pharmacological and pharmaceutical industry as well.

Are there any proposals for reform in this field?

There are, but they are not radical enough. You need to change the infrastructure. This does not mean private enterprise, but it does mean that state-related laboratories and centres gain a more flexible system of commercial activity, able to link up with other systems without passing through a ministry. Some efforts are being made in this field, but it is necessary to change the financial incentives as well, so that the successful development of new products for commercial enterprises produces financial rewards.

In the Soviet Union, this remains at the level of demands from high officials for scientists to produce better results from links with industry. The whole structure of Soviet science remains so rigid and hierarchical that young scientists have very little opportunity to be independent. This is a problem here as well, but a young scientist in our institute who produces a very good paper can quickly become well known and influential, finding a new job and a much higher salary, in America or elsewhere. In the Soviet Union, only the top scientists are considered authorities: however good a young scientist is, he or she will remain junior, can use new work only through the co-operation of the senior people—someone from the Academy—and has no opportunity to present it at international meetings.

There is a lack of freedom in a real sense: freedom of collaboration, of presentation and publication and of travel. Moreover, a scientist's career is weighed down by the paraphernalia of degrees and titles and political loyalties—and this situation is actually getting worse rather than better. In the 1950s scientists were the freest people, had high prestige and good salaries. Now other jobs are more attractive to bright young people, and scientists and particularly technologists are getting very low salaries.

There is also a generational problem. From the time of Stalin's death to the mid-1960s there was a sharp increase in the number of scientists, from 150,000 to about 700,000, and there were new centres like Novosibirsk. Young people like myself could advance very rapidly to become laboratory heads. Now they are older, have many titles, but are not always able to pro-

duce. Research is now very expensive and new vacancies are limited.

Also, that was a time of liberalization, with freer discussions of political subjects, when there was no direct connection between your political views and promotion. Solzhenitsyn describes in 'The Oak and the Calf' how Suslov shook his hand at a writers' meeting. This atmosphere ended with the invasion of Czechoslovakia. We can scarcely imagine Ligachev—the present-day Suslov—shaking hands with a writer who produced works in the style of Solzhenitsyn. Nowadays a scientist who expresses any unorthodox or dissenting views has no chance of promotion. Gaining new titles and awards is very closely linked with political loyalties. Scientists are under much greater ideological and political control and all this has seriously affected the development of science.

Do you think a person like Gorbachev is aware of these problems?

He is not aware of them: he believes the party is the fount of supreme wisdom in all things and that, if you want scientists to do something, you give them the money, tell them what to do and they will do it. This may have worked in Stalin's time, when one man like Kurchatov could make an enormous difference in a field like atomic weapons: Stalin gave him an unlimited bank balance and Kurchatov produced the bomb. But they did the same thing with Chazev to tackle heart disease, he built his huge cardiological complex, yet coronaries and heart attacks are now a higher percentage of deaths than before and the increase is rapid.

So this old approach does not work. You need to mobilize thousands of scientists to do better work; this requires giving them great freedom of expression and cutting down the hierarchy to give more chances to the young. Yet Gorbachev has strengthened the hierarchy. There used to be just junior and senior scientists: now we have junior scientist, scientist, senior scentist, chief scientist and leading scientist. Then there is a second hierarchy of administrative positions, and a third hierarchy of titles—PhD candidate, Doctor, Corresponding Member of the Academy, Academician. So, in all, there are three parallel systems of promotion. This is an extremely silly way of diverting scientists from their research.

Here we see the main contradiction in Gorbachev's whole approach. He wants to create a very sophisticated, high-technology, highly productive society; yet at the same time he wants to keep everything under control and ensure that the party bureaucracy can claim all credit for the better life. There is no serious attempt to delegate power and decision-making to the lower level.

III Agriculture

In discussing Gorbachev's record you underlined the acute problems besetting agriculture. How do you define these problems and what signs are there of new ideas for tackling them within the leadership?

Agricultural improvement is the key element in any effort to restore dynamic economic growth. It is a very difficult problem. An accumulation of trends since the start of the 1970s indicates that agriculture has finally begun to decline.

There is no single comprehensive answer to agricultural problems. Take Central Asia, for example—the one region where the rural population is growing very rapidly. The area specializes in cotton, based on irrigation, providing a lot of cash for local people. It now produces too much cotton for Soviet needs, so more than a million tons is exported. Yet the region has to import food; the irrigation system is drying up the Aral Sea, depleting the fish population rapidly; and there is no economic incentive for the region to switch from cotton to maize or corn. This situation, which stems from Stalin's decision to develop cotton production in the 1930s when the Soviet Union had to import 50% of its cotton, no longer makes any sense.

Problems are quite different in other areas. In the Caucasus and the central Russian region, there is serious rural depopulation. This involves not just a shift to the towns, but one within the rural areas from small villages into larger, better equipped villages. Thus, between Moscow and the Urals, there are now some 150,000 villages which are considered to have no future, while only some 90,000 are designated to continue developing. These ghost villages have small fields which are no longer being cultivated, buildings which are left empty. This involves a very large waste of resources.

There have been articles in the press—from the Smolensk region, for example—about people wanting to take over and work these deserted farms, as contract brigades producing not necessarily for the market directly but for nearby collective farms. Officials have blocked this as illegal, because it would amount to private-family farming and the people involved could make more money than nearby collective farmers. People from the towns would also like to buy such farms as dachas, but peasants are forbidden to sell.

There is also the problem of how the land would be worked. You wouldn't need large machines—a horse would do for ploughing. But using a horse for such a purpose is illegal. Horses can be used for sport, or for transport by old-age pensioners, but not as a means of production held in private hands. This was one of the hallowed decrees of the revolution.

In such an extraordinarily diversified country, attempts to produce central directives providing general answers simply don't work. Thus Gorbachev was in favour of more irrigation, so the Ministry of Irrigation introduced what could be called mass-produced irrigation. It benefited some types of fields, over-salinated others and destroyed yet others. The same pattern occurred in the mass production of fertilizers, producing an imbalance between nitrogen, phosphates and potassium salts. Moreover, applying fertilizers without tackling the shortage of pesticides and herbicides can result in developing weeds rather than crops. These problems are accentuated when you move from extensive agriculture with large fallow areas to the more intensive methods favoured by Gorbachev. These intensive methods require a very complex system of chemical products applied on the basis of careful analysis of the local soil. Decisions of this sort must be taken by local farmers: they cannot be taken centrally. The consequence of many central decisions has been a serious erosion of soils and a decline in fertility.

When Gorbachev was dealing with agriculture under Brezhnev, his idea was to create a single agro-industrial complex: to organize agriculture, the industries providing inputs for it and the food-processing industries into a single network. This may have been based on a comparison with the relationship between the military and industry, but the analogy was not fully applied. For in that field, the consumer—the military—has sovereignty, can pick and choose what it wants. But Gorbachev gave the kolkhozes and sovkhozes no such rights.[2] Indeed, with a single big system it was the producers—the tractor industry, for example—which had the whip hand. They could sell all their equipment, often of very poor quality and not even assembled. The kolkhoz has no right to refuse the equipment; it has to pay for it, assemble it and, if there is a fault, repair it.

Even when the producers take a lot of trouble to produce modern equipment things can go badly wrong. For example, they have recently introduced a new combine-harvester for the whole country, called the Don. It should have been produced by 1984, but will not be ready till the end of the five-year plan. This is because it has been being perfected—with computerization, a very comfortable cabin and so on. But the problem is that it is in any case too heavy and damages the soil: therefore, it has now had to be substantially modified.

Similar problems arise for the food industry. It has to buy from the kolkhozes at a much higher price than its own retail price—paying four or five roubles for meat that it must sell for two roubles. So there is no economic incentive to improve food-processing, food retailers are run down and the food is poorly prepared.

Finally, towards the end of last year, Gorbachev made a drastic move at the centre, scrapping the seven ministries involved in agriculture, making many thousands of bureaucrats redundant and establishing a

2. Kolkhoz = collective farm; sovkhoz = state farm.

single committee with a single chairperson. But this will bring some improvement only if it is combined with a genuine devolution of decision-making, giving greater independence to collective farms and individual farmers; also to different regions, to establish their own quotas and have more or less full rights to decide on their own methods. This must be a genuine decentralization, not a replacement of ministerial by party centralization as occurred under Khrushchev.

Furthermore, there must be more private agriculture on the Hungarian model in regions with shortages of rural population. I am not in favour of generalized private agriculture—this is in any case no longer possible in the Soviet Union—but the private element must be increased. It may even be that the Chinese system of maintaining nationalization of the land, but leasing it to peasants for twenty-four years, could be applied.

Can Gorbachev bring himself to accept changes of this scope?

I believe he will be pragmatic and flexible enough to do so. But it will not be easy for him to admit that the present system, which he has for so long said can be made to work, cannot in fact be made to function better and must be changed. There have been some signs before and during the 27th Party Congress that some new structural ideas are being considered, involving economic liberalization of rural services and even of the over-large kolkhozes themselves, introducing more private intiative. But there are great ideological inhibitions against openly proclaiming such changes, despite the fact that Brezhnev himself doubled the permitted size of private plots. The problem is that if the private sector in the countryside becomes richer than the state sector, there will be social and ideological tensions; yet, if there is no change, there will not be adequate growth.

IV Industry

From what you have said, it would appear that in the short term the new team has no prospect of a rapid reversal of agriculture's poor performance. Quick successes must then depend upon industrial growth. Are there signs of a genuinely new approach in this field?

There has been some real debate in the press about economic reform. There are people putting forward models involving market competition, in the sense that in every industry there would be alternative suppliers to choose from. Some people in the West seem to think that Aganbegyan—the economist who has been director of the economic research institute in Novosibirsk, and who has been advising Gorbachev—belongs to this school, but they are wrong. Aganbegyan's model involves computerization of the economy to such a pitch of co-ordination and smooth administration that optimal outcomes are achieved in every branch. Even Kosygin's 1965–6 reform, which was suppressed, was more revolutionary than this in trying to use market mechanisms.

Gorbachev and Ryzhkov are strongly criticizing Soviet science and technology for seeking only to improve existing industrial systems, whereas these systems are themselves out of date and unable to compete on the world market. The key slogans are for new technology, computerization and automation. Yet the mechanism for inducing such changes remains the old administrative system. There is no mystery about this. In 1985 we had a series of speeches from Gorbachev—first in Leningrad, then at Kiev, at Minsk and in the Tyumen oil region—spelling out his economic policy. In addition, we have the new five-year plan and the fifteen-year economic project for the Party Congress—a vast number of documents on economic plans. All this amounts to the old system of detailed plan targets for every sector.

Aganbegyan's mathematical model-building may be valuable, but it doesn't replace competition, which acts as a pressure on enterprises to conform to the model. What is lacking in the USSR is freedom for managers to collaborate outside the framework of the centralized ministerial system, or to collaborate with the Eastern bloc—never mind the West. In the West such computerized models are used in large companies, but they work because managers have unrestricted access to other companies' products. In the Soviet Union all such access must pass through the central ministries, which must co-ordinate. And this central apparat does not consist of economists or computer experts but of bureaucrats, who in fact achieve very poor co-ordination.

Thus for the computer model to work, it would be necessary to get rid of this central administrative apparat. Moreover, the economic departments of the party would also have to be made redundant. Each ministry has, standing above it, the relevant party department supervising it in a system of dual administration. There is also no free exchange of technical and scientific know-how. Furthermore, the party apparat does not use computers for its decision-making—it decides in the old way. So you have more than sixty of these ministries as a very heavy bureaucratic weight on this computerized model.

My expectation is that all these long-term output targets now being agreed are not realistic, any more than the ten-year food programme drawn up by Gorbachev at the start of the 1980s was realistic: in none of its five years of operation so far has it achieved results even approximating to its targets. Of course, agriculture depends upon the weather, so much criticism may seem misplaced. But the industrial targets depend upon new technologies, which Gorbachev wants to be developed internally, not imported from the West. But this is not an easy or predictable job, so it is where the main bottleneck will be. A mass import of technology will in fact be necessary. But the Soviet Union's main foreign-currency earners have been oil, coal, timber and gas: of these, only gas is continuing to increase, while the output of the other three is in decline.

They hope that if you give the top jobs to better planners, administrators or managers, they will create miracles. Aganbegyan has himself written just this: that the solution is to put the right people into the right places, and he gives examples of how such miracles have been achieved by finding the right person for the job. But they will not fulfil all these nice plans without more fundamental reforms.

I also think it is wrong for the Party Congress to attempt to agree plan targets up to the year 2,000, because we are dealing with very dynamic technological changes. For example, they plan for only 60,000 videos in the Soviet Union by 1990, 200,000 by the year 2,000. This is because they are afraid of the video revolution, since it gives people the possibility of using video tapes from the West. But their desire to control this will only increase the demand. Another example is their refusal to plan for small desk photocopy machines. Yet such things are necessary for practical use in industry. So, even in the current plan, we find this very restrictive approach over many things that we take for granted here.

Some people here are arguing that, although Gorbachev is not putting forward major reform plans now, he intends to do so in the future. Yet you are suggesting this is not so.

I would be happy to believe this; but why, then, are they going to such lengths to set detailed targets up to the year 2,000, and doing so not only in the economic programme for the Party Congress, but also in the CC and government document on consumer goods? They are doing the same for agriculture. All this is quite unnecessary. It is capped, moreover, by the Party Programme itself, which lacks any clause indicating that some changes in the traditional party structure or ways of operating may be necessary.

All this indicates that Gorbachev believes he is making the long-term changes now. He really believes that once he has changed the personnel, putting a new generation in power, the economic system will start to work very effectively. Innovation and radicalism is a matter of imagination, and Gorbachev does not seem to be very developed in this field.

Some argue that perhaps Gorbachev is not fully in control, yet this cannot be accepted. He has already made big personnel changes and he had his people controlling the selection of delegates to the Congress, so that it would approve whatever he wanted. So the Congress was his best chance for getting backing for new ideas; for giving himself freedom to make reforms later. Yet he has shown no inclination to use it for this pur-

Chernenko's funeral

pose.

We have talked, so far, of Gorbachev's plans for, so to speak, managing things. But what about his plans for managing people and for trying to ensure that people are going to achieve his targets? What is the significance of the idea of 'work collectives'? Or the anti-corruption and anti-alcohol campaigns?

The legislation on so-called 'work-collectives' was introduced in Andropov's time. This is a contract system, which makes the income of brigade members dependent upon final output. This is called experimental, but there is no evidence that it has made any difference. Yet Gorbachev has come up with nothing else. He seems to believe that the brigade system will start to show its real advantages once technological changes have occurred in industry.

But now the brigade system has produced problems. Those with higher output have increased their wages, but this has produced economic differentiation, especially in agriculture. Under the system in agriculture, you get a bonus for fulfilling the plan; output above the plan target can be sold directly on the market by the brigade. But this discriminates in favour of those brigades producing, for example, vegetables, but against those working with fodder or grain, which can be sold only through the state procurement agencies and not on the open market. Furthermore, those working in fodder can be prevented from reaching plan targets by factors beyond their control, so the new system gives them no incentive at all. In such fields, the brigades are very unpopular.

Thus about 25 per cent of the peasants are in brigades, while the remaining 75 per cent —including the old, widows, women workers with families and so on—are working on less profitable crops and their earnings are in decline. So a lot of people in the villages are very unhappy about this. Similar problems are also occurring in industry.

The old system had individual quotas, involving payment by individual output. The brigade system has enabled some groups of manual workers greatly to increase their pay, beyond the income of white-collar specialists such as engineers. In response, Gorbachev has increased white-collar salaries, but only a little, because he has very little extra money to distribute.

This whole story is an example of the way in which a scheme designed by a few people at the centre can produce all sorts of unintended results, when it is applied in an extremely complex society. Gorbachev has already had lots of examples of how many issues he regards as very important are simply outside his control: he made great efforts to increase oil output, but had to face the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult technically to extract extra oil; the same problem occurred over coal output, and over his efforts to maintain the size of the labour force in agriculture.

So this idea that they can control everything, and be the source of all the new ideas, simply doesn't work. Liberalization in the economy is necessary, with the leadership simply setting general objectives and priorities and playing an inspirational role, while letting others decide how they will achieve the general objectives.

When Gorbachev speaks of self-management in industry, what is he referring to?

This is not self-management in the Yugoslav sense, or in any real sense. He talks about self-management in the context of the need to restrict ministerial interference. The problem of the Soviet economy, which many Soviet economists recognize, is that different branches of the economy belong to different ministries and the Soviet ministries are not coordinated. For example, a ministry owns the industrial plant which produces tractors. But tractor production depends on many other plants, since it requires other products such as, for example, tyres or electrical parts and these are made by plants owned by other ministries: the ministry of chemical and rubber production, and the ministry of electrical parts. At present the

coordination and connection, the contracts for supply of the equipment, are made through a ministerial network and not directly between the plants themselves. This is now under discussion. The idea is to give the director of a plant the power to make direct contact with another plant which is not subject to approval by both ministries; even to make contracts with foreign firms for things his plant needs.

This would be an important change.

Yes, but this is only under discussion. Because such a change would demand a change in the price system. In the present system of pricing of goods consumed by industry, each item has a price and many suppliers are not flexible to change or reduce the price. When bargaining takes place through the ministerial network, then ministers could discuss and say: 'We can sell to other plants for a higher price.' But if a certain commodity were made available to all, without the intervention of the ministerial bureaucracy, then you would have a kind of internal market and, as things stand now, everything would be more expensive rather than cheaper.

Gorbachev's idea is to reduce production costs by new technology; but all calculations indicate that, if you have market relations within industry, then prices will go up. So instead of being able to buy two tractors, the collective farm will be able to buy only one; and it would want to buy a better quality tractor, or it would not buy anything because it would be too expensive. This will be reflected in higher prices for agricultural products. So the whole system of pricing—which has up to now been quite artificial, not linked to labour costs or other factors, with many things being subsidized—will have to change. The idea is certainly good, but the realization of the idea will be extremely difficult. For there will be inflation.

As for the anti-corruption campaign, you probably do not know this so well, but it is not going with the same momentum as during Andropov's time. Because Andropov was very concerned with increasing his personal power as general secretary and, as the previous head of the KGB, was better placed to lead the anti-corruption campaign. Now the campaign is proceeding at a slower pace. It is not directed against higher officials; not against Obkom secretaries, except a few who had to be removed.[3] It has a lower profile.

The campaign against drinking is a different thing again, because drinking had become a calamity. Yet the whole thing had been encouraged by the government! Even the food programme which Gorbachev himself designed and recommended when in charge of agriculture allowed for an increase of wine production, because income from this and from vodka is great. But the economists finally managed to convince the government that the losses in terms of health, discipline and accidents were higher than the profits derived from alcohol sales. So finally they decided that it was necessary to reduce alcohol production.

There had probably been seven or eight C.C. decisions against drinking in the past but alcohol production had never been reduced. On the contrary, it had always gone up. Stalin tried to stop it, but not efficiently. Malenkov tried to stop drinking by closing all bars, so people started to drink in the streets. Then Khrushchev decided that if you increased the production of good quality wine, people would stop drinking vodka. In actual fact, however, the production of vodka continued to increase, though not as quickly as the production of wine. In addition, since the Soviet Union does not have high-quality grapes except perhaps in the Crimea and Georgia, they started to produce wine from fruit, from apples, and it was very low quality wine. Cheap bars started to proliferate, and in the streets there were automatic machines: you put in a coin and got a glass of this low quality wine. It is not a private industry, you realize; it is not profit, which the government takes in taxes like here: it is all government business.

The whole approach which Gorbachev adopted at the beginning was very unpopular, because he put all the blame on the people. True, people drink too much; but they do so because they have been encouraged to drink too much by all kinds of measures. Indeed, during Andropov's time the price of vodka was reduced by 30%: people started to call this bottle with a reduced price 'andropovka'. So drinking alcohol has always been connected with government policy. It was thus wrong to put the blame on the public, introduce heavy fines, and so on. It was enough to reduce production, replace drinking facilities by cafés, and so on. The last statistics published indicate a 30% reduction in production—which means less cash for the government, but this is cash well spent.

V The Congress

Turning finally to the 27th Party Congress, how would you sum it up?

The Soviet press has presented the Congress as a turning-point in Soviet history, but this is wrong. The Congress was not at all reminiscent of, say, the 20th or the 22nd Party Congresses; indeed, it was much more like the 23rd Congress of 1966, after Khrushchev's replacement. There was no discussion of history or of culture; no discussion of social problems, the problems facing young people, environmental or health problems; no new positive ideological line to give energy to the party membership; no new discussion on foreign affairs or the international Communist movement. In other words, it wasn't a properly political Congress of a Communist Party. Its almost exclusive focus was an extremely narrow one on problems of economic management. Even here, comparison with the 23rd Congress reminds us that the Kosygin reforms discussed then were more radical than the economic agenda of this Congress.

Furthermore, the Congress was managed in typical Brezhnev style. Just like after the fall of Khrushchev, the pre-Congress discussion was used to air grievances and criticisms of the previous regime but the Congress itself was used to bring such openness to an end. Criticism of Brezhnev was muted: his name was never mentioned and instead the formula of 'unfavourable tendencies' in the late 1970s was endlessly repeated, allowing the inference that problems arose from Brezhnev's period of illness. Criticism was directed at unidentified 'bureaucracy' and much of it was presented as partly self-criticism. Yeltsin's speech was the one bright spot, yet even it served largely to suggest that everybody was responsible for the negative tendencies.

The style of discussion was thoroughly traditional. Gorbachev gave the political report; subsequent speakers simply praised the report and illustrated this or that point within it by means of examples. Even the top Politburo members gave surprisingly dull speeches: Ligachev concentrated on a dogmatic attack on writers; Chebrikov made a very tough attack on deviants, warning about spies and attacking video machines; even Gromyko, who has a reputation for being a good speaker, was dull and in part scarcely comprehensible. For a Congress devoted to economic management, moreover, it was remarkable that not a single economist was called upon to speak.

All this contrasted quite strongly with the tone of much press discussion before the Congress, when some very sharp criticisms were made on such issues as the environment, party ethics and even party privileges. This latter issue was especially notable. On 13 December, Pravda printed a survey of readers' letters strongly attacking the privileges enjoyed by party officials—the first time such an article has appeared in the press and undoubtedly a reflection of many thousands of letters attacking this increasingly widespread and ostentatious phenomenon. There is evidently great bitterness and anger over this issue. Yet, at the Congress, Ligachev specifically criticized the press for carrying such criticisms.

In conclusion, the Congress has undoubtedly been a disappointment for most intellectuals and for reformers. None of this means that the new leadership has set its face against any sort of reform. They know they must try to adapt the system to make it work better. They know there is an urgent need to produce results. But they are still not fully clear on how far they should go. Above all, they are very concerned to maintain tight control over any changes they do make.

Interviewers: Michele Lee and Oliver MacDonald.

3. Obkom = committee of an *oblast* or province.

Europe's international politics is in a state of flux. It is uncertain how it will develop in the future. Over the last seven years the structures of detente established in the 1970s have to a large extent crumbled, as a result of Washington's conviction that detente had turned out to serve Soviet interests. The Soviet leadership remains for the moment committed to restoration of the old balance in Europe. But if Gorbachev's continuing efforts to produce agreements on Europe through summitry with Reagan fail to produce results, dissident voices within the Soviet leadership may push Moscow in new directions.

OLIVER MACDONALD

NEW DIRECTIONS IN SOVIET 'WESTPOLITIK'?

For the Soviet leadership, the detente of the 1970s had rested on two pillars: a military balance acceptable to the Soviet Union, underwritten by Washington; and a political attitude towards the Eastern bloc acceptable to the Soviet leadership, underwritten by both Bonn and Washington. Both pillars have almost entirely collapsed. On the military side, the main events have been the arrival of Cruise and Pershing missiles, with the capacity to hit the USSR from Western Europe; NATO's switch to new *Blitzkrieg* attack doctrines for war-fighting in Europe—the 1984 adoption of Follow-on-Forces-Attack and the *Bundeswehr*'s earlier adherence to 'Air-land battle' concepts; the modernization of British and French nuclear systems, which will enormously expand NATO's European nuclear strength by the 1990's; and finally—and most menacingly—the American push for Western Europe to adopt new, high-tech 'conventional' weapons, first promoted as 'ET' weapons and now incorporated into the Star-Wars package: lasers and the like, for pre-emptive strikes at missile sites, command centres, etc. deep inside Warsaw-Pact territory.

This disruption of the military equilibrium would matter less to Moscow were it not combined with a dramatic change of Washington's stance towards Eastern Europe: the Reagan administration now ceaselessly declares its aim to 'free' Eastern Europe, in other words to end the division of Europe by forcing the Soviets out of it. The military changes seem to correspond precisely to the requirements of such political aims: in the event of a revolt in Eastern Europe, the planned new military dispositions could be used to counter a Soviet attempt at military intervention. In addition, the Reagan administration's current tactic of combining tough trade sanctions in high-tech goods, via COCOM, with offers of economic benefits to Comecon countries that pursue policies favoured by Washington—a tactic exemplified by Schultz's behaviour on his trip through Eastern Europe last year—is calculated to increase Moscow fears.

Washington's aims would not, of course, pose much of a threat if they were being effectively resisted by the main West European states, of which by far the most important is the FRG. There was some evidence of such resistance while the Schmidt government remained in office, but it has been crumbling at governmental level since the fall of the Social Democrats in October 1982. Genscher, the Foreign Minister (and the person responsible for the change of government), seems set on resisting implementation of the Star Wars programme and on maintaining a close dialogue with the USSR; but the main trend in the CDU-CSU part of the government is moving in a very different direction. This trend still favours the maximum expansion of trade with Comecon, but it has replaced the old concept of *Ostpolitik* with the rhetoric of *Deutschlandpolitik*. Many of its leading figures have hinted at, or openly avowed, their commitment to Germany's 1937 frontiers; and while they stress that German unity will be achieved only through re-uniting the whole of Europe, the Europe they refer to, of course, excludes the USSR. In short, in place of the 1970s concept of expanding the FRG's contacts in Eastern Europe by way of Moscow, a powerful current in the CDU-CSU wants a return to *Ostpolitik* of the Adenauer sort—so to speak 'from below'. And while in the 1970s Washington was hostile to this political orientation, it is today vigorously encouraging it. Kohl himself tries to act as a broker between government factions.

This political turn in Bonn has been accompanied by a drive to strengthen West Germany's military industries, now freed at last from the post-war restrictions on conventional arms production—thanks to a decision reached last autumn by the Western European Union. As for Washington, its plans for Europe evidently involve a much enhanced role for the FRG, as the key US partner within the Atlantic alliance. West Germany is already the dominant economic and military power in Western Europe (excluding nuclear capacity). The Star War package would effectively give its armed forces a finger on the strategic trigger in the European sphere, downgrading the importance of French and British nuclear weapons. A German-American condominium could manage the key political problems of Western Europe.

Gorbachev's Response

Against this background, one might have expected a sharp turn in Soviet *Westpolitik*: a return to Khrushchev's 1959–61 policy of pressure and threat towards West Berlin, if not to Stalin's 'Cominformism' in the years after 1947. Yet this has not happened. Dire threats were indeed directed at the Kohl government from the spring of 1983 onwards, when it had become clear that Bonn was not pressing for a change in the US arms-control posture, to lure Moscow back to negotiations. The Soviet leadership did indeed put a stop to Honecker's proposed visit to the FRG in the autumn of 1984. There is also clear unease in the Soviet leadership over the economic dependence on the West of Hungary and the GDR (an unease encouraged by the Czechoslovak leadership). Nevertheless, since its deployment of SS-20s in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, the Soviet leadership has failed to take any further action against Bonn or to clamp down on its East European allies' dealings with the West.

There are a number of likely explanations for this low-key approach. It is the case, of course, that the Americans to some extent did Moscow's work for it, so far as Eastern Europe is concerned. The US drive for economic sanctions after Afghanistan and Poland and the imposition of COCOM controls have pushed all the East European governments towards a strengthening of their ties with the Soviet Union. Even Romania and Yugoslavia, both in serious economic difficulties, have sought and gained closer economic links with the USSR—in the absence of adequate help from the West. Another important factor was the readiness of both Bonn and Paris to take a different line from Washington on Poland, re-opening diplomatic and economic relations and thus easing Soviet concern there.

But other, even more important considerations have influenced the Soviet leadership, the following three in particular. First, the full deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles, and the full implementation of the Star Wars programme, alike remain in the future.

Secondly, the Soviet leadership believes that although the Reaganite political strategy remains immensely strong in Washington, there are still powerful establishment forces in Western Europe opposed to a full-scale confrontation between the blocs in Europe. Thirdly, a Soviet turn to confrontation in Europe would be very costly, in terms of both domestic objectives and relations with Eastern Europe.

The critical question for the success of Gorbachev's *Westpolitik* is whether he is right in believing that his own accommodating policy towards the West European establishments will pay off, through adequate resistance on their part to Reagan's aggressive new orientation. There are signs of doubt on just this issue among the makers of Soviet foreign policy. Before turning to these, however, it will be useful to go through what appear to be the main themes of Gorbachev's policy towards Western Europe.

Gorbachev's basic political message to West European governments is a very reassuring one (it led Thatcher, on the occasion of his visit to London, to declare him to be 'a man I can do business with'). He assures them that he will respect their internal security interests in relation to threats from the left; and that he is not seeking to damage their external se-curity concerns either. After long discussions with Gorbachev in Moscow last February, Italian Communist leaders reported his recog-nition that 'unilateral' changes should not take place in the balance between the two blocs in Europe; that, also, 'one must acknowledge the existence of historical, economic, political and cultural links with the United States, with regard to which the USSR does not seek to drive in wedges or bring about divisions'. In short, Gorbachev is a stout defender of the basic political *status quo* in both halves of Europe.

Against this background, the Soviet leadership has put forward proposals in the arms negotiations designed rather to appeal to moderate opinion in Washington than to split Western Europe off from the USA: separation of the European nuclear issue from the rest of the agenda; the zero option on Cruise, Pershing and SS-20's, provided that France and Britain do not increase the size of their nuclear arsenals (even if they modernize them). These proposals would allow Washington to claim victory on the issue of SS-20s, while ensuring that it would not at some point in the future be faced by a hostile effort on the part of France and other West European states to present a joint nuclear 'Third Force' in world politics.

In the economic sphere, however, Gorbachev's appeal is directed much more towards Western Europe. It involves accepting the Common Market for the first time as a fully-fledged negotiating partner, and greatly expanding trade links. Up to 1985 these have been growing rapidly, especially with the FRG, despite the cold political climate. Naturally, the Soviets want an end to as many as possible of the COCOM controls on high-tech goods. But they link the prospect of increased economic exchange above all with the readiness of the West European powers to refrain from overall endorsement of the testing and implementation of Star Wars.

Doubts in the Soviet Leadership

There are undoubtedly elements within the Soviet leadership sceptical of the line being pursued by the new General Secretary. One sign of this may be the survival at the 27th Party Congress of the Ukrainian party leader Scherbytsky, a man closely associated with the old Brezhnev équipe: active recently in the foreign policy field, he has expressed strong doubts about the chance of winning concessions of any sort through the summit process. There has also been a spate of articles in the Soviet foreign policy journal *International Affairs*, denouncing in unqualified terms the drift of policy in Bonn. At the same time, in the same journal there have been significant differences of emphasis and tone concerning the trend of events in Western Europe. On the one hand, in an article in the June 1985 issue entitled 'West European Integration as Part of the Aggressive Plans of Washington', an earlier stress on the contradictory character of integrationist trends has been replaced by an outright rejection of them, as being entirely governed by Washington's requirements. By contrast, in the December 1985 issue Alexander Bovin, a foreign affairs commentator close to Gorbachev, presented a picture of seething West European official disquiet over Washington's European policy; insofar as there was criticism it was directed only at West Europe's lack of will to transform this unease into action. One might surmise, therefore, that the first major test of Gorbachev's authority within the Soviet leadership will come not over economic performance following his reforms, but over his *Westpolitik*.

The Reaganite European Policy

The dominant elements within the Reagan administration are, of course, bitterly hostile to Gorbachev's positions, not simply or even mainly because of ideological hostility to the USSR or because of strong commitment to the 'liberation' of Eastern Europe. Their European preoccupations hinge, above all, on the perceived need to re-establish US hegemony over the *capitalist* world, not least Western Europe and especially West Germany. In the medium term, this involves restructuring the world economy and the international division of labour, in particular in the high-tech industries, in America's favour. This, in turn, requires preventing any of the main capitalist rivals of the United States from having an escape route to strategic raw materials and energy sources. State-protected trade zones independent of the dollar area—such as the Common Market could become (and for which access to markets in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union could be vital)—are thus anathema to Washington. Behind the drive against the USSR in Europe over the last seven years has lain the drive to achieve these economic objectives in *Western* Europe—using US military and political hegemony in the region for the purpose.

The Reaganites know that they cannot simply impose their will by fiat over Western Europe. They must combine their assertion of power with a positive political and economic formula, that can appeal to key groups in the region. In geographical terms, their biggest problem here has been West Germany; politically it has been the whole cluster of interests—welfare state, nationalized industries, strong trade unions, corporatist state bureaucracies and Socialist and Social-Democratic parties—so powerful in the boom period and so authoritative for much of the population of North-Western Europe. Washington's answer has had a number of prongs: 1. Friedmanite economic liberalism—for free markets and against tariffs and trade-union 'rigidities', as well as against the bureaucratic 'bullies' of welfarism and nationalized industry; 2. right-wing nationalism in foreign policy, with a stress on military strength and anti-Sovietism; 3. a 'new Europeanism', embracing the whole of Europe—bar the USSR; 4. specifically for West Germany, the prospect of leading all these trends as the dominant West European power in alliance with the USA.

At the governmental level, Washington's drive has been remarkably successful: using French worries about Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the early 1980s against the Schmidt government, then sabotaging Mitterrand's efforts to establish his own Franco-German axis as a French-led force in 1984–5; playing Thatcher throughout with the greatest of ease; forcing through commitments to Star Wars research in Britain, West Germany and even France in recent months. Beneath the top state level, however, strains produced by Washington's policy remain very great: there has been the Westland blowout in Britain; there is the continuing failure of the CDU-CSU Right to achieve dominance either over the political establishment or in the electoral arena; and there is a certain fraying at the edges of NATO among the smaller states in the alliance. Above all, there is the danger of revolt against the whole idea of a Western Europe dominated by West Germany. All these tensions could explode if Reagan were to kick summitry with Gorbachev to one side. Hence the Reagan administration's tactics over the last month since Geneva: a series of small provocations and insults, designed to force the new Soviet leader to prove his toughness by breaking off the summit process in a rage. The hawks in Washington are hoping to taunt the Kremlin to the point where internal pressure will force Gorbachev to do this, whatever his initial intentions. This

will then swing Bonn and other Western European capitals behind Reagan. A new dynamic will begin to shape international and indeed domestic policies throughout the continent. In the European East, Zhdanovite clamps will be re-imposed. In the European West, Reaganism will sink deeper roots; a right-wing Bonn-Washington axis will come into place; a new offensive against the Left and the labour movement will unfold. Meanwhile, Gorbachev's hopes of using economic and political links with Western Europe to help modernize the Soviet economy will be dashed. The stakes are high for both sides—and for the populations of Europe as well.

The Left Response

To strengthen his coalition at home as well as to win allies abroad, the new Soviet leader is trying to reach out to political forces in the Centre and Centre-Left in the West, especially to the social-democratic parties. This is far from being an attempt to turn these parties into ideological fellow-travellers of Moscow. It is rather an appeal that plays upon the desire to preserve welfare state capitalism in Western Europe, together with effective trade-union and civil liberties. There has been some positive response to this appeal, as the recent meeting of European Socialist parties in Berlin indicated and as the presence of Socialist representatives at the 27th CPSU congress confirmed.

The Ukrainian republic occupies the south-western corner of the USSR, bordering Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. It faces onto the Black and Azov Seas, the Soviet Union's maritime route to the Middle East and Southern Europe. With a territory of 600,000 square kilometres (larger than France) and a population of over 50 million, it produces one quarter of the Soviet Union's food and one fifth of its industrial goods. It is the largest producer of steel in Europe. With a membership exceeding three million, the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) is the biggest communist party west of Russia and a crucial component in the political life of the Soviet Union. The 27th CPU Congress, which opened in Kiev on 6 February 1986, and the All-Union CPSU Congress three weeks later revealed that a considerable group of leading Ukrainian communists, including the CPU's first secretary Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, have reservations about the economic strategy propounded by Gorbachev.

TARAS LEHKYJ

UKRAINIAN PARTY CONGRESS

The most striking aspect of the CPU Congress was the difference between Shcherbytsky's report and subsequent contributions from delegates in assessing the main problems facing the republic's economy. Shcherbytsky delivered a speech reminiscent of the Brezhnev era. He first noted increases during the 11th Five-Year Plan in national income (21% in Ukraine), productivity of labour (22%), industrial output (19%) and agricultural production (no figure given). But he followed on with a list of 'howevers': inefficient use of fuel and raw materials; failure of certain sectors of industry and agriculture to meet their plan targets; little attention given to labour discipline; and, significantly, a prolonged decline in the rate at which industries are replacing their fixed capital.

He concluded by outlining the economic strategy of the Gorbachev team, namely: accelerating growth by introducing new technology; reorganizing the planning process to overcome imbalances and bottlenecks between sectors of production; improving labour discipline; retiring enterprise managers who cannot cope with the demands of the time; and purging corrupt state and party officials. But in this restatement of the All-Union leadership's strategy for the 12th Five-Year Plan, Shcherbytsky gave no indication of the key bottlenecks and imbalances in the Ukrainian republic, the immediate measures needed to overcome them or the republic's relationship to the All-Union plan, as it is now being fashioned.

However, the delegates to the Congress who then rose to speak—mainly first secretaries of provincial party committees, but including several republican ministers—mounted a sustained attack on the CPU Central Committee and its Council of Ministers, venturing on occasion to blame All-Union authorities as well for their current economic woes. The common thread running through their interventions was an emphasis on the severe shortage of investment funds that is afflicting a range of industries and which is the main cause, in their view, for the poor performance of the republic's economy.

Problems in Coal

The coal-mining industry, for example, is encountering growing difficulties in meeting plan targets. The first secretary of Voroshilovhrad province, B. T. Honcharenko, went so far as to suggest that coal production will actually fall in the 12th Five-Year Plan. The workforce in mining is adequate: it averages under 40 years in age and is well educated. Approximately one half of all coal mined in Ukraine is by collectives of the Young Communist League. But mine managers admit to a high labour turnover because of dangerous working conditions and frequent spells of idle time caused by faulty equipment, which forces miners to work a six- or even seven-day week.

Ye. P. Zavialov, a brigade leader in the Ilych mine, Voroshilovhrad province, argued that 'increasing the output of coal and raising labour productivity is held back in a number of places by the lack of adequate equipment, especially to work winding and declivitous veins of coal. Mining in many shafts is still being done with jackhammers, as it was fifty years ago.' Zavialov blamed the republican coal industry minister, saying that his departments were too slow to respond to miners' proposals and demands.

M. S. Surhai, the coal industry minister, responded by passing the blame further up the hierarchy. 'We have to admit squarely', he said, 'that the council of ministers, managers of production associations and individual mines still haven't reorganized their work in the light of the decisions taken by the April and October 1985 Plenums of the CPSU Central Committee. We are held back, however, by the lack of investment capital . . . We came up with proposals to build six new mines, but got no support from the All-Union Ministry of the Coal Industry or from the State Planning Commission. The funds we have been assigned by the 12th Five-Year Plan do not allow us even to reconstruct and technically re-equip our existing fixed capital. The financing of capital construction has not been thought through. There are other tasks that do not require investment funds, but depend on what we [the

republic's ministers and party leaders] decide.'

M. S. Samilyk, first secretary of the Kirovohrad party organization, explained that neither industry nor agriculture in his province had achieved their plan targets because 'the situation with capital construction has become acutely bad. The provincial party committee and its executive many times made concrete proposals to republican and All-Union organs concerning the development of the Oleksandrivsk lignite basin, the technical re-equipment of our briquette factories and thermal power stations. But we do not understand why the All-Union Ministry of the Coal Industry remains indifferent to the fate of the 20,000 workers in its production association here. The State Planning Commission takes an essentially similar stand, and unfortunately not in this matter alone. Its officials know, too, that the All-Union Ministry of Heavy Industry Plant Construction systematically, in violation of government orders, without the approval of local and even republican bodies, without estimating actual possibilities and needs, develops its own programme of work for provincial construction teams and doesn't even provide them with the necessary resources to get the job done. It is clear to the divisions of heavy industry, construction and the local economy here that the CPU Central Committee should get involved more in these problems.'

Other Sectors Criticized

The first secretaries of Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk provinces, V.H. Boiko and V.P. Myronov, pursued a similar line of attack. Dwelling on the state of ferrous metallurgy in Ukraine, which was described in the 6 April 1986 issue of *Pravda* as 'especially alarming', Myronov argued that 'a fundamental renovation of production is necessary, requiring the assignation of considerable investment capital, a rational utilization of funds to repair existing fixed capital which will cost us one and a half times the amount of funds we are now getting to develop the industry . . . It is necessary also to remove decisively the obstacles being thrown up by the Construction Bank and the State Bank . . . [whose officials] hide formalistically behind outdated instructions and willy-nilly create unjustified difficulties for us.'

Contributions from the floor of the CPU Congress continued unabated in this vein, as other ministries and party officials from Kiev, Rivno, Ternopil, Vynnytsia, Odessa, Kherson and Crimea provinces all noted the inadequacy of investment funds being assigned by All-Union authorities for light industry, food processing, construction of the Kiev metro, the republic's radio and television stations, or the campaign against acid rain and other chemical pollution. They blamed the CPU Central Committee and its Council of Ministers, but—recognizing their limited powers—carried the blame further, to the All-Union authorities which give economic directives to the republic.

M.S. Pokhul'chenko from Chervonoarmiisk in Rivno province summed up their charges in the following way: 'One has the impression that the Council of Ministers in the republic either can't see these problems or it can't solve them. In that case, it must pose them more firmly before the USSR Council of Ministers.'

The consensus at the Congress echoed similar protests raised in Ukraine during the 1920s and 1950s, when economists were citing large proportions of surplus product being exported from the republic. Their public revelations renewed strong sentiments of national autonomy among the republic's leaders. In 1957, for example, the CPU Central Committee passed a resolution demanding that the Ukrainian Gosplan (State Planning Commission) and not the All-Union one have responsibility for both 'current and long-term plans as well as control over the entire economic life of the republic. This was the strongest statement of republican economic autonomism ever made by a CPU Central Committee.'[1]

The final resolution of the 27th CPU Congress did not acknowledge delegates' concern over inadequate investment for the republic. Nor did Shcherbytsky mention it in his closing remarks. But the fact that three weeks later he appeared at the 27th CPSU Congress in Moscow as their re-elected First Secretary and chose the investment issue as the only critical theme of his speech, makes one wonder whether his silence in Kiev beforehand was but a tactical manoeuvre.

In his speech Shcherbytsky reported on the debate at the CPU Congress, where delegates 'spoke in sharp terms about how the tardy approach of All-Union organs to solving imminent tasks had a negative effect on the results of the Five-Year Plan. In the first place', he went on, 'the debate was about planning errors, including capital investments that are sorely needed to renovate the production apparatus. Proposals concerning reconstruction and modernization of ferrous metallurgy, for example, were put several times before the State Planning Commission and the USSR Council of Ministers, but these bodies did not examine them carefully or deal with them in time. That was the situation then and to a great extent still is in coal and light industries and in the production of construction materials. Now it is being corrected but valuable time has been lost.'

Gorbachev and Shcherbytsky visiting a steel mill in Dnipropetrovsk

Shcherbytsky could not ignore the promise Gorbachev had made in his speech to the CPSU Congress the day before to increase capital investment throughout the Soviet economy by 80% over the 11th Five-Year Plan. But, except for this tacit acknowledgement, Shcherbytsky stood firm. Ukrainian communists had not got a fair deal from Moscow in the past, and they weren't sure they would in the future. Promises had to be matched with actions.

Not one other republican leader at the CPSU Congress raised such a protest. By contrast, a number of speakers from the Russian republic complained about the inability of construction workers' organizations to handle the capital investments their industries are being assigned. V.K. Miesats, first secretary of the Moscow provincial party committee, noted also that 'despite orders prohibiting construction of new plants in Moscow province . . . the USSR Council of Ministers allowed during the 10th and 11th Five-Year Plans the expansion of existing industrial enterprises at a cost of several billion roubles, taken from the fund for new construction.'

Does the debate at the CPU Congress presage a new era of republican autonomism in Ukraine? It may, given the emergence of such autonomism in previous transition periods. But it is doubtful whether Shcherbytsky will preside over a more nationally assertive CPU as his predecessor Petro Shelest did in the 1960s. The first secretary has been targeted for retirement (according to a London *Guardian* report of 25 February 1986). Shcherbytsky was associated with Leonid Brezhnev and did not back Gorbachev in the succession struggle. He, at 67 years of age, and Dinmukhamed Kunayev the 74-year-old Kazakhstan first secretary are the last survivors of the Brezhnev coalition still in the CPSU Politburo. If he leaves the Politburo, he will not be leading the CPU for long. Perhaps his uncertain future with the new Gorbachev team has forced him to edge open a gate of national assertiveness in Ukraine, in order to strengthen his hand vis-à-vis Moscow. Shcherbytsky's immediate future depends on how adroitly he handles the investment crisis.

Footnote

1. Bohdan Krawchenko, *Social Change and National Consciousness in 20th Century Ukraine*, London 1985, p. 2.

One of the reasons why Western and Eastern Europe have an equal interest in the results of the Geneva talks is that it is in Europe that nuclear weapons are most densely deployed—a Europe which is also 'overflowing' with conventional armaments and troops. Hence, Europe would be the first victim if another world war were to break out.*

DUŠAN PIREC

EUROPE'S NATIONS PUT TO TEST

The United States is loath to relinquish the Star Wars programme, believing that it may serve to check Soviet economic—and therefore political—expansion; that abandonment of the project would directly assist Soviet reform and a revival of the Soviet economy. The Strategic Exports Control Act, passed by Congress on 27 June 1985, is also intended to check Soviet economic development. However, Star Wars is not only going to wear down the Soviet Union and its allies—it will inevitably also leave its mark on the United States and, most especially, on the latter's NATO allies. Indeed, we may reasonably assume that the Star Wars programme and Strategic Exports Control Act are geared to America's allies in Western Europe as much as to the Soviet Union. Is the USA afraid its European allies might waver, because of Europe's uncertain economic and technological future?

Eastern Europe is much interested in Western technology, which could help it to upgrade production. At the same time Western European countries are striving to join the technological race, balance their budgets, step up employment and cut the rate of inflation. In the Third World, debts and foreign-trade deficits are placing a tight rein on their economic development ambitions—the economic policy of the industrialized countries is increasingly curtailing the already narrow margins of their development; in turn, this state of affairs is backfiring on developed countries, for it limits the possibility of an export-led growth.

During the 1980s, neither the USA nor Japan (albeit for different reasons) have served as a 'development locomotive' for Western Europe: both were engrossed with the Pacific region.[1] At the same time, it would appear that the European West is not (or will not be) able to participate as an independent factor in international political and economic relations, thanks partly to a certain 'technological sclerosis' and partly to absence of the necessary political cohesion. The more backward countries of the EEC, in particular, have at present little prospect of resolving their urgent economic problems (low growth rate, unemployment, technological progress) unless they become more active in the sphere of economic relations.

The European stalemate is illustrated by the existing degree of unemployment in Western Europe, and by Eastern Europe's unwilling resort to a policy of 'self-reliance'. Unlike in the USA, unemployment in Western Europe is very hard to cope with. Over 11% of the able-bodied population is unemployed, and out of this number 23% are between 16 and 24 years of age.[2] Low growth rates limit young people's chances of employment, while penetration of the new technology is creating new surplus labour. In the countries of Eastern Europe, the redundant manpower has emerged as a problem of overemployment, so that effects differ from those in Western Europe.[3]

The USA is unable to extricate Western European countries from recession. The Soviet Union is equally unable to meet the growing aspirations of their own people and those of Eastern Europe. It is, therefore, obvious that something must be changed in the countries of both Eastern and Western Europe—both in the countries themselves and in their mutual relations. For, if the change is not made, the USA will continue to draw on surplus labour from Western Europe (and other countries as well) in its attempt to make up for the gigantic budgetary deficit caused by its strategic ambitions. One may equally assume that the Soviet Union will be forced to rally its own European allies—labouring as it does under the burden of a vast military expenditure—in order to preserve strategic parity: to parry the United States on European soil, and to counter the position which the latter has managed to secure in Western Europe thanks to the logic of capital.

It is obvious that Europe, both East and West, has no alternative save a mutual opening up, in both the economic and the political sense. The Soviet Union's interest in Western Europe can only grow, in proportion to the pressure in Eastern Europe to pursue a more rational, i.e. intensive, development: while Western Europe's interest in finding ways of solving the problem of unemployment is also bound to increase. The Soviet Union has brought a certain amount of psychological pressure to bear on Western Europe—and seems to have been partly successful—by proposing a radical cut in armaments. The USA has resorted to a 'dual purpose policy', the essence of which lies in forestalling any possible resistance to its economic and military interests. (Similar pressure has been exerted on developing countries, of course, though here much more from a position of strength.) The invitation to other developed countries to share in the SDI research is nothing but an attempt to bind the allies, in terms of technology and production, as firmly as possible to America's strategic objectives—though the frontal technological leadership in carrying out the Star Wars programme will still be held by the USA.

Role of the Dollar

This question of East-West relations can be approached through the twin prisms of the dollar as world currency and the policy of embargo. With respect to the former, it is generally known that the overvalued dollar, the result of huge budget deficits linked to enormous military expenditure, has eroded the competitiveness of American products on the world market, despite the rise in US productivity.[4] It has raised problems within the NATO alliance, for it has led to a capital flow out of Western Europe. The United States has only two possibilities left.

The first would be to reduce the value of the dollar. This would mean that the United States must reconcile itself to a comparatively slower growth rate, to a relative (if not absolute) reduction of military spending, and to offering the sturdy Japanese economy more possibility for making headway on the capital markets and in gaining some strategic advantages in the Pacific area.

The other option would be to maintain the current attitude to the dollar, in which case US interest rates will go up again and with them the dollar's rate of exchange. The higher rate of exchange will once again make the American capital market attractive to foreign capital investments; the growth rate will increase, but so too will the foreign trade deficit. This will certainly have repercussions on the world economy in general,

as well as on the strategic options of some of the more prestigious capitalist countries. Sooner or later the United States will clash with the Western European countries' vital interests, which will strategically weaken its flank. In both cases, therefore (in different directions, yet with identical consequences), there would be a definite shift in the world balance of forces.[5]

The Embargo Strategy

Regarding the embargo codified in the Strategic Exports Control Act, it has been the case for some time now that NATO's European members have been complaining about American restrictions on technology exports, especially since experience has hardly served to support such a policy. During the post-war period, the US embargo on the socialist countries was part of a strategy of 'containment' intended to undermine their economic and military viability.[6] Throughout the fifties, however, it had no major effect on either their economic or their military development. When the pressure eased with the advent of détente, East-West trade progressed fairly rapidly and the trends in trade made for interdependence.

But a subsequent deterioration of political relations subjected trade once again to various restrictions—for example, the embargo on US grain deliveries to the Soviet Union after the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan. It was assumed that agriculture was the most vulnerable economic domain, yet effects of this new embargo again did not come up to expectations. Again, even before martial law was introduced in Poland (December 1981) the United States had restricted exports of oil and gas technology in the hope that the Soviet Union would be unable to exploit its oil resources effectively.

The American administration's pressure on European enterprises using US licences, on the European affiliates of American multinational companies and on West European governments triggered off a crisis within NATO. Yet these measures had no effect either on the construction of the Siberian pipeline or on the rhythm of Soviet gas production. On the other hand, 'their political and economic effects within NATO were formidable'.[7] Nevertheless, all these negative results did not prevent the Williamsburg Summit of June 1983 from inaugurating a species of economic NATO: the thesis was adopted that it was better to control high-tech exports and cut on preferential credits to the Comecon countries than to try to reduce West European dependence on Eastern Europe's raw material and resources.

The rivalry between the superpowers is of a global character, but Europe remains to all intents and purposes the focal point. As Gorbachev has recently put it, 'the political climate in Europe largely depends on how economic ties between the Eastern and Western halves develop'. Within Europe, it is necessary to examine anew whether this confrontation actually springs from conflicting interests, or whether it is ideological in nature. The experience of history, as well as long-term interests, in my opinion indicate the need for a 'modus vivendi' on lasting economic foundations.

Footnotes

* This is a slightly shortened version of an article published in *Review of International Affairs*, No. 855, Belgrade 1985.

1. The importance of the Pacific region is illustrated by the following: a) the gross national product of the coastal Pacific countries accounts for about 60% of the world's gross product; b) since 1980, trade across the Pacific exceeds trade between the Atlantic states; c) in 1970, the ten EEC countries had a GNP equal to that of the USA and twice as high as the ten leading economies in the Pacific basin. Now the GNP of the European Ten amounts to 93% of US GNP, while the GNP of the Pacific countries amounts to two-thirds of the EEC GNP; d) the greater part of world scientific output is currently located on the shores of the Pacific (California and Japan); e) half of the US trade deficit in 1985 (about 150 billion dollars) is accounted for by the Pacific countries (largely in Asia); f) the economic growth rate of the Pacific countries and of the USA have been higher than those of Western Europe for several years.
2. In the sixties, there were about two million unemployed in the EEC countries. In 1978 this figure rose to four million, in 1983 to six million and in 1985 to 15 million (not counting Spain and Portugal). The EEC countries would have to find employment for one million workers every year just to maintain the present level of unemployment.
3. In 1978, American industry with a labour force of 22 million produced one fifth more than the Soviet Union employing 36 million people. If the Soviet Union is to catch up with the advanced capitalist countries, it must achieve an annual productivity growth of nearly 6% as from 1986 onwards, i.e. it must double its present productivity growth rate.
4. Mike Davis, 'Reagonomics' Magical Mystery Tour', *New Left Review*, no. 149.
5. It could be said that the strategic margins of the United States are relatively narrow, but this may not necessarily be the case with its tactical margins; whereas, in the case of the Soviet Union, the opposite is the case: strategic margins are fairly wide, and tactical ones narrow.
6. First the US Trade Department and later the Paris-based COCOM (Commission for Export control Coordination) drew up a list of commodities subject to restrictions, guided entirely by the concept of strategic benefit.
7. Yves Perez, 'La discussion sur les embargoes américaines contre l'USSR et leurs conséquences sur les relations transatlantiques', *Cahiers d'études stratégiques*, 9 June 1985, CIPRES, Paris, p. 134.

JOŠKO PALAVRŠIĆ

EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND THE USA

In the last year or so, the Socialists of Western Europe have been striking certain anti-American chords not previously heard so clearly from their orchestra.* But if one seeks a common denominator in this indubitable divergence from American policy, one finds that as a rule it excludes Europe and the Soviet Union. Apart from French pipes for Siberian gas and Greek theatricals concerning US bases, the reaction against Washington—sometimes without the habitual velvet gloves—invests a broad front from Salvador via the Middle East to aid for the Third World, but has little to say about missile politics, the Soviet Union, NATO or Reaganite anti-communism. Why is this?

American policy has, in fact, never shunned the Socialist and Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe. Even if, after the Second World War, not all these parties immediately adjusted their policies to suit US global strategy (the Italian Socialist Party, for example; in February 1950, Nenni told the Italian parliament: 'I have long remained almost the only person to point out the danger of joining NATO'), it was not necessary to wait for long to see that the Americans had in fact had a good instinct in relying as much on Socialist and Social-democratic parties as on classical conservative parties in this part of Europe.

Washington's basic message in its post-war approach to Western Europe was that 'the spires of the Kremlin have thrown long shadows . . . upon many countries which consequently at least tolerate our country becoming a great power, even if they are not necessarily happy about it' (George Kennan). When the pragmatic Truman announced his doctrine, much of the world came to believe that the US approach to international relations was a question of reacting to 'communist pressure'—so that without such a pressure there would be no economic aid. American strategy, therefore, was treated as a blank cheque for economic and military aid to those parts of the world which showed signs of 'communist success'.

The Social-Democratic and Socialist parties identified these shadows of the Kremlin's spires as something interfering particularly with their own prospects. So it was not difficult for them—though it may have been rather short-sighted—to accept the American argument that the Communists planned to swallow them up, as they had

done with similar political groups in Eastern Europe (especially in Czechoslovakia). If one adds in the old suspicions between Socialists and Communists that go back to the First World War and, in particular, the period immediately after it (above all in Italy and Germany, where their conflicting approaches to the question of fascism and Nazism helped Mussolini and Hitler to come to power, with all the bloody consequences which ensued), it is not difficult to understand how the initial flirtation with the Yankees of sundry Saragats soon evolved into a solid partnership between the most powerful capitalist state and a sizable slice of the European working class.

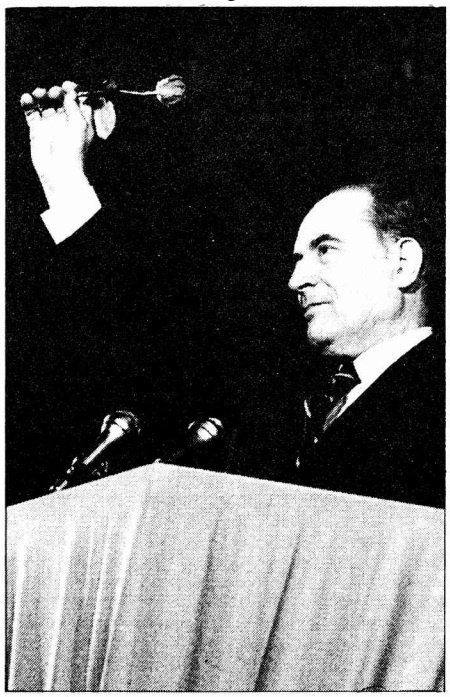
For the Americans, it was very important that their appearance in Western Europe should not be seen as deriving from self-interest: God forbid, they were there to help! To break the belief—then widespread in Europe—that along with Marshall Aid and NATO they were installing their own political-military-economic domination over the Western part of the old continent, was one of the primary tasks of the State Department. The official documents produced by the Marshall Plan HQ in 1947 declare: 'If the people of Western Europe refuse American aid, this act will in itself be a vote for Russian domination. A political battle will take place on this issue. The Communists will fight against the programme in every way. The only force which can silence them will be public opinion, which will understand that this [i.e. the Marshall Plan] is the only way to save Western Europe from catastrophe.'

Though it was only logical that the Communists of West Europe should have been against the post-war US engagement in Europe (even if some of their arguments came by diplomatic mail from Moscow); and though it was also in the nature of things that the bourgeois parties and the social groups behind them should have felt suspicious of the shadow of the Kremlin spires and should, therefore, have embraced another foreign power, the United States, and seen it as a solid raft in the event of social shipwreck; it was not at all in harmony with their own social and political vocation for the Socialists and Social Democrats to have folded up their flags quite so fast and stored them away in the attic. To do so, they had to convince themselves and those who trusted them that the old Tory Churchill, in his speech at Fulton which brought the 'iron curtain' into existence, was indeed an inspired Messiah, a modern-day deliverer.

The Americans cleverly judged that precisely these left social forces, who had the sans-culottes behind them but little faith in the possibility of their social liberation, represented a potentially fertile terrain. Their reward came quickly. For not only did the Socialists and Social Democrats feel far distant from the Communists; they felt even further away from any will or desire to move in the direction of a radical social transformation—however far in the future it might be. If the Americans could win them over, they would have won the war. And that is what happened. Their cover was the appearance that they were not just working for themselves, for 'the American way of life'; the left forces, you see, were propping up democracy while the Americans were trying to repair it. The idyll was painted, the message discreet: social peace was possible—and desirable.

Socialists and Social-Democrats were becoming heads of state, prime ministers, Chancellors, defence ministers, ministers of the interior and foreign affairs, heads of financial corporations—and this was all fine with the Americans. Eden or Bevin, Schuman or Blum, Adenauer or Schmidt—Washington did not care: every individual was persona grata—provided he or she was not a Communist. The State Department never protested when a Socialist or a Social Democrat entered a Nato government; but warnings, threats and reprimands were loud if a Communist came anywhere near to being eventually considered as a possible choice for a cabinet post—however unimportant—in any Western government. Togliatti and Thorez were quickly ejected from governments which they had entered borne on the wings of Allied victory.

Here, it is not so important that the Communists were suspect—said to be effectively agents of Moscow—but that Socialists and Social Democrats were not. After the fascist regime in Portugal was overthrown in 1975, the pro-Communist officers who constituted the new revolutionary power were left to hang around the ante-rooms of the Atlantic Pact—without a pass—there was no room for them in the places of debate and decision-making. In Italy in the late 70s, Aldo Moro, a Christian Democrat leader well known as a defender of the existing order, was disowned by the Americans for expressing the thought in public that it was only fair that Berlinguer and his colleagues should be considered for government. At the same time, lists were being published showing how much money various US organizations, not all of them very respectable, were handing out to the Socialist and Social-Democratic leaders and trade unionists.



François Mitterrand celebrates his electoral victory in 1981

In this alliance of disparate partners there has, of course, been the occasional controversial incident. There was, for example, the one involving Guy Mollet, head of both the French government and the French Section of the Second International, who together with the British Tory Anthony Eden made war in a place and time which the United States did not like: in the Middle East, in Egypt. But it all ended in the way desired by the transatlantic partner. And it is interesting to note that this incident inflected not at all the line of transatlantic cooperation. It was only the conservative De Gaulle who brought a degree of turbulence to the long-standing Atlantic idyll: and among his bitterest opponents were precisely the Socialists, who sought to ditch the old general under the banner of Atlanticism.

Times have changed—or they have altered the European protagonists of our story, as if there were the beginning of an understanding that the post-war choice was not exactly a happy one. There have been, it must be said, no official statements to this effect: in politics, it is always difficult to admit one's mistakes. Not long ago, moreover, we heard the then West German Chancellor Schmidt defending to the hilt Carter's belligerent Olympic policy, at a time when many more militant Atlanticists had already discreetly abandoned him. This Bonn episode still echoes too loudly in our ears for us to be sure whether Mitterrand's repudiation of American policy in some parts of the Third World, or Papandreou's stubborn demand for higher rents from the US bases in Greece, or Craxi's calculated (if unsuccessful) ploy of picking a quarrel with Reagan about the Egyptian airliner, or Brandt's insistence on special treatment for the Third World—whether this is all a question only of a marginal struggle against a too-tight embrace, or whether on the contary it is perhaps the start of something new.

After the war, Socialists and Social-Democrats took the American constitution as their Bible. Even if they could find some excuse for doing so in that part of the Communist movement which liked 'the shadows of the Kremlin spires', there was no justification for the fact that they spent more time furthering the American strategy in Europe than in doing what they were founded to do. But historical routine has established a frame of mind, and this changes only slowly. This is why they are saving their souls in Nicaragua. They are frightened to do the same in Europe.

* This article appeared in February 1986 in the Zagreb weekly *Danas*.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

EAST GERMAN PEACE ACTIVISTS TAKE UP HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

Our readers will be familiar with the crisis caused in the Western peace movements by their failure to avert the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles, the downturn in their public activities and the intense political debates over their future course and orientation. The East German peace movement is currently going through a similar period of reappraisal and debate of perspectives. Some of its constituent groups, such as the Jena Peace Community which became internationally known through its daring public initiatives, have been virtually extinguished by state repression (taking the form of the expulsion of its active members to West Germany), others have withdrawn deeper into the protective structures of the Protestant Church or switched their activities to other issues (ecology, Third World). East Berlin, with its relatively well-developed alternative organizational and communication structures centred around Pastor Rainer Eppelmann and its close links with West Berlin and the East German activists exiled there, has been at the forefront of the political debates. In the search for possible new avenues of political activity some have looked towards the West German Green Party as a model, some towards other East European movements such as the Czech Charter 77. We hope to report on these developments and publish further documents in forthcoming issues of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*. The following two documents reflect the growing concern over human rights issues and the experiences of East German peace activists with the suppression of democratic liberties by the state, as well as the influence of Charter 77. The first is a letter signed by the three spokespeople of a new Human Rights initiative and by Pastor Rainer Eppelmann, which was sent to GDR party and state leader Erich Honecker on 24 January this year—with no reply as yet. The second document is a circular letter intended to provide information about, and spread awareness of, the new initiative among East German peace groups. The translation from the German is by Peter Thompson.
Günter Minnerup.

The United Nations has declared 1986 to be Peace Year. After the encouraging start, with CPSU general-secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's noteworthy proposal, all states and citizens are challenged to respond to Gorbachev's call with their own contribution. In conscious acknowledgement of our co-responsibility for the maintenance of peace and for the social development of our country, we wish to present our own thoughts on some of our domestic political problems. We wish to deal in our appeal with the issue of internal peace, since we feel that only a state which is at internal peace with itself can play a convincing role in the search for global peace. For us, internal peace means the guarantee and practical realization of the basic rights contained within the general declaration of human rights.

As we see it, the following measures are necessary as the first steps in this process, and we believe that they can be achieved within this year. All contributions should be discussed and examined by society in an open discussion.

1. We perceive restrictions on the freedom to travel as a sign of mistrust on the part of the government towards the people. Journeys to the West are still possible only in exceptional circumstances, as for pensioners and invalids. Opportunities to travel to other socialist countries have also been severely restricted, or fully denied without any justification in individual cases, as was seen clearly and frequently in 1985. In order to rebuild trust we propose, amongst other things, the following:

a) Unrestricted freedom of travel for all citizens. As a result of the economic and political situation in the GDR, this will be achievable only in stages.

b) Legal guarantee of the existing travel regulations. This implies a duty to explain the reasons for a rejection, and the legal means to challenge such a decision in a court of law.

c) The continual extension of the right to travel, which is not to be seen as a privilege nor to be applied arbitarily, but requires detailed legal definition.

d) Restrictions of a), b) and c) are to be possible only in the case of criminal proceedings, and are to be notified to the individual in a written justification.

2. Paragraphs 99 (treasonable passing of information), 106 (anti-state agitation), 107 (anti-constitutional associations) and 218 (combining to pursue illegal aims), etc. can all be interpreted in such a way as to restrict basic human rights. The practice of juridical persecution of political activity is generally questionable. For this reason the following measures are indispensable:

a) An amnesty for all those prosecuted under paragraphs 99, 106, 107 and 218, etc., as well as the dropping of all current investigations under the provisions of these paragraphs.

b) Exclusion from this amnesty only for those prosecuted, or convicted, for the propagation of fascism, militarism, racism or war.

c) Parliament is to consider the further application of these paragraphs. In order for this to be possible, a public debate through a general referendum is needed.

3. As a confidence-building measure, and as a step towards furthering the possibilities for democratic participation, we consider the nomination of independent candidates for municipal and parliamentary elections as essential.

a) All must be given the right to nominate a consenting citizen for election.

b) Each citizen must be able, as a personal decision, to stand for election.

4. The freedoms of assembly, public meeting and association are severely restricted by the possibility and practice of rejecting applications for permission to assemble, hold public meetings and set up an organization. For this reason, we are of the opinion

that it is necessary to revise radically existing laws and regulations as follows:

a) Assemblies, public meetings and associations should not be dependent on state approval, but rather the appropriate state departments should merely be informed of such activities.

b) Assemblies, public meetings and the establishment of associations can be forbidden only if they can be proved to have fascist, militarist, racist or terrorist aims.

5. The legalization of conscientious objection, through the creation of an alternative civilian service independent of all military structures, would be a clear sign of the will for internal as well as international peace. At the same time, the following alterations are also necessary:

a) An amnesty for all those already convicted or those being prosecuted under paragraph 256 (refusal to do military and reserve service).

b) The abolition of military education at polytechnic high schools.

c) Participation in pre-military training should not be a condition for an apprenticeship contract or for acceptance into university or other higher education.

6. We consider the readiness of the government of the GDR to engage in a dialogue with people of differing opinions to be a basic prerequisite of internal peace. We therefore propose that the government of the GDR should respond, where possible publicly, in a business-like manner to all comments, criticisms, ideas and proposals, even if they come from those who are of a different opinion. This appeal is intended to express our ideas as to how, in this year of peace, a process of constructive change could be initiated.

* * *

Berlin, 24.1.1986

Dear Friends,

The recognition of a need to link peace with human rights is growing within the peace movement. Many of the experiences of the past few years have shown how the aims of peace work are dependent on the realization of basic democratic rights and freedoms. The two great blocs continue to arm themselves without any consideration for the victims. Negotiations take place behind closed doors; peace activists are increasingly persecuted and sometimes criminalized. The 'Western democracies' are no better in these matters than our own rulers.

That is our experience—but little have we learned from it. Apart from reaction to, and spontaneous sympathy for, individual cases, up till now no conscious work has been done in the area of human rights. The initiative for a human rights seminar originated last summer with people involved in various different Berlin peace groups. It was intended that we would, at an initial meeting, discuss together our common experiences, examine possibilities for working on the question of human rights and forge links with each other. The proposed topics and priorities were intended as a stimulant to discussion and should have prepared the ground for constructive work later. In our comment on the provisional cancellation of the human rights seminar of 16.11.1985 and in our letter to the Synod of the Berlin-Brandenburg Church, we document the arguments about the banning of that seminar.

However, the situation did not mean that our responsibility for the creation of a human rights seminar and further work in this field was at an end. In the preparatory groups, other work priorities were discussed and decided upon. Working groups were formed in which members of church and autonomous groups work together. We now wish to give you further information about the situation.

Working groups and priorities:

- ☐ Peace and Human Rights
- ☐ The right to work as a basic human right
- ☐ Human rights and society (historical development)
- ☐ Human rights and justice
- ☐ The church and human rights
- ☐ Human rights, education, youth
- ☐ Perspective of human rights work in the GDR
- ☐ Environment, health and human rights
- ☐ Human rights and the military

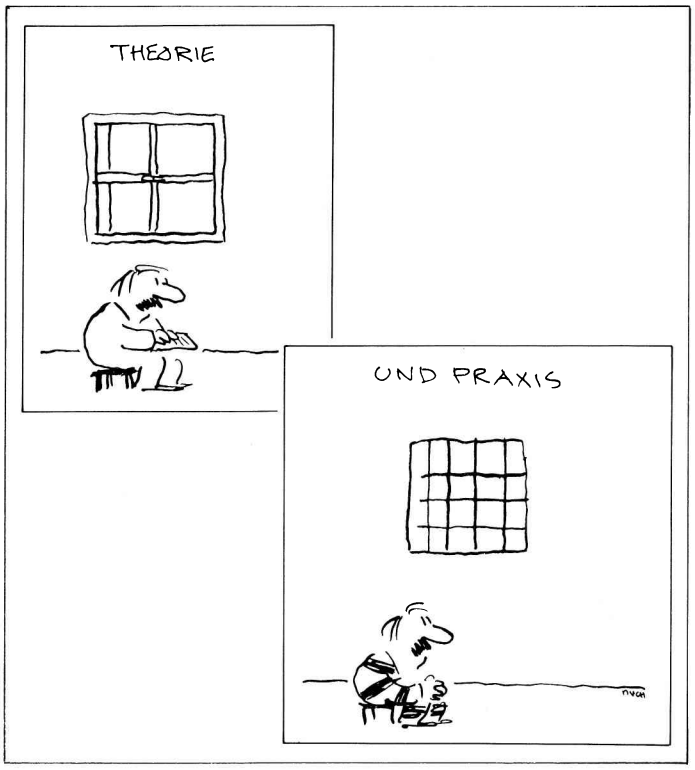
With all these topics, we wish to concentrate on the development in our own country—which, however, does not exclude the possibility of discussion of human rights, or cooperation and solidarity action with other human rights groups, in other countries.

We are looking to extend our work over the whole of the GDR. At present, representatives of all the working groups mentioned above are active in a preparatory group which meets in Berlin and regularly plans and coordinates the discussion and organizational work. The preparatory group 'Peace and Human Rights' will be represented to the outside world by three spokespeople, who will rotate annually. The present spokespeople are:

1. Wolfgang Templin, 1100 Berlin, Neue Schönhölzerstr. 12
2. Ralf Hirsch, 1035 Berlin, Frankfurterallee 55
3. Peter Grimm, 1162 Berlin, Bölschstr. 11

We are looking forward to your criticisms, ideas, material contributions and cooperation.

Wolfgang Templin Ralf Hirsch Peter Grimm
Spokespeople for the Initiative 'Peace and Human Rights'



Three times in the post-war history of Poland (in 1945, 1956 and 1981) programmes of workers' self-management have been advanced. On each occasion this has been associated with deep-seated political, social and economic crisis. It has represented a method of broadening the political base of the regime and a programmatic alternative to the Stalinist political system and the centralized command economy, together with a de-centralizing, market-oriented economic reform.

D. C. HOLLAND

SELF-MANAGEMENT IN POLAND: GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION VIEWS

In 1981 a programme of workers' self-management was espoused both by the Government and by sections of the Solidarity movement and eventually by its leadership. Solidarity defended the concept of the 'social enterprise', which was to give sweeping management powers to enterprise workers' councils, including the right to appoint managerial personnel, so destroying the *nomenklatura* system of Party nomination to all significant official positions. This concept was developed at the Solidarity congress into a broader one embracing the whole of society: the 'Self-Managing Republic'.

After protracted negotiations, in the midst of a fierce propaganda struggle and efforts by all parties to determine the course of events by pressing ahead with the establishment of workers' councils by their own supporters and according to their own conceptions, without a clear legal framework in which they could operate, definitive legislation was eventually passed in September 1981. Although fiercely criticized by Solidarity supporters, who called for a national referendum on whether the legislation should be amended in a radical direction, the laws on self-management and state enterprise passed in 1981 represented a qualitative innovation of major proportions. The context in which this legislation was to be implemented, however, was transformed by the imposition of martial law at the end of 1981.

Self-management bodies like Solidarity were 'suspended' by the martial law regulations from 13 December 1981. All their powers were transferred to enterprise directors and to the military commissars. The legal immunities (from dismissal, for example) enjoyed by members of workers' councils were removed. Self-management activists generally escaped internment, but many of them lost their jobs or encountered other difficulties. Unlike Solidarity, however, the self-management project has remained not only a programmatic idea of the opposition, but also a central strut in the authorities' programme of 'normalization' and reform.

In the siege economy conditions of 1982, with chronic scarcity and consequent rationing of raw materials by the central authorities, circumstances were not auspicious for the extension of enterprise level decision-making or the creation of space for the functioning of workers' self-management bodies.[1] Prospects were made even bleaker by the intense political polarization prevailing in the country in the months following the imposition of martial law. With the revival of production and a marked improvement in supplies to the consumer market in 1983–5, both objective economic and subjective political conditions improved for the workers' councils. As the period of large demonstrations and calls for a general strike receded, independent public opinion was forced to weigh up carefully the pros and cons of participation in such institutions.

The heady utopian demands of 1981 for the reconstruction of the whole of society on democratic and self-managing lines have now given way to much more restricted possibilities. As former members of the Gdansk area Self-Management Co-ordinating Committee wrote in 1984: 'Most of all, the present situation has deprived the self-managements of their natural social base—popular activity, responsiveness by people to public affairs and faith on their part in the possibility of positive change.'

Nevertheless these self-management activists from the Solidarity period went on to write: 'Even today, when it is easy to level charges of collaboration, self-management activity has real value. Many people have adopted it as their field of public work and this is one reason why self-management is one of the least compromised of institutions. The question of workers' self-management is then still in play in Poland.'[2]

1. The Government's Programme

Senior official spokesmen, from Jaruzelski downwards, have repeatedly affirmed the Government's commitment to the economic reform and to the role of self-management within it, asserting that there is to be 'no turning back'.[3] What has been called 'the long history of the short reform' in Poland, however, gives substantial reasons for doubting the most categorically phrased commitment. At least, as one senior official economist, Jozef Pajestka, has remarked, the current reform has lasted longer than any earlier attempt without being 'thrown on the rubbish heap'.[4] Pajestka also pointed, however, to the characteristic 'softness' of the Polish legal order, i.e. the readiness with which statutory provisions succumb to the exigencies of everyday decision-making and are thrust to one side and rendered inoperative. In tracing the course of official policy-making towards the workers' councils, therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to the pragmatic policy-making that shapes reality than to formal declarations.

The legislation defining the power of workers' councils that emerged from the cliff-hanging negotiations with Solidarity in September 1981 actually placed these bodies in a rather strong position—at least in purely formal, legal terms. For example, Article 1, clause 2 states: 'The workers' self-

management of state enterprises has the right to take decisions in important enterprise affairs, to express opinions, take initiatives, put forward recommendations and exercise control over the enterprise's activities.' Article 37, clause 2 states: 'The Director of an enterprise carries out the resolutions of the workers' council relative to the enterprise's activities.' Article 38: 'The Director of an enterprise is responsible before the workers for the proper conduct of the enterprise.' Article 40: 'The workers' council has the right to block the execution of the decision of the Director if it is contrary to a council decision . . . taken without consideration of the council's opinion . . . or without a resolution by the council.'[5]

Further concessions, which the authorities might well have preferred to avoid, include the right of some enterprise councils to elect their Directors after a competitive selection procedure, and the absence of any element of co-option onto the councils of 'representatives of social and political organizations'—who effectively would be Party nominees. Elections to the workers' councils lack any of the elaborate screening and control mechanisms built into the procedures for local government and parliamentary elections. At least on paper, the self-management law of 25/9/82 compares very favourably with the latest Western equivalent, making very slow progress: the proposed EEC directive on employee consultation.[6]

The strong legal position of the workers' councils has meant that, although the authorities have constantly reiterated their determination to press ahead with an economic reform based on the 'three S's' (enterprise autonomy, self-financing and self-management) on the basis of the 1981 legislation, they have felt it necessary to move with great caution in re-activating the workers' councils and have formally suspended various provisions of the 1981 legislation. Recent indications that formal amendments are being prepared have evoked widespread protest from the workers' councils.[7]

The same decrce that suspended the operation of the workers' councils included provision for Ministers to nominate enterprises in which self-management activity might resume, if the situation in an enterprise justified such a decision.[8] In March 1982, a very few self-managements were reactivated. They were, however, denied the right to elect their Directors, conduct referenda or call general meetings of the workforce. The government also retained the right to suspend entire self-managements, if they acted contrary to the law or to 'fundamental social interests' —a very wide catchphrase.

By the beginning of July, 147 requests from enterprise Directors had been forwarded to Ministries to re-activate self-managements: 16 had been approved. By 20 August, 560 requests had been forwarded and 175 approved.[9] In the last quarter of the year the pace quickened. By the end of the year 3,620 decisions to revive self-managements had been taken, from a possible total of 6,500 enterprises where self-managements could exist.[10] Research into the activities of these councils, however, showed that they engaged only in extremely limited activities,[11] and that some re-activated self-managements have dissolved until such time as conditions permit 'authentic' activity.[12]

In May 1982, the Politburo report to the Central Committee stressed 'the fundamental significance of renewing the activities of workers' self-management, even in the period of the state of war'.[13] At this stage, the authorities were engaged in carefully winnowing out those enterprises where the situation appeared to be sufficiently under control to permit the re-activation of the workers' councils. The Slupsk Voivodship Party Committee, for example, carried out research in all the enterprises in its area to identify those where 'the political, economic and organizational conditions exist for the appointment of self-managements and where guarantees exist that their activities will be in accord with social norms and principles.'[14]

'The question of workers' self-management is still in play in Poland.'

This step-by-step approach was continued in the regulations governing the period of 'suspended' martial law, issued in December 1982,[15] with a full re-activation of self-management bodies envisaged for April 1983. Even after the completion of this process, some important plants where the political situation was judged to be unsafe were not permitted to establish workers's councils. In mid-1985 these included the Ursus plant, WSK Okecie and ZK Polcolor in Warsaw and the Refinery in Gdansk. This was said to be owing to the 'immaturity of the social and political conditions' in these plants.[16] The Council of Ministers also produced a list of 1,371 enterprises of 'basic national importance' (some of which were categories of enterprise) in which the state retained power of appointment over the Director.

In the legislative compromise with Solidarity in 1981, the list had contained only 200 such enterprises, essentially in the armaments industry, the railways, the banks and other such sensitive areas. The sweeping character of the new restrictions may be judged from the fact that in 1983 500 of the biggest Polish producers, many of whom would have figured on the 'reserved list', produced two thirds of the national product in terms of sales value.[17] To this list were added enterprises formerly under military administration or carrying out 'special tasks'. In these, the right of workers' councils to sustain objections to management decisions was suspended.[18] These restrictions were extended until 1985 under the provisions enacted for the period of emergence from the crisis with the formal ending of martial law in July 1983.[19]

At the same time as maintaining this programme of gradual re-establishment of the workers' councils, the authorities made it abundantly clear in the official press that the model of self-management they were promoting had nothing in common with the proposals put forward under the aegis of Solidarity in 1981 and still maintained by the political Opposition. These were characterized as a farrago of utopianism, a 'people's capitalism' screening ambitions to overthrow socialism by means of 'group ownership'.[20] The government's programme, on the other hand, was represented as the resolute implementation of the line adopted at the IXth Congress in 1981, calculated to strengthen socialist democracy and correct the distortions that had given rise to the workers' protest in 1980.

The theoretical framework within which this programme was developed provided some grounds for fears that a corporatist, authoritarian model was being aimed for, in which a facade of democratic participation would be preserved and a broader layer of people co-opted into collaboration with the authorities, so stabilizing the political base of the regime.[21]

At a regional and national level, representation of the workers' councils has been minimized and carefully regulated. Nothing has been heard of the proposal, floated in one of the government reform proposals in 1981 and enthusiastically greeted by independent opinion, for a second chamber of the Sejm in which self-management representatives would be seated. Care over the self-managements is entrusted by the 1981 legislation to the Sejm, and a standing Sejm Commission maintains activity in this area. Regional support for the self-managements is supposedly provided by regional caucuses of Sejm deputies and commissions established alongside the Voivodship People's Councils.[22] This is very much regulation from above and is a far cry from the 25 regional co-ordinating committees and the national federation spontaneously established by workers' councils in 1981. It was made very clear in the first weeks of martial law that continued activity by these bodies would not be tolerated.[23] Phrases such as 'civil mutiny' and 'illegal organizations' were bandied about in the Sejm Commission session which discussed these organizations.

Article 35 of the 1981 law on self-management enshrines the right of self-management bodies to form co-operative links with one another. The government's approach, however, has been to draw the line firmly against such spontaneous initiatives from below, presumably in order to prevent such platforms being exploited

Gdansk strikers spread the word in 1980

by the political opposition. By way of example, a national rally of self-management activists was called in Warsaw in April 1984. It was addressed by Jaruzelski and attended by all the official luminaries responsible for the economic reform and for the workers' councils. Significantly, however, only about 300 workers' council representatives were invited—a very small number given the workers' councils supposedly in operation at this time.[24] Invitations were not sent to active councils in important enterprises the political composition of which was considered suspect, such as the Warsaw Steel Works. It was entirely in line with this approach that an attempt by the workers' council at the Elana textile factory in Torun to call a national meeting of workers' council activists, to prepare for the full re-activation of the self-managements in April 1984, was firmly squashed.[25] This sort of initiative was perceived as a challenge to the authority of the state.

The government's approach, then, has been to confine the 'democratic' aspect of the re-activation of the workers' councils firmly to enterprise level. A return to the conception of the 'mobilizing', 'transmission-belt' conception, which dominated the activity of the pre-1980 Conferences of Workers' Self-Management, cannot be excluded. 'The basic task of self-management is to promote efficiency,' remarked Gabrielski, the Director of the Central Committee Social-Professional Department, at a Party School in May 1985. He did not choose to emphasize the representative character of workers' self-management.[26]

Reporting the progress of the reform in August 1984, a government commission claimed that 78% of enterprises (6,123 of 7,813) had self-management bodies in operation, concentrating the activity of 128,700 people, mainly through the workers' councils themselves.[27] One well-informed adviser to a leading workers' council estimated that perhaps only 10% of these councils were able to engage in authentic independent activity.[28] The inference is that in many plants the council has been established 'from above', as a result of Party or management initiative, and has aroused scant interest in the work-force.

The same report acknowledged that difficulties persisted in defining the areas of responsibility of Council and Director respectively. Disputes had arisen over failures to acknowledge the powers of the councils in questions such as the merger and division of enterprises, or the appointment of Directors without the legally obligatory process of competitive selection. GUS, however, reported only 104 disputes, of which 34 had reached the courts. Such a small number of councils standing their ground, in the clashes of interest that inevitably are associated with such a massive process of reorganization and alteration in management structures as is ostensibly involved in the reform, may be taken as an indication of the councils' weakness.

Reports in the official press do, however, indicate that the government does not have it all its own way in the councils. Members of the Sejm Commission on self-management have complained about these bodies enacting unjustified wage increases (though enterprise managements may be as responsible as councils here) and of disputes lasting for months.[29]

One strategy that may be employed by the authorities, in order to restrict further independence of the councils, is to expand the role of the official trade-union organizations at the expense of the councils. Indications that the trade unions were pressing for control of enterprise social, welfare and housing funds under the control of the councils, have been confirmed by amendments to the trade-union law which have established the unions' right of veto in decisions in this important area of traditional patronage at factory-floor level.[30] Similarly, the 1984 wages law entrenched the right of the trade unions to conclude agreements with management regardless of how many workers they may represent in a plant.[31] The continuing weakness of the trade unions, and indications that a strong workers' council is likely to correlate with a weaker than average trade union, imply that such a transition from 'society's' organization (the workers' council) to the Party's (the trade unions) will not be effected without a tussle.[32]

Detailed information is not available at the time of writing on the extent to which pressure may have been applied to eliminate troublesome activists during elections of workers' councils to a new term of office in the course of 1985. In the 40% of elections that had taken place by May 1985, however, 60% of the composition of the councils concerned had changed.[33] This would indicate if not pressure, at least a susbtantial drop-out rate. Official pressure is not implausible and, since this would in reality constitute pressure upon the most active and independent workers' councils, it would reduce their chance of retaining more than a formal identity in the future and reduce also the chances of success for the economic reform of which the self-management project is a

pillar.

The Government's commitment to the economic reform package was reiterated at a special party conference on the issue held in Poznan at the end of May 1985. Nevertheless, in a survey held in 1985, only 24% of managers considered that enterprise autonomy existed. A slightly larger number, 31%, thought that 'self-management' had been established. Thus, despite the favourable climate initiated by the arrival of the Gorbachev leadership on the scene, there is every reason to think that the reform is making, at best, slow progress.[34]

The authorities' policy towards the workers' councils is caught in a contradiction. The slim base of support on which the government rests in Polish society stems, to a large extent, from precisely that narrow stratum of economic managers and ministry officials whose interests would be most directly affected by a genuinely de-centralizing reform. Whilst the centre needs co-operation in the enterprises if it is to revive the Polish economy, it is constrained by the need to keep a tight political rein on developments. The self-managements can play a role in strengthening the hands of enterprise managers seeking increased autonomy, but in doing so may be reduced to screens for managerial manoeuvres, rather than authentic expressions of economic democracy.

Moreover, the general lack of belief on the part of Polish managers in the durability of the reform[35] appears to be being borne out by developments towards the end of 1985, which indicate a major shift of policy towards the creation of huge sectoral industrial corporations. Showing a characteristic disregard for the detailed provisions of the law,[36] and over-riding the opposition of both workers' councils and academic experts,[37] the first of these giant combines, embracing the entire iron and steel sector, is in the process of creation. If this development is extended to the rest of Polish industry, there will remain scant room for enterprise autonomy or workers' self-management.

2. The Attitude of the Opposition

The political opposition in Poland is a substantial but highly fragmented body of opinion. Such regional and national structures of 'Underground Solidarity' as continue to exist are generally recognized to have a symbolic rather than functionally representative role. The opposition here is broadly defined as those who produce, distribute and read the opposition press, a phenomenon unprecedented in Eastern Europe and running into thousands of titles, ranging from barely legible broadsheets to authoritative quality political quarterlies. Many hundreds of factory bulletins continue to be produced on a regular basis—a large plant may support several rival titles—and the attitudes of the activists grouped around these publications to the workers' councils is therefore a matter of some significance.[38]

The re-activation of self-management structures has presented the opposition with both problems and opportunities. With very few exceptions,[39] it continues to adhere to the programmatic goal of Solidarity: a 'Self-Managing Republic'. The union strongly supported a de-centralizing economic reform in 1981 and campaigned in support of the draft bill on self-management produced by the 'Network of leading Solidarity Enterprises'.

An early and persistent response to the self-management initiatives of the regime was suspicion and outright rejection, coupled with calls for a boycott. This is most clearly expressed in the Underground Solidarity leadership's statement on the re-activation of self-management structures, issued in August 1982: 'Self-management under the state of war only create an illusory possibility of authentic collective activity. In reality what is happening here is a repeat of the KSR manoeuvre of 1958.'[40]

The statement goes on to argue that self-management structures assist the authorities in implementing unpopular measures, facilitate the shifting of responsibility for the disastrous economic situation, and widen the circle of people collaborating with the authorities—so bolstering the *nomenklatura* and engaging society in a wholly imaginary reform. It concludes: 'Workers' councils elected before December 1981 should undertake new activity only if this is endorsed by a referendum of the work-force.'

This sceptical attitude was reflected in a multitude of articles in the Underground press in mid-1982. It was widely observed that talk of enterprise autonomy in conditions of chronically scarce raw materials was nonsense. The Bialystok region group of 'The Network', in its publication *Nasz Samorzad* (Our Self-management) in August 1982, argued that hitherto under the reform the administrative centre had strengthened its position. The inevitable centralization of resource allocation decisions had produced an 'El Dorado of the Centre'. The new supposedly voluntary 'industrial associations' (*zrzeszenie*) were almost invariably the old 'industrial boards' (*zjednoczenie*) under a new name, with the old Director or his Deputy in charge. 'Only the names recall what we struggled for,' concluded the Network group.

Progressively, however, a debate developed on the possibility of participation in the self-management structures. In the months of March to June 1982, soundings were taken in the Krakow plants which indicated a willingness to enter the self-management organs under certain conditions. A document produced in this period, summarizing a discussion in which activists from five plants in the Krakow area took part, very cautiously acknowledges that, as the only legal means of workers' representation, the self-managements should not be dismissed out of hand.

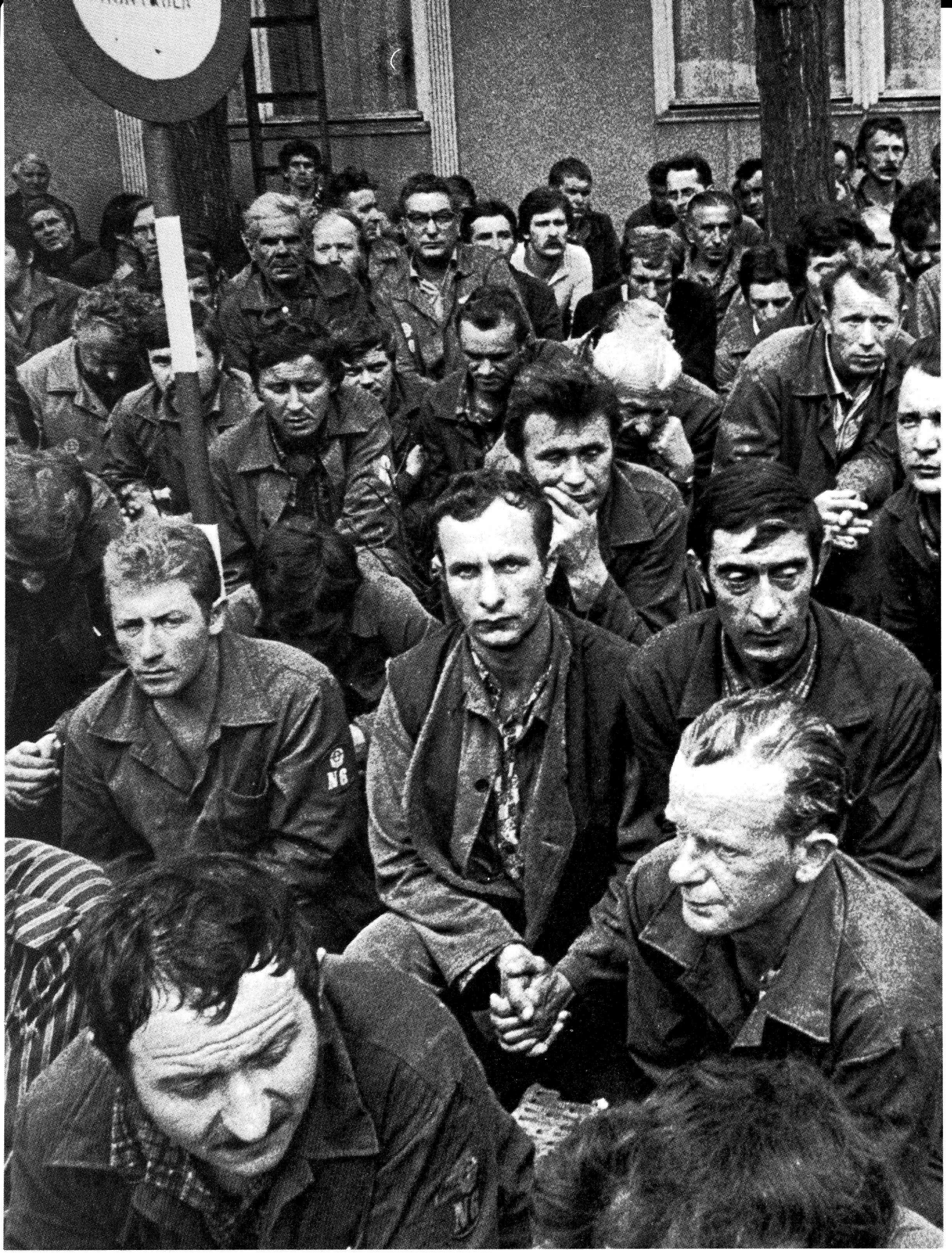
The tendency towards participation was boosted by a revision of the position of the underground leadership, which, in its programmatic statement *Dzis* (Today) published in January 1983, supported participation in self-management structures where: 'The possibility exists of making them serve the defence of workers' conditions and making them act as a defence against repression.'

This move elicited significant support. *Kronika Malopolska* argued in February 1983 that the self-management structures provided a front of struggle, especially for the majority of workers unable to take part in clandestine activity. A firm decision was needed, on a plant-wide basis, to exchange a policy of boycott for one of active participation. Boycott abandoned the field without a struggle. A range of positive measures were suggested. Activists could attempt to set up legal self-management papers and use plant public-address systems; publicly question decisions of management and government; refuse to participate in matters decided without consultation, or in propaganda offensives such as 'the battle against speculation'; organize referenda on important questions and torpedo attempts by the authorities to legitimize their own decisions. All possibilities for strengthening the links between the workers in an enterprise and between workers in different enterprises should be utilized.

To this end, the contacting of self-management bodies in other plants, the organization of visits, conferences and joint sessions were suggested. Self-management activists should set up their own problem-solving commissions and make direct approaches to sympathetic academic circles. In short, all possibilities for legal activity should be exploited. The forum of self-management structures should be used to raise demands for the release of imprisoned enterprise workers and the reinstatement of sacked work-mates.

This positive and combative approach was reflected elsewhere in the Underground press. *Robotnik* argued in February 1983 that self-managements should not be equated with the regime's tame trade unions or the 'Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth', since they were a democratic conception properly belonging to the rank and file. As economic reform was being reduced to a matter of pricing policy and enterprise autonomy remained a fiction, self-management could not have any real impact on economic performance. It might, however, be possible to use it as an instrument for defending workers' interests, in pressing for improvements in wages and bonus levels. Other papers produced in Warsaw and Lublin printed forceful arguments for 'going-into' the self-managements, exploiting any space for legal public activity and supporting the economic reform.[41]

The opposing position was also maintained. Underground bulletins, some of which displayed a noticeable flavour of the factory floor, continued during 1983 to voice



calls for boycott and to reflect an intense scepticism among worker activists about the approach advocated by some leading Underground circles. Thus, 'From the Life of the Pseudo Self-management', a broad-sheet from the Warski ship-yards, pours scorn upon the efforts of those canvassing for the reactivation of self-management. It describes ill-attended departmental meetings, with half those present drawn from managerial levels and the reluctance of all but a handful of workers to have anything to do with such activity.

The underground paper *Hutnik*, based in the Lenin steel-works in Krakow, reported in March 1983 the procedures of intimidation and manipulation attending the organization of the preliminary electoral commission to supervise the election of a new workers' council. Those drawn into the activity were characterized as management narks and layabouts. In June, a letter from the same plant mocked the elections to the council and the climate of apathy in which they took place.

Calls for a boycott were reiterated in the Warsaw paper *Sektor*, and *Tygodnik Wojenny* in May reported the manoeuvres of management in one plant to set up a tame self-management body via its collaborators, preparing the way with a nominated 'advisory council'. 'All those people with any authority amongst the work-force and the greater part of the workers themselves have refused to take part in the work of appointing a facade of self-management', asserted the well-known Warsaw paper.[42]

A personal interview with a self-management activist from the Solidarity period, conducted in Gdansk in 1984, bore out these assertions. He recalled being called to the Director's office and ordered to set about establishing a new self-management. He reported this to a meeting of the work-force, who angrily rejected the proposal.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that the strategy met with some success. Straws in the wind were twin statements by Walesa in December 1983 and April 1984. In December, Walesa asserted: 'Workers' self-management is a complex problem. There are enterprises where self-management functions well and fights for the rights of the workers, but there are also others where the workers allow themselves to be manipulated. There are also many enterprises where the workers, who have no hope, do not want self-management at all. However, self-management must have a place in any reformed political system. The workers themselves must decide whether conditions in their enterprise permit the creation of self-management bodies.'[43]

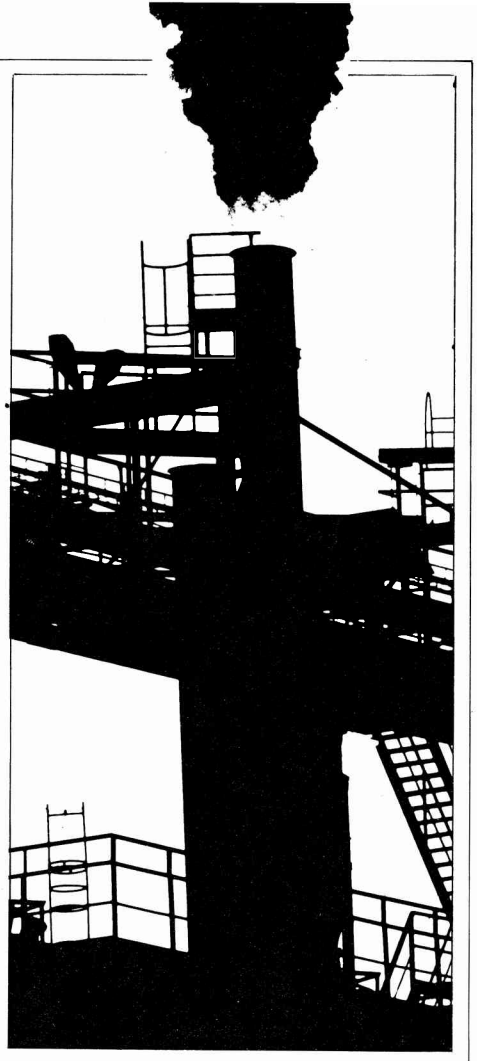
In April, Walesa spelled it out even more explicitly: 'One should have no illusions that present self-managements can play a role similar to the one we expected in 1981, or be the real administrators of the work-place and the driving force of the reform. But this area cannot be resigned. Self-management is not something that can be simply given to us: it is an institution liberated by the engagement of thousands of people. It may be regarded as one of the authentic social forms that emerged from before 13 December, and some elements of this authenticity have been preserved until now. We can certainly find self-managements which have been incapacitated or wound up like clockwork and I know that they belong to the world of fiction. Alongside them post-August groups of activists still continue, enjoying authority amongst the workers and defending their independence. Such self-managements should be supported. How else can workers learn how to run economic units and undertake initiatives, or establish features of a real perspective of full self-management, which will be necessary if better forms of administration appear in Poland?'[44]

Other indications were provided by the re-establishment of the self-management-oriented 'Network', reported in January 1984,[45] and the appearance of a major article in the leading Warsaw underground paper *Tygodnik Mazowsze* in May 1984, by an anonymous member of a Warsaw workers' council, in which he defends a strategy of militant trade unionism, employing the vehicle of the self-managements. The author quoted a successful strike against victimization supported by the workers' council in the enterprise. In another instance: 'In the elections to the workers' council, the whole former factory commission of Solidarity stood—and were elected. The management once more has to negotiate with X or Y representing the workers, but now as representatives not of Solidarity, but of the self-management.'[46]

Informal discussions with Warsaw self-management activists confirm that there are a number of such instances.[47] Attendance at a session of the workers' council of the Warsaw Steel Works confirmed an impression of a strongly trade-unionist flavour to proceedings.

An interview with Henryk Wujec, a member of the Warsaw leadership of Solidarity in 1981, which appeared at the beginning of 1985 in *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, not only gave authoritative further support to this 'trade-unionist' attitude to the councils, but also argued strongly that wherever possible their powers for economic administration should be exercised: 'People who get elected to self-management councils are experienced, know their factories, and can help to remove some obvious absurdities, without impinging on macro-economic decisions, on which we have no influence . . . Workers' councils provide an opportunity to test what scope there is for action within individual factories.'[48]

Wujec's argument is an important one, since it seems likely to reflect main-stream opinion in the Opposition. Without abandoning the clandestine Solidarity factory commissions, he argues for a highly positive intervention in the workers' councils.



3. Future Prospects

As the far-reaching debates over the character of ownership in the economy, social control and economic democracy, together with radical economic reform, have receded into the past, the scope both for economic reform and for workers' self-management within it are now much more limited. The project of 'Kadarization' in Poland, which would imply the possibility of de-centralizing economic reform and a relatively liberal regime, founded on a firmly managed political stability, also looks increasingly implausible. Political repression appears to be gradually increasing, rather than having been surgically applied so that it could then be dispensed with and the consequent room for manoeuvre utilized. What then are the possible scenarios for the future role of the Polish workers' councils?

Firstly there is a distinct possibility that they may have no future. A return to fully fledged centralized administrative-directive economic management would leave no role for the workers' councils. If this were to happen, their remaining independence would be crushed and their organizational structures neglected and allowed to fall into desuetude, as happened in the 1970's with the KSR Conferences for Workers' Self-Management. This would run entirely counter to the professed intentions of the central authorities. However, given the pronounced

distrust of middle levels of the economic and party apparatus towards the councils,[49] and the past record of co-option and bureaucratization of such bodies,[50] it is not an improbable scenario.

Secondly, there is the possibility that a limited but genuine degree of autonomy will be conceded to the enterprises, but that this will remain heavily qualified, preserving the pattern of lobbying and pressure-group politics. In this scenario, the self-managements will probably become instruments in bureaucratic bargaining between levels of the economic apparatus. Such a system would aim to recruit the most active workers to the structure of authority. Technicians, specialists and low-level foremen would be able to use the self-management structures to promote their own interests. The management would use the legitimating stamp of the workers' council to justify its decision to the workers. This scenario is more probable than the first one, but might also serve as a stage in transition to the first alternative.

Thirdly, there is a slim possibility that the dominance of economic liberals in the central administration may open the field for future growth of activity by the workers' councils. This would suppose that the economic reform, as advertised by the authorities, will actually be progressively implemented. This would make possible the return to social activity of many of the broader layer of skilled workers who were mobilized by the self-management movement in 1981. Their desire to rid their work-places of the waste and nonsense of bureaucratic production relations could be harnessed as a powerful engine to promote the reform. The backing of the new leadership in the Kremlin for economic reform moves and the strengthening of the Jaruzelski leadership in the Autumn of 1985 against some of its 'hard-line' critics would seem materially to strengthen the hands of the reformers. Recent policy moves, however, do not seem to be consonant with this picture.

Finally it should be observed that there is strong evidence to believe that the *idea* of economic democracy and workers' control is deeply rooted in the Polish working population. Although a minority of workers support the existing self-management organizations in the concrete circumstances of post-martial-law Poland, survey evidence from 1980, 1981 and 1983 shows that an overwhelming majority of Polish workers are responsive to the idea of what they conceive to be authentic workers' self-management (as opposed to what they actually get).[51] However utopian such conceptions may be, this would imply that in any future social and political crisis erupting in Poland, the notion of workers' self-management will once more come to the fore.

Footnotes

1. Although the gravity of the crisis was so extreme as to produce a perverse effect of enforcing local decision-making in conditions other than those envisaged by the reformers. I am grateful to Prof. D. M. Nuti for pointing this out to me.

2. Janusz Sopocki and Janek Janko, *Workers' Councils in Poland 1980–81—The Example of Gdansk*. Unpublished Manuscript, 1984.

3. *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 9/6/85, No. 23. 'Trzy S Po Trzech Latach'. At a two-day Party seminar on self-management, Jaruzelski reiterated the Party's commitment to it. Barcikowski affirmed that there was 'no going back'.

4. Jozef Pajestka, *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 15/9/85, No. 37. 'O Reformie Po Trzech Latach'.

5. *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1981, No. 24, Items 122 and 123.

6. *Bulletin of the European Communities/Supplement* 3/80. *Employee Information and Consultation Procedures*.

7. *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 16/6/85, No. 24. 'Nie Tak Samorzad Straszny'. Irena Dryll records protests from workers' councils from many areas of the country in defence of the existing legislation.

8. *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1981, No. 32. Item 185.

9. *Raport o wdrazaniu reformy gospodarczej w pierwszym polroczym 1982r.* Warsaw 1982, p. 32.

10. *Raport o wdrazaniu i skutkach reformy gospodarczej w 1982r.* Warsaw 1983, p. 41.

11. B. Blaszczyk, *Raport Przejsciowy z Badan. Zmiany Procesu Planowania w Przedsiebiorstwie w 1982r.* Instytut Organizacji Zarzadzania i Doskalenia Kadr., Warsaw 1982. Duplicated. p. 49.

12. J. Jermakowicz. *Samorzad Pracowniczy, Nadzieje i Niespelnienie*. Mlodziezowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1983, p. 41.

13. *Zycie Warszawy*, 5/6/82.

14. *Dziennik Ludowy*, 5/6/82. Michal Kierczynski. 'Krok w Kierunku zraktowania Samorzadow'.

15. J. Grzybczak, 'Druge "S"—Samorzadnosc', *Odrodzenie*, no. 32, 1985. Cited by Jerzy Osiatynski, Wlodzimierz Pankow, Michal Federowicz: *Samorzad W Gospodarce Polskiej 1981–85* (Duplicated), Warsaw 1985, in *Polskie Towarszystwo Socjologiczne*, Oddzial Warszawski, p. 42.

16. 'Ustawa z dnia 18 Grudnia 1982r. o szczegolnej regulacji prawnej w okresie zawieszenia stanu wojennego.' *Rzeczpospolita* No. 290, 1982.

17. M. Misiak, 'Piecsetka i otoczenie', *Zarzadzanie* No. 13, 1985, cited in Osiatynski et al., op cit. p. 73. The same authors cite a separate study using different criteria, which indicated that 781 enterprises in 1983 produced 57.7% of Polish industrial production. T. Oldakowski, 'Jeden Wielki Znak Zapytania', *Zycie Gospodarcze*, No. 23, 1983.

18. *Dziennik Ustaw*, No. 9, 1983, Item 47.

19. 'Ustawa z dnia 21 lipca 1983r. o szczegolnej regulacji prawnej w okresie przezwycizania kryzysu spoleczno-ekonomicznego', *Dziennik Ustaw*, no. 39, Item 176, 1983.

20. c.f. *Nowe Drogi*, I, 1983, 'Koncepcje Opozycji Antysocjalistycznej w Polsce' by Margorzata Dabrowa Szetler and Henryk Patadzewski; 'Gospodarka w Sieci' by Henryk Zawira, *Glos Robotniczy*, 15/3/82; 'Zwiazki Zawodowe i Samorzadnosc', *Polityka*, 25/6/83.

21. Quoted in 'Sens Samorzadnosci' by Ryszard Kazimierska, *Zycie Warszawy*, 12/9/84. For similar treatment of semi-fictitious self-management bodies, c.f. Anna Turska, 'Samorzadnosc Osiedlowa', *Ksiazka i Wiedza*, Warsaw 1982.

22. This was written before the amendment of the law dealing with academic affairs, which sharply reduced the legal autonomy of the Universities.

23. 'Gospodarz zakladu pracy. Poselka pomoc dla dzialeczy', *Rzeczpospolita*, No. 64, 1983.

24. 'Kiedy ma trzeciego "S"', Ryszard Kazimierska, *Zycie Warszawy*, 20/1/82.

25. *Trybuna Ludu*, 10/4/84, 'Wspolodpowiedzalni za gospodarke', M. Wieczorek and T. Szymanski.

26. 'Self-Management: Just Who's in Charge?', Agnieszka Wroblewska, *Przeglad Techniczny*, No. 23, 3/6/84. Translated by the Polish News Bulletin of the British and American Embassies. 29/6/84.

27. 'Raport o reformie gospodarczej', *Rzeczpospolita*, Warsaw, August 1984. At the end of 1984, according to information submitted to the Sejm, self-managements existed in 87% of plants empowered to have them, in 6,403 enterprises, embracing 5.5 million workers and involving 133,000 people in the activity of workers' councils, 55% of whom were manual workers. *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 18/8/85, No. 33. 'Portret Samorzadu', Irena Dryll.

28. Tomasz Jezioranski, 'Partia a Samorzad', *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 12/5/85, No. 19.

29. An adviser to the Huta Warszawa workers' council, in a personal interview.

30. *Zycie Warszawy*, 11/10/84, 'Co sie dzieje z trzecim "S".'

31. c.f. 'Poland's New Unions Challenge for Welfare Funds', by Christopher Bobinski, *Financial Times*, 12/6/84. The new trade-union law: 'Ustawa z dnia 24 lipca 1985r. o zmianie ustawy o zwiazkach zawodowych i niektorych innych ustaw okreslajacych uprawnienia zwiazkow zawodowych', *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1985, No. 35, poz. 162.

32. The wages law: 'Ustawa z dnia 26 stycznia 1984r. o zasadach tworzenia zakladowych systemow wynagrodzenia', *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1984, No. 5, poz. 25.

33. The pressure to expand the role of the trade unions, and their weakness where a strong council is in place, is noted by Pawel Ruszkowski, 'Poszly Konie Po Betonie', *Polityka*, No. 15, 14/4/84. Trade-union strength in Huta Warszawa and the FSO car plant, in both of which there are strong councils, was estimated by council activists in personal interviews at around 10% (at the end of 1984), well below the national average of 15–16%.

34. Reported by Roman Grzeborz, an enterprise Director in Katowice, at a national Party seminar with 300 participants on self-management in Katowice in May 1985. *Zycie Gospodarcze*, 12/5/85, No. 19: 'Partia a Samorzad', Tomasz Jezioranski.

35. *Quarterly Economic Review of Poland*, Economist Intelligence Unit, No. 3, 1985, p. 11.

36. c.f. the legal opinion drafted by Bronislaw Ziemianin in the *Zycie Gospodarcze* supplement 'Samorzad i Zycie', 6/10/85, No. 40, rejecting the draft document defining the powers of the new Wspolnoty Przedsiebiorstw Hutnictwa Zelaza i Stali as inconsonant with the law.

37. ibid. 'Rady Pracownicze Decyduja'. The Boleslaw Bierut Steel Works, for example, categorically rejected adherence to the new combine. Pawel Ruszkowski, in 'Wspolnota czyli Monopol', denounced the ultimata delivered to enterprise managements and workers' councils to join the new combine.

38. The Paris-based *Biuletyn Informacyjny* is probably the best Western source for reprints from the Underground press, together with the London Uncensored Polish News Bulletin. For a survey of the Underground press, see 'Poland's Underground Press' by Anna Sabat-Swidlicka, *Radio Free Europe RAD Background Report*, 168 (Poland), 18/7/83.

39. Such as the Niepodleglosc group.

40. TKK statement on the Reactivation of Self-Managements, *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, Paris, 25/8/82. KSR= Conference of Workers' Self-Management: the collegiate body incorporating representatives of social and political organizations which took over most of the functions of the workers' councils in 1958.

41. *Wiadomosci*, No. 53, 26/1/83, Solidarnosc Region Mazowsze; *Informator*, No. 55, 4/3/83, Lublin.

42. *Sektor*, No. 18, 25/1/83, Warsaw.

43. 'Walesa Issues Programme Statement', *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, Winter 1984.

44. Text from *Robotnik*, No. 55, 9/4/84, 'E' Edition.

45. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, 73, 5/1/84. Reportedly, representatives of Huta Lenina, Huta Katowice, the Wujek mine and the Swidnik plant in Lublin formed the founding group. The underground leader Zbigniew Janus, originally from the Ursus tractor factory, was associated with the move.

46. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 90, 31/5/84.

47. Huta Warszawa, the Elana textile plant in Torun, Polmor near Gdansk and the FSO car factory were mentioned.

48. *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, Summer 1985, vol. 8, no. 5; 'Self-Management and Solidarity—Interview with Henryk Wujec', p. 23. See also the *Financial Times* report cited in 'Jaruzelski Back on the Defensive' by Oliver MacDonald, which quotes a government survey referring to 30 enterprises where the Party organizations were considered to be under pressure from workers' councils. See also an interview with 'Jan Hartman', a self-management activist, in *Autogestions*, No. 15, March 1984, which supports the view that 'workers councils are much more instruments of struggle than management instruments'.

49. A theme developed by P. Ruszkowski in 'Kto sie boi samorzadu czyli w oplotach reformy': text of introduction to Warsaw PTE seminar on self-management, 24/11/83.

50. A procedure theorized as a conscious manipulative process by Jan Morawski, 'System Wladzy: Kryzys i reprodukcja struktur', *Krytyka*, 15, 1983.

51. 'Polacy: 80' and 'Polacy: Jesien 81', IFIS Pan; see too Z. Malak, 'Co o nim mowia?' *Polityka*, 30/7/81.

The following article sets out to provide a brief introduction to the main political groups in the Polish underground, outside of Solidarity. The survey is put together on the basis of Polish publications available in the West, as well as translations and articles that have appeared in various journals over the past few years. An attempt has been made to give an estimate where possible of the size of each group, but this is not always a reasonable guide to its influence. The article also seeks to capture the flavour of the politics of the Polish underground, to indicate where each group stands in the ideological spectrum from left to right and to demonstrate what themes and attitudes are common to all or most of them.

GUS FAGAN

POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE POLISH UNDERGROUND

First, some general comments are necessary. Every group in Poland today has, of course, 'independence' and 'democracy' on its banner. One very important common strategic theme, shared by sections of the Solidarity leadership itself and most of the intellectual opposition except for the revolutionary left and some 'realist' or 'pragmatic' currents, is the notion of an 'underground society' which can somehow grow up from the self-determined activities of individual citizens and groups, gradually pushing back the frontiers of state control and creating a space for a free civil society, albeit in the 'underground'.

Another common theme, if not article of faith, is the market economy, which is almost universally accepted as the panacea for the ills of the centralized economy. Yet almost all groups, with the exception of one or two on the right, are in favour of workers' self-management of at least the commanding heights of the economy—perhaps thanks to the unattractiveness of recession and unemployment in the market economies of the West, combined with the weight of the Solidarity experience in the period 1980–81. This is true, moreover, in many cases of groups which on other issues would be to the right of Western European social democracy.

Equally striking, if one considers Poland's national traditions, is the moderate and conciliatory attitude which most of the groups adopt towards the country's neighbours. With some notable exceptions, present frontiers are accepted, German reunification is taken for granted, and there is a general concern to distinguish clearly between the Russian people, the Ukrainians, etc. and the Soviet state. At the same time, except for the Solidarity leadership itself and some of the 'realist' currents, attitudes towards the Polish regime are generally non-conciliatory.

Fighting Solidarity (*Solidarność Walczaca*—SW) was set up in June 1982 in Wroclaw by Kornel Morawiecki, a physics teacher in the Wroclaw Technical University. Morawiecki had been an oppositional activist in the seventies and had edited a clandestine monthly bulletin, 'Biuletyn Dolnośląski'. He was a delegate at the Solidarity Congress in September 1981 and after martial law edited the official Solidarity underground paper for the Wroclaw region. The Solidarity leadership body (RKS) in Wroclaw, of which he was a member, was headed by Wladyslaw Frasyniuk. In June 1982 Morawiecki left RKS to set up SW, which considers itself to be more 'radical' than Solidarity, while proclaiming its continued loyalty to the broader union.

In size and organizational structure, SW is one of the main opposition groups in Poland. It claims over 500 active members and sympathizers. Its paper of the same name has a print run of between 12,000 and 20,000 and it prints local papers in at least 10 other cities. Since September 1984 it has published a bi-monthly journal called *Czas* (Time). It has its own radio station in Wroclaw.

Politically SW is a radical-liberal group which sees its roots in 'Christianity, democracy, Poland, socialism and . . . Solidarity'. Its programme envisages an independent Poland with parliamentary democracy and a market econmy. It opposes large-scale private ownership and sees workers' self-management as the basic form of management. In international politics, it supports independence for all nations in the Soviet bloc and inside the USSR, and favours the unification of Germany. In February 1985, SW signed an agreement with the right-of-centre Liberal Democratic Party *Niepodległość* (Independence), stating their common goals and their willingness to co-operate. The group seems to attract support from those who are dissatisfied with the moderation of the underground Solidarity leadership. Its 'radicalism' appears in its methods of struggle (SW is a strong advocate of street demonstrations, often clashing with the Solidarity leadership over this issue) and in the non-compromising character of its demands (overthrow of the present political system, no discussions, no agreement, etc.).

Robotnik (Worker). This group began in Warsaw in 1982. Set up by a group of socialist intellectuals, its paper *Robotnik* has a print run of about 5,000 and is distributed in a number of Warsaw factories as well as in parts of industrial Silesia.

Politically the Robotnik group identifies with the traditions of the pre-war Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and says that its long-term goal is the 'reconstruction of the PPS'. For the present, however, socialists should organize as 'a current within the existing structure of Solidarity'.[1] The paper is officially produced in the name of the 'Inter-factory Solidarity Workers' Committee' (MRKS). It recognizes that 'to be a socialist in Poland . . . is a particularly difficult and important task' because of what Stalinism has done to the socialist ideal. The group strongly favours the formation of different political currents in the workers' movement and says that Solidarity should 'break with the artificial notion of unity of thought'.[2] According to Robotnik, the programme of a future socialist party in Poland must be social-democratic and there is a tendency in its publications to idealize Western social-democratic parties.

Committee of Social Resistance (*Komitet Oporu Spolecznego*—KOS) was created immediately after martial law in December 1981 and has an underground structure linked to Solidarity. Along with SW, KOS is one of the largest and most important underground groups in Poland. Its Warsaw-based paper *Kos* (Blackbird), which has appeared regularly since January 1982, has a circulation of 10–15,000, with reprints in the provinces. Over 30 KOS publications appear in various parts of Poland and there are probably thousands of people involved in the many KOS circles that exist throughout the country.

KOS defines itself as a social movement and is opposed to the formation, at this stage, of political parties or groups. Although explicitly rejecting any political programme, it is seen as a current on the left, broadly social-democratic. One of its main writers, David Warszawski, has written that only the left in Western Europe could be a true ally for the Poles, especially for the Polish working class.[3]

KOS, of all the underground groups, is most concerned with international issues. It

condemns what it calls 'dishonest glorification' of Polish history and strongly opposes traditional Polish national prejudices, criticizing any manifestation of an arrogant attitude towards the Russian people (which is not to be identified with the Soviet state). KOS insists that Poland cannot have back the lost eastern territories and, at the same time, keep the newly acquired western ones. In September 1983 KOS issued a statement of solidarity with the peoples of Czechoslovakia and Chile, to mark the fifteenth and tenth anniversaries respectively of the Soviet invasion and the military coup. They published an open letter to Western peace groups in May 1983, and were officially represented at the Perugia peace conference in Italy during the summer of 1984.

In terms of political strategy, KOS believes that a 'long march' lies ahead for the Polish opposition. It is, therefore, a strong advocate of the strategy of creating an 'underground society' by means of publishing, educational work, artistic events, in fact any kind of activity in which people 'regain their self-determination and dignity'.[4] It is generally opposed to street demonstrations, confrontations, and what appear as more 'radical' actions of the type favoured by SW.

Freedom-Justice-Independence (*Wolność-Sprawiedliewość-Niepodległość*—WSN) was formed in August 1982. It is a small group, based in Warsaw, with a very limited circulation for its irregular publications. A monthly, *Idee* (Ideas), first appeared in February 1984.

WSN seems to carry on the tradition of the Clubs for a Self-Managed Republic. It was generally assumed that Kuron and Michnik, who were involved in setting up the Clubs just before martial law, had a perspective of forming a socialist party in the future based on the traditions of the PPS. The Clubs were an organizational starting-point for this project, whose main initiators have spent a lot of their time in prison since 1981. Politically WSN favours a parliamentary democracy based on a mixed market economy, with large industrial complexes run by workers' self-management committees.

Liberation (*Wyzwolenie*) is a group based in Warsaw which published its first monthly paper by the same name in January 1984. Its size, structure or circulation figures are not known. *Wyzwolenie* was also the name of the left wing of the Peasant Party before its two wings merged in 1929, but whether there is a conscious link with this tradition is uncertain.

Ideologically, Liberation seems to be a centre-of-the-road liberal nationalist group with some social-democratic elements. It favours a mixed market economy, in which large-scale industry and natural resources would be nationalized and self-managed by workers. Land would be privately owned, with no limit on size of holding. The state would control monetary policy and foreign trade. The public health service would allow for private practice, and so on. Its slogan is 'Independence, Democracy, Society'.

Polish Socialist Labour Party (*Polska Socialistyczna Partia Pracy*—PSPP). The PSPP was formed during the first Solidarity Congress in September 1981 by Edmund Baluka. Baluka was one of the leaders of the shipyard strike in Szczecin in 1970/71. After this he lived for a time in Britain and, eventually, in Paris, where he worked closely with the French left. He returned to Poland in April 1981. The founding committee of the party had already been set up in Paris in 1980.

The PSPP is based in Szczecin and appears to be relatively small, maybe several dozen members. Since May 1983 it has produced its own paper, *Biuletyn Informacyjny PSPP*. Politically on the socialist left, the founding programme of the party was based on the 13 demands of the 1971 strike committee.

Press Alliance of the Workers' Opposition (PROR) The Workers' Opposition was established in the spring of 1985 by the editorial groups of four left-wing organizations. The PROR is a left-socialist current, which sees its aim as promoting workers' self-management and a working-class revolutionary struggle against the Communist Party bureaucracy. At the end of 1985 they published the first issue of their monthly bulletin *Przelom* (the Breach), and in June 1985 they published an Appeal and a draft political programme.[5]

The four groups which came together to form the Workers' Opposition are:

1. **Głośno.** *Głośno* is the organ of the Provisional Co-ordinating Committee of the Mines (TKKG) in Solidarity. The TKKG is known in Britain mainly because of its support for the British miners' strike.[6] In the autumn of 1984 it was in conflict with the regional underground leadership of Solidarity (RKW) in Silesia, when the organ of the RKW accused the TKKG of 'ultra-leftist-anarchist deviations'. The RKW had opposed its statement on the British miners' strike.

2. **Wolny Robotnik** (Free Worker). *Wolny Robotnik* is the organ of the Union of Workers' Councils of the Polish Resistance Movement (ZRP-PRO). This organization, which is based on clandestine groups in the factories, has operated in Upper Silesia since 1982.

In its July 1984 issue, *Wolny Robotnik* defined itself as a 'revolutionary current' whose main characteristics were: '. . . it struggles for the revolutionary overthrow of the current system of power and for its replacement by a self-managed republic. It sees the working class as the motor-force of such a revolution. It upholds the traditions of revolutionary thought of the workers' movement, counterposing workers' control and socialism as the alternative to the current Stalinist system.'[7]

Wolny Robotnik admits that this current is 'limited in strength', but claims that its views 'find a growing echo among members of the opposition'.

3. **Front Robotniczy** (Workers' Front). The *Front Robotniczy* was first published in the summer of 1984. It is published by a small group that openly identifies itself with the revolutionary tradition in the Polish anti-bureaucratic left. In its first issue, it reprinted extracts from the famous *Open Letter* of Kuron and Modzelewski written in 1964.

The *Front Robotniczy* takes a strong stand against what it calls 'national phobias'. An article in its first issue argues that without a 'strong internationalism' and a 'clear definition of an international strategy' there will be 'no chance of overthrowing the system of rule of totalitarian bureaucracy'.[8] It calls for such practical steps in this direction as: propaganda directed towards Soviet military units in Poland; radio broadcasts to Ukraine, GDR, etc.; contacts with opposition groups in other countries. It strongly condemns 'tendentious nationalist literature' and chauvinist attitudes towards the Russian people themselves—which, FR claims, only keep the bureaucracy in power in both countries.

4. **Sprawa Robotnicza** is, like FR, the publication of a small group which identifies with the revolutionary left and is involved in the self-management movement. Like FR it is internationalist in outlook, stating in its first issue that it considers itself to be 'a link in the international working-class community'.

In its Appeal of June 1985, the Workers' Opposition Alliance differentiated itself from what it called the 'national independence opposition' and the 'democratic opposition'. It claimed that outside Solidarność the opposition had a 'preponderance of pro-capitalist currents'. The leadership of Solidarity, it says, has 'become passive'. It has shifted away from a conception of working-class struggle to 'conceptions of a unity of the entire society against the regime'.

Niepodległość (Independence). The *Niepodległość* group, on the right-wing end of the political spectrum in Poland, had already formed a nucleus in 1981 before martial law. Its paper, by the same name, first appeared in January 1982. In November 1984 the group announced the formation of the 'Liberal-Democratic Party *Niepodległość*'. This group, almost alone among groups on the right, has been active among workers in the factories. Its exact size and support are not known, but its print run is between 3,000 and 5,000 and its readership is perhaps much larger.

Ideologically *Niepodległość* is firmly on the right. Its programme, published in April 1984, advocated a parliamentary democracy based on the March 1921 constitution. It calls for a free market economy, openness to foreign capital, an absolute minimum of social welfare. Factories, although initially

given to the workers, would be free to pass to the private sector. It sees competition as the best way to eliminate poverty. On international questions *Niepodleglość* accepts Poland's present frontiers, supports independence for nations in the Soviet bloc and the USSR, and accepts as inevitable the unification of Germany. Unlike most other groups in the opposition, *Niepodleglość* claims no relation to Solidarity, which it regards contemptuously as a spent force.

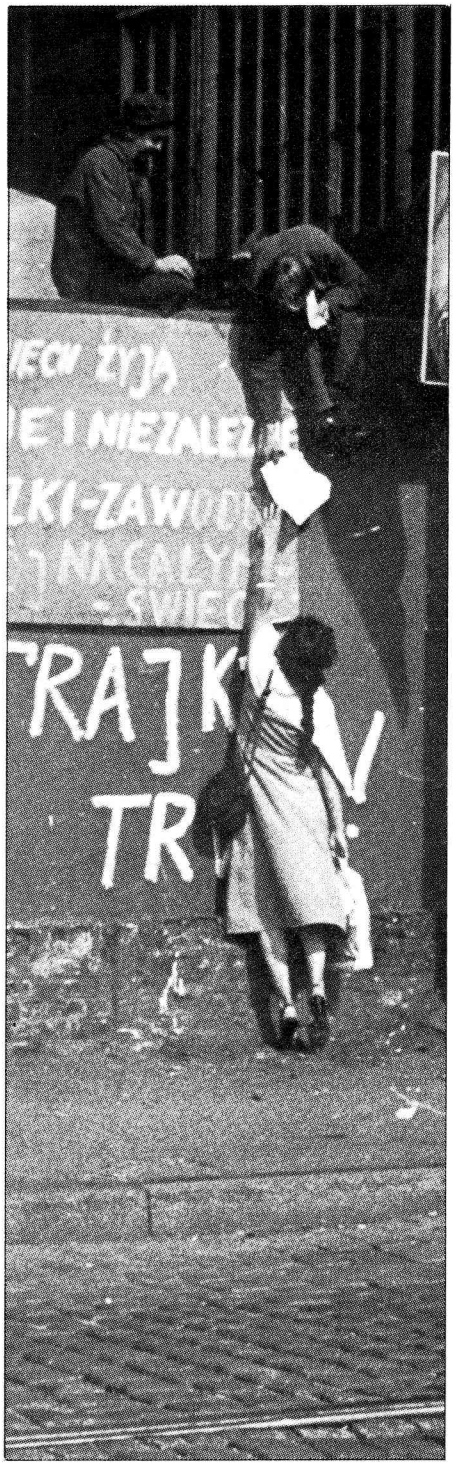
Confederation for an Independent Poland (*Konfederacja Polski Niepodleglej*—KPN). KPN was established in September 1979 by Leszek Moczulski. It grew rapidly during the Solidarity period, but most of its leaders were arrested and imprisoned, starting with Moczulski in 1980. After martial law was imposed the group practically ceased to exist. After the June 1984 amnesty, it attempted a comeback but without much success. In December 1984 four of its leading members left to set up a new group, the Polish Independence Party (*Polska Partia Niepodległośći*—PPN). There were various statements from KPN in 1985 and there were some arrests. The membership claims of KPN during the Solidarity period were probably grossly exaggerated—it claimed 60,000 members.

Ideologically, KPN is a traditional right-wing nationalist group, regarded by some as chauvinistic. It strongly emphasizes the Polish national tradition and Christian ethics. Its economic programme was similar to that of most of the intellectual opposition: a market economy in which only key industries would be nationalized and worker-managed. Like the *Niepodleglość* group, KPN was active in the factories.

The KPN was very much the creation of Moczulski. In 1977 he had been co-founder of ROPCO (Movement in the Defence of Human and Civil Rights), which he had seen as an alternative to KOR. He left ROPCO in 1979 to set up KPN. After the murder of Father Popieluszko in 1984, some KPN members were active in setting up various Human Rights Committees in different Polish cities. The group, however, has clearly lost its influence and its future is uncertain.

Congress of Solidarity of the Nation (*Kongres Solidarnośći Narodu*—KSN) is a right-of-centre nationalist grouping set up in 1983 by Wojciech Ziembinski. Its paper *Solidarność Narodu* (Solidarity of the Nation) was first published in Warsaw in February 1982. The group is not linked with Solidarity. The number of people involved is not known.

Ideologically KSN is on the conservative right. It puts great trust in the church and its hierarchy, which it regards as the main pillar of the nation. Its principal political aim is independence for the nation and it regards Solidarity as having been taken over by the left. It has said very little about the Polish economy other than it should be under Polish (as opposed to Russian) control



and that farm land should be privately owned.

Other Groups. A number of other groups occupy the centre and right of Polish underground politics. Of particular interest among them are those that make up what is called the 'realist' current.

The journal *Polityka Polska* (which does not represent a formal organization) began publication in 1983. Although committed ideologically to a liberal democratic Polish state, *Polityka Polska* believes that Solidarity went 'too far too fast' and that the strategy of building an 'underground society' is unrealistic. It calls, therefore, for a dialogue with the authorities to 'soften up the system'.

Glos, first published in 1977 by a group within KOR, has been published half a dozen times since 1981. *Glos* believes that the only way forward is to create an accord between the church, the army (which, it says, has replaced the party) and Solidarity. It is a Catholic group and very pessimistic about the possibility of change in Eastern Europe.

The Young Poland Movement was formed in August 1980, a national-catholic organization close to the politics of KPN. It was very active in the student milieu in Gdansk, but after martial law withdrew from Solidarity's underground activity. Prior to the 1985 elections to the Seym (the Polish parliament), the Young Poland Movement, together with the group around the journal *Res Publica*, wanted to participate in the elections and sought the support of the catholic hierarchy in this venture (which failed). This move was strongly condemned by the Warsaw Solidarity leadership and by such figures as Michnik, who wrote from his Gdansk prison that he would 'rather sit on the defendants' bench with Bohdan Lis and Wladyslaw Frasyniuk than in the Seym with Rakowski and Siwak'.[9] The Solidarity underground journal *Tygodnik Mazowsze* condemned the move of the 'realists' as collaborationist, and described *Res Publica* as a group which 'harks back to conservative thought, to the European tradition in which Christianity stood in the forefront. It is an elitist journal with pronounced nationalist connotations.'[10]

These then are some of the main groups in the Polish political underground. Undoubtedly, this process of political differentiation and the clarification of political strategies and ideologies will continue. In the past year independent peace groups have been formed which are in contact with the Western peace movement, adding another important dimension to the Polish and East-West political process. This political process in Poland is of tremendous importance to socialists in Western Europe. After the Solidarity experience, who can believe that there will be any fundamental change in Western Europe which does not involve some profound changes in Eastern Europe as well?

Footnotes

1. *Robotnik*, No. 44, Warsaw, 23 January 1984.
2. *Robotnik*, No. 45.
3. *Kos*, No. 12, Warsaw, July 1982.
4. *Kos*, No. 20, November 1982.
5. *Wolny Robotnik*, No. 30, June 1985. Both are in English in *International Viewpoint*, No. 66, December 1984. The Appeal is also reprinted in *Bulletin of the Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign*, February 1986.
6. The statement in support of British miners was reprinted in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, Summer 1984.
7. *Wolny Robotnik*, No. 20, July 1984. Reprinted in *International Viewpoint*, op cit.
8. *Front Robotniczy*, No. 1, Warsaw, August 1984.
9. *Kultura*, No. 9, Paris, 1985.
10. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 124, 1985.

IVAN HOWARD

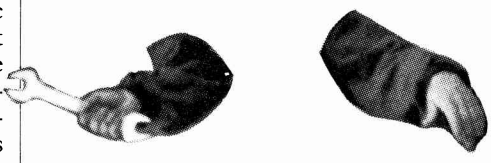
NEW WAVE OF REPRESSION IN POLAND

Since martial law was lifted in Poland, there have been two amnesties for political prisoners and a further release of some 200 prisoners due to a special clemency measure. Another amnesty might take place this summer to mark the occasion of the Tenth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. The continued repression and imprisonment of hundreds of political prisoners, combined with this pattern of frequent amnesties, is a strong indication of the regime's inability to normalize the political situation, both within society and within the party.

There are over two hundred political prisoners at present. One of the most prominent among them is Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, a 34-year old bus driver and underground Solidarity leader from Wroclaw. His sentence of three and a half years imprisonment was upheld at a recent appeal hearing. Frasyniuk was sentenced for participating in a meeting which discussed the underground Solidarity leadership's call for a 15-minute general strike on 28 February 1985 against price rises and a 48-hour working week. This meeting was called by Lech Walesa and attended by seven others—yet only three were imprisoned for it. Apart from Frasyniuk, Adam Michnik was sentenced to two and a half years and Bogdan Lis to two years imprisonment (reduced at appeal). Walesa and the rest were not charged at all—it was a case of selective persecution.

Recent legislation has reinforced official repression of oppositionists. Amendments to the Higher Education Bill have greatly extended the powers of the Minister of Education over the heads of academic institutions and over their self-governing bodies. Under the new bill, all members of academic senates or department councils have lost their representative mandate, with the sole exception of professors. Student self-governing bodies were automatically dissolved and their status stripped of powers previously enjoyed. Every student organization was required to re-apply for ministerial approval.

The Minister was also granted special powers that allowed him to dismiss, by 30 November 1985, any rector, vice-rector, dean, assistant dean or institute director from administrative posts. In this way at least 76 academics at various levels were sacked from their positions, among them Professor Karol Taylor, rector of Gdansk University, Professor Franciszek Kaczmarel, rector of the University of Poznan, as well as four vice-directors and seven of the eight departmental deans there, including Adam Mickiewicz. Other institutions hit were the University of Warsaw, the Warsaw Polytechnic, the University of Wroclaw, institutes in Krakow, Opole, Torun and Radom. Victims of the purge have been described officially as persons whose 'civil attitude' was unsatisfactory. In February 1986, a senior party official warned that a number of lecturers can expect to lose their job after an assessment of their performance.



There is little doubt that the main purpose of the reconstituted Higher Education Bill is to establish strict government control over the universities and higher colleges, after the liberalization of the Solidarity era. Thus the Minsiter now has the right to dismiss or suspend staff, expel or suspend students, and close down courses or whole departments. There is no right of appeal against such suspensions, dismissals or closures. New regulations provide also for creation of a security officer drawn from among the university staff, who would be in charge of checking whether illegal posters are being pinned on notice boards and whether Solidarity supporters are meeting on university premises.

In July 1985 new legislation also came into effect which consisted of a bill on Special Criminal Liability and amendments to the Penal Code. Among the measures included in this legislation are 'accelerated court procedures' whereby someone can be arrested, investigated, tried and imprisoned for up to three years within 48 hours for activities such as printing or distributing unofficial literature, going on demonstrations, fly-posting, etc. Since the summer of last year, 70 per cent of political prisoners have been imprisoned under this procedure.

One of the most recent developments within the opposition has been the creation of the Freedom and Peace Movement. Its programme involves work for peace, human rights and national liberation. It seeks the demilitarization of central Europe and the declaration of a nuclear-free zone in order to reduce the danger of nuclear war. It supports the idea that respect for human rights is a precondition for social reform and peace. On this basis it has sought contacts with other European peace groups.

The Freedom and Peace Movement was formed in the spring of 1985, after young people had organized protest actions against the imprisonment of Marek Adamkiewicz, a former Solidarity student activist, for refusing to take a military oath to defend peace in alliance with the Soviet and other allied armies. Consequently, it has called on the Minister of Defence to provide a social alternative to military service and remove non-Polish references from the military oath. In December 1985, a member of the movement was sentenced to three and a half years in prison for conscientious objection. Two other of its activists, Piotr Niemczyk and Jacek Czaputowicz, were arrested in February 1986 for belonging to an illegal organization.

GYÖRGY KRASSÓ

THE MONOR DISCUSSION

In the summer of 1943, nearly half a century ago, the best of the Hungarian intelligentsia gathered in the surroundings of a summer camp at *Balatonszárszó* for a series of lectures and debates. The acknowledged cause of that meeting was anxiety for the fate of Hungary—the prospect of the country's imminent defeat in the great conflagration of war brought together many who had up to then openly disagreed. In the summer of 1985, between 14 and 16 June, a similar meeting took place in the camp of Monor, a small town near Budapest. Intellectuals of differing viewpoints were once more drawn together by their concern with the current situation in the country and by the desire to find a way out of it.

What are the roots of this concern? After all, Hungary appears to have a more sensible economic approach, a more considered foreign policy and a more liberal domestic atmosphere than most of her COMECON partners. Is it not the case that people here live better, that social stresses are weaker and that socialism is more 'human'? For an answer to these questions we may refer to the opening speech delivered by one of the meeting's organizers, Ferenc Dónath. Dónath spoke of 'pressing circumstances [which] urge the search for a new way out of the worsening situation of our society, a society whose living standards have been declining for years . . . The government does not keep its promises. . . . The economy is moving along tracks imposed by factors outside its power. . . . The economic crisis is giving birth to a political crisis. . . . The leadership has missed the opportunity to present the nation with a programme of consistently democratic and satisfactory national demands.'

This general picture was filled in by the discussion which followed, which comprised five papers distributed in advance in written form, four opposing written contributions, and verbal interventions from other participants. Taken together, these dealt with the problems considered most significant for understanding the character of the present-day crisis in Hungary.

In his paper titled 'New Hungarian Self-Building', the leading 'populist' writer István Csurka spoke of 'the culture, or more exactly quasi-culture, created by a loser, an agonizing and at the same time self-exploiting and neurotic society'. According to him, Hungarian society has made an imposed compromise with the authorities in past decades, and the price of this has been a loss of memory: the euphoria of the revolution has had to be forgotten, and with it thousands who were killed and tens of thousands who were imprisoned. This has caused a confusion in the social consciousness, an acritical acceptance of the actual state of affairs, a cynicism and a moral decay. As a way out he suggested a 'self-building' based on mutual love; the replacement of *homo politicus* and *homo economicus* with *homo habilis*; the preservation of individual identity; the full realization of individual talents, to be achieved by moving away from concern with political and economic spheres. His opponent, the historian Miklós Szabó, argued that after the repression of the revolution society had made not so much a compromise as a capitulation. It had become apolitical, privatized, cynical and corrupt. But rather than leave its last fortress too—the economy, the sphere of material growth—society should find again and develop a sense of right, solidarity and 'civil courage'.

The title of the second paper was 'Unhurried Troubles on the Danube', written by Sándor Csoóri, a poet. He dealt with the situation of the Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries, primarily in Romania and Czechoslovakia. The *Diktat* of the Trianon Peace had not solved the national problem, but allowed it to become a source of fear, neurosis and hate. The Hungarians had never understood the historic necessity of Trianon; the Romanians had never understood the rape and violence which it contained. The process of madness had not come to an end after World War II, with the political changes which occurred then. Concealment of the existence of the problem, and the impotence of the Hungarian government, had not helped the Transylvanian Hungarians, the denial of whose national rights had become a fatal dimension of the Ceausescu system. Csoóri's opponent, the literary critic János Kenedy, stated bitterly that even real democratic achievements are not usually rewarded; he wanted Csoóri not to try to base the demand for help for the Hungarian minorities on a relative present-day 'good standing' of Hungary in the eyes of the West which can easily disappear.

Two papers by the economist Tomás Bauer (of which the longer is published below) had a common theme: the hesitant and partial realization of the economic reform. Bauer argued that, as a result of this, Hungary faces the prospect of a decline to the level of her neighbours. There are a number of indications that the reform is being obstructed by lobbies of the centralized industries. Moreover, Comecon does not ensure for Hungary all the advantages of the international division of labour. Bauer's opponent, the economist Mihály Laki, seemed to be even more pessimistic regarding the prospects of a radical reform of the economic mechanism. He observed that it was naive of Bauer to address his remarks to an administration whose real intentions have shown themselves to be ambiguous.

The last essay, written by the philosopher János Kis, editor of *Bestélö*, journal of the Democratic Opposition, was entitled 'On Our Limits and Possibilities'. Living conditions are worsening, inflation is rising and the overall economic reform has not yet taken place. At the same time, there is no social policy to help those who sink below the poverty line. The leadership has no programme—it balances from one day to another—but neither has the intelligentsia, or that part of it which concerns itself with public affairs. It formulates limited demands dealing with economic reform, social policy, health and the environment, the media or labour rights—but these do not come together to form a united programme. Kis suggested that the general political crisis could be averted through a new compromise separating the state from the civil sphere, the separation being ensured by constitutional and legal guarantees. His opponent, the historian Miklós Vásárhelyi, reminded those present that Hungary was a part of an 'alliance', and that therefore 'our internal development depends on outside factors as well'. He went on to add that domestic public opinion was characterized by a barren simplicity regarding both national and foreign affairs, and ended by taking up the need to reduce the danger of nuclear war.

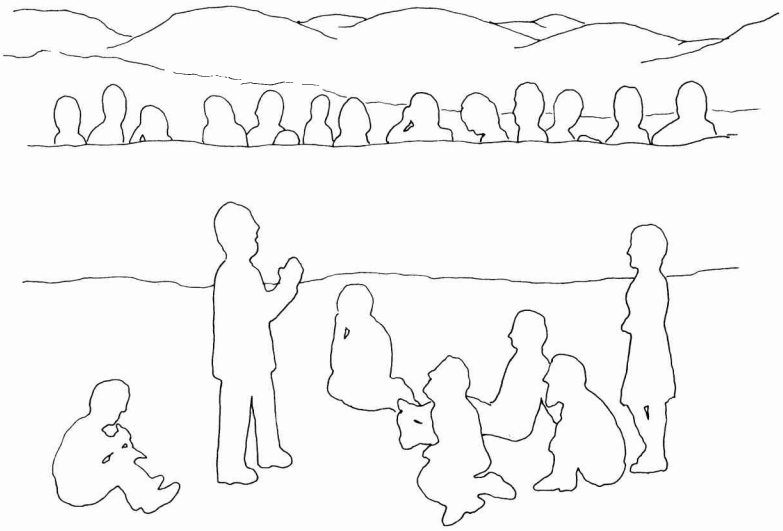
Even this very abbreviated survey shows that the intellectuals gathered at Monor dealt with what they considered to be essential problems, and also that the whole discussion had a 'popular front' character. The Monor discussion seems to suggest that the era stamped by the name of János Kadar—an era in which the material conditions of life have gradually improved, but the formulation of policy has remained the prerogative of the party—is now coming to an end. What is to replace it? The participants at the Monor Discussion did not provide an answer to this question.

One would have stronger hope for the future if the Monor Discussion had been opened to all, as the similar event at Balatonszárszó in 1943 had been. Or if the organizers had invited some workers in addition to the forty-five intellectuals—if only Sándor Racz, ex-president of the

1956 Budapest Workers' Council, who even today works as a manual worker. This would not only have strengthened the 'popular front' character of the gathering, but also have provided an indication as to what social force could alone push through the realization of some of the ideas brought up at Monor.

The Monor papers, together with the counter-reports—some 76 densely typed pages—were subsequently published as a samizdat brochure, omitting however the interventions 'from the floor'. At the end of last year a Munich-based Hungarian-language paper *Nemzetör* (*The National Guard*) published the essay by Csurka in two parts. The author chose to protest in the official Hungarian weekly *Élet és Trodalom* (Life and Literature) of 24 January 1986 against this 'rude violation of my copyright'. On the same day the *Rakpart klub*, a club at which Csurka was supposed to deliver a lecture, stopped all public activity; and for good measure the rehearsal of a new play by Csurka at a Budapest theatre was cancelled as well.

The *Kossuth klub* of the Social Sciences Education Association (TIT) announced last autumn a series of debates on *Reform and Democracy*, to begin on 4 November 1985. The subject, planned to be debated over four afternoons, was one of the main themes of the Monor Discussion—even some of the lecturers would have been the same. The programme was banned at the last minute, apparently after an intervention by Lénard Pál, ideological secretary of the Central Committee. The fact that the ban prevented two members of the C.C. (Imre Pozsgay, general secretary of the Patriotic People's Front, and Rezsö Nyers, economist and director of the World Economic Institute) from speaking as well was something of a novelty. What was not new was that reform and democracy was once again a prohibited theme for a wider public.



TOMÁS BAUER

EIGHT COMMENTS ON THE DIRECTIVES FOR THE 13TH CONGRESS

1 The publication of the Congress Directives was once again accompanied by an invitation to party members and non-members alike to make comments: it is supposed to be a nationwide discussion. But, as usual, there was no assurance that the remarks would be considered, let alone acted upon. There was nothing to indicate any readiness for such comments to be publicized; and though numerous remarks and opinions must have been offered, the press has quoted none.

My own experience so far has not been too good. Five years ago I submitted extensive comments on the *Directives* for the 12th Congress and received no response whatsoever. I only heard through the grapevine that they were considered by leading officials to be a case of 'intellectual opposition'. The mild retribution I have suffered (refusal of permission to participate in a scientific conference abroad) was a small matter compared to what might have happened at another time or place. But compared to what one expected following the invitation to comment, the punishment was heavy.

If, despite this, I now take the invitation seriously, not knowing whether those who issued it in the first place do so too, this is for two reasons. Firstly, because I feel that I have something to say which I would like to be known to both the drafters and the readers of the *Directives*. Secondly, because many of my friends and colleagues find themselves in a position similar to my own, so that what I have to say may contribute to a common wording of our thoughts.

2 First of all, I want to raise a general question regarding the *approach* of the *Directives* to the problems under consideration. It is an old reflex on the part of party officials to accuse 'local organizations' or the 'executive organs'

for any discrepancy between their intentions and reality. As a rule, more fundamental self-examination (leading to criticism of central decisions) follows only as a consequence of an accumulation of troubles, a sharpening of tensions.

The *Directives*, once again, are permeated by this attitude. It appears explicitly in paragraph 6.1: 'the representation and realization' of correct policy 'greatly depends upon the organization and control of the implementation of our resolutions. This is the weak point in our work today. At all levels, greater attention must be paid to the organization, implementation and control of activities.' (Supplement to *Népszabadság*, p. 24).[1] We find a similar approach in the economic chapter of the *Directives*, for instance in paragraph 3.8, which deals with income generated by secondary economic activity: 'the undesirable phenomena in this field must be overcome by consistent enforcement of regulations'. (I shall return to this paragraph properly later on.) We have already witnessed the drawbacks and dangers of this approach, and its resurrection is rather worrying and hardly accidental today.

3 In paragraph 1.3, the *Directives* repeat the usual statement regarding the 'deepening of the general crisis of capitalism'. If this were a mere ritual, perhaps we might even pass over it. But the *Directives* discuss the *external conditions of our economic situation* in the light of this. What does 'general crisis of capitalism' mean? It means that capitalism is no longer capable of responding to the demands of the development of productive forces and has become subject to an overall decline, so that it lags behind perpetually developing socialism. The question is then posed: is this true for capitalism today? Such is hardly the case. The capitalist world economy was, and in part still is, in crisis: witness the fact of mass unemployment, unstable financial structure, deepening North-South conflict, etc. At the same time, however, the system is characterized by a deep-rooted change and a significant adaptability—by a rapid technological development with which the socio-economic structures appear to comply. To speak of 'general crisis' in the sense used by Stalinist political economy in regard to capitalism is today unjustified.

There is no doubt that one aspect of the international environment surrounding the Hungarian economy today is this crisis-ridden capitalist world economy characterized by increasing protectionism and discrimination, world-wide monetary crisis, rising interest rates (by now abating): this has played and will continue to play a significant role 'in the greater than foreseen disadvantageous development of the external conditions of our economic construction' (Introduction to Chapter 3, pp. 11–12). However, if we take up only this side of the economic environment—if we put forward Western protectionism, discrimination, financial crisis as the only external factors responsible for the losses suffered by the Hungarian economy—then we shall come to one-sided conclusions regarding the roots of our troubles. Yet this is what happens in the *Directives*. Disregarding several highly respectable internal sources, and several articles in professional journals, the document says nothing about the economic problems of Comecon countries or the unfavourable impulses reaching the Hungarian economy from this direction: the halt in the increase of raw materials and energy supplies, or the depreciation of exchange-rates. And yet, without taking these into account, it is impossible not only to understand clearly the present situation but also to avoid errors in contemplating the future. For there is no reason to believe that this side of our external economic environment will change for the better in the near future.

4 The *Directives* greatly overestimate the *economic achievements* of recent years when they say, for example: 'In preceding years, the party and state leadership have conducted the economic life of the country with success. The main aims of the economic policy defined by the 12th Congress were achieved. Our economy has proved to be firm, sturdy and viable, its balance improved . . .' (Introduction to Chapter 2, p. 12).

At the end of the seventies the Hungarian economy, like those of other Comecon countries, found itself in a peculiar crisis, whose most conspicuous symptom was a prolonged decline of unprecedented proportions in the rhythm of growth. This was not (not merely) a question of one of the cycles of decline that had in the past periodically manifested themselves in the Hungarian and other East European economies. Unlike in previous recessions, holding back investment, production and imports for a year or two was not this time sufficient to create the necessary conditions for recovery. It is justifiable to describe this as a crisis, since the kind of extravagant growth that had characterized the East European economies since the introduction of the planned economy became simply impossible to maintain in the new economic conditions: limitation of Soviet raw-material and energy supplies; radically changed (in both directions) price ratios; exhaustion of supplementary labour-force resources; the emergence of environmental damage as a restraining force; the toughening of competition, due to the emergence of new rivals. This novel situation meant that many of the small Comecon countries, including Hungary, could maintain their short-term foreign-trade balance only at the expense of internal consumption. It is, therefore, right to speak of a structural growth crisis.

Although the official propaganda everywhere except in Poland—and since August 1980 even there—refrained from admitting to the crisis, Hungarian economic policy reflected this essential truth when the need to change to a new trajectory of growth was announced at the end of the seventies. At that time, a further worry contributed to the sense of crisis: acute difficulties in the discharge of debts. This again had two sides. In 1981–3, the changed behaviour of Western banks and the withdrawal of deposits from the Hungarian National Bank by our own 'friends' put into question our ability to stay solvent—we had to reschedule our debts. This particular danger was overcome—though the non-rouble balance of payments was not stabilized—by the sale of the Hungarian food surplus to the Soviet Union for dollars. This particular agreement expires at the end of 1985, and it remains uncertain whether the Soviet Union will continue to be prepared to pay in dollars for these food supplies, or whether the resulting surplus in our balance of trade and of payments (in non-rouble relations) can be maintained; but, at all events, by the end of 1984 a favourable agreement had been reached and the solvency crisis had passed.

However, this does not in the least mean that we have overcome our structural growth crisis—that we have embarked on a new trajectory of growth. This much is admitted by official assessments, which point out that, contrary to intentions, the restabilization of the external balance was achieved not so much by improved results as by restraining internal consumption; not so much by increased exports as by reduced imports. Even in 1984 an increase in volume of exports appeared in areas such as metallurgy or chemical and light-industrial products where unfavourable terms meant that a reduction of exports would have been desirable, while the export results of the machine industry were considerably weaker.

Recent years have been characterized by a *tour de force* of export at all cost, irrational import substitutes and, on the internal market, increasing shortages. From the point of view of the short-term goal—the maintenance of solvency—the rationality of this is indisputable. But it would be a serious error to put aside the fact that, as a result, the efficiency and competitiveness of Hungarian production and foreign trade have most probably suffered. Restraining investment in raw materials and semi-finished products for years has inevitably increased the gap between us and the developed countries. While all over the world the application of new technology surges forward irresistibly, the Hungarian government programme stipulates development in this field by reliance on home products, thus remaining loyal to the undesirable and unsuitable Comecon tendency to autarky.

The presentation of economic achievements continues in the *Directives*, after the previously quoted passage, in the following words: 'the material-technological foundations of socialism have become more extensive and modern, the national wealth has increased. Productivity has risen faster than the national income. The consumption of specific materials and of energy have decreased and so has the volume of imported goods used in production. The economy has grown more in line with the requirements of intensive economic development—it has become more flexible.' (p. 12) Taken singly, almost every phrase of this paragraph (except the last) is true. However, as an overall assessment, it is false. It avoids the essence: that there has been no breakthrough in the efficiency and competitiveness of our economy.

This is well illustrated by the analysis of industrial results. According to the *Directives*, 'the Hungarian vehicle, aluminium, pharmacological, cosmetics and medical industries, and the products of our information and vacuum technology, are internationally recognized' (p. 12). Well, this 'international recognition' is unambiguous only within the protected Comecon market. On the world market, Hungarian products can reach only its less exigent segments, the lower categories. At the same time, countries which started from a lower level than ourselves have broken into the more demanding sections of the market, at higher price categories. In these circumstances, our relative position has inevitably deteriorated. For a country which relies as much on the world market (Eastern and Western) as Hungary does, relative deterioration means absolute deterioration—as we have been able to observe in the past few years.

This means, therefore, that we have not at all achieved the main objects of our economic policy, particularly the adoption of a 'new trajectory of growth'. It is hardly an accident that this slogan has now gone out of use. Overcoming the financial crisis is not the same as overcoming the structural growth crisis. Nor can the population of our country regard the deterioration of living conditions and the decline of real income as 'successful economic policy'. The optimistic assessment of the situation contained in Chapter 3 of the *Directives* reminds one of the success propaganda in Poland at the end of the seventies, and one fears that it similarly irritates our own public opinion.

5 When, in an article published in *Mozgo Világ*[2] in 1982, I called this structural growth crisis the general crisis of the East European planned economies, I wished to show that the actual functioning of these economies, their economic mechanisms, predetermine an extravagant growth that cannot be sustained under new conditions. I wanted to show further that there was no sign of readiness for a renewal on the basis of which a profound reshaping of economic mechanisms could take place—which would in turn provide the foundation for a break with the extravagant growth model and thus allow us to overcome the crisis. Measures aimed at encouraging small enterprises, introduced at the start of the eighties in Hungary, could serve as an important element of such a transformation. Similarly, institutional changes in enterprise management, which are intended to come into force in the middle of this decade, could also point towards such a transformation. But these will work only if the necessary conditions are created in the economic mechanism and in politics as a whole.

Regarding the consolidation of small enterprises, three conditions seem to me particularly important. For small enterprises to conduct their affairs legally and honestly, they must be able to obtain materials and tools on the official market: in other words, it is imperative to reduce economic shortages. Secondly—and paradoxically—in order to avoid small enterprises appearing as alien elements in the economy and society, a more flexible, productivity-oriented mode of conduct by the state and cooperative sectors is called for, linking reward to better performance. Thirdly, government propaganda must take an unambiguous stand on the social need for small enterprises, recognizing at the same time the legitimacy of higher income derived from independent enterprises.

Unfortunately, these three conditions do not unequivocally apply—indeed of late they do so less and less. With increasing frequency official economic management responds to shortages and their abuse by curbing competition instead of curtailing monopolies. (Among numerous instances, it is sufficient to quote the prohibition of chain trade.) The *Directives* also fail to take an unambiguous stand in support of small enterprises, recognizing them only as a 'supplementary-auxiliary activity'. They thereby fail to understand the concept of mixed economy, in which state, cooperative and individual ownership exist side by side. They merely allow for personal property, alongside that of the state and the cooperatives (Para. 2.1., p. 7). In Paragraph 2.2. (p. 8) small producers, the private sector, are mentioned as providing 4–5% of products, thereby 'satisfying real social demand, fulfilling a useful role'. But when they go on to speak of ownership, the private sector is no longer present. At the same time, in connection with 'supplementary-auxiliary activity', the *Directives* emphasize: 'Measures aimed at curtailing phenomena that are alien and detrimental to socialist economy and at strengthening discipline were introduced, but their effects were only slightly felt.' (Introduction to Chapter 2, p. 12) Such wording once again shows profit in a negative light and foreshadows a more vigorous pursuit of restrictive measures in the future. In Chapter 3, paragraph 8, in connection with these supplementary activities, they surface once again as undesirable phenomena which 'we must overcome by consistently enforced regulations, so as to make personal income proportional to achievement' (p. 16). We have to remind ourselves that this position is not feasible in a society based on production for the market, since different achievements may be compared only through wages and incomes. In the case of income stemming from the private sector, the demand that income should be proportional to achievement makes no sense. Behind this phrase there can hide only a demand to reduce the income of the private entrepreneur. In other words, society should not recognize the entrepreneur's income along with the entrepreneur's activity.

It is more than likely that the latest increase in taxes aims at such 'proportioning' of incomes. No doubt, too, the loud press campaign surrounding police action against illegal commerce and bribery (equating two very different phenomena) is aimed at intimidating small entrepreneurs. If this ends in the suppression

of small enterprise, as happened in the seventies (when it involved also subsidiary enterprises of cooperative farms and the private plots of cooperative members), then nobody will be better off. On the contrary, the result, now as then, will be harmful for the economy and society as a whole.

The third condition we mentioned involved greater flexibility and orientation to achievement on the part of the cooperative and state sectors. I will deal with this next.

6 The question is this: can we count on changes in the economic mechanism sufficiently far-reaching to produce a leap in efficiency and competitiveness, leading to a take-off of the desirable new trajectory of growth, which would enable us to avoid a break with developments in the world economy and thus escape technical and economic regression? Before the April 1984 resolution, discussions went on for years about how to advance the reforms further. The fundamental question is whether the changes will simply be like those in 1971, 1976 and 1980, or whether they will be radical enough to enable a lasting modification of managerial behaviour. The experience of the past decade and a half makes it clear that regulatory changes are not capable of this.

The April Resolution (*Standpoint*) was no doubt a compromise. On the one hand, not only the idea of a 'second reform' but even talk of a 'complex', 'all-embracing' advance of the reform was rejected. On the contrary, the politicians stressed continuity in the development of the economic mechanism—which, over that decade and a half, had halted the process of reform. This same attitude asserts itself once again in the *Directives*, when the introduction plays down in retrospect the significance of the reforms, referring to them only as 'modernization in the management of the economy' (P. 4). It does not differentiate even in its choice of vocabulary between reform and reorganization, and plays around with indicators in the way that was once customary in Hungary and still is in other Comecon countries.

On the other hand, the April Resolution was a 'package' all the same, covering all elements of the economic mechanism: regulations, the planning system, and the organizational-institutional system. The new forms of management should be considered a great achievement: the introduction of enterprise councils, i.e. the notion of enterprises managed by elected leaders. However, after nine months it seems that the all-embracing resistance to the reforms was effective here as well.

First of all, the ministries succeeded in keeping a grip not only on public companies but also on the competitive enterprises. Even in companies which moved to new forms of management, the aims of the change were only partially achieved. The purpose of the new management forms was to bring about a considerable diminution of hierarchic dependence upon state direction and the realization of a degree of control from below, workers' control. But instead of introducing safeguards against any revival of hierarchical dependence, and against any manipulation or formalization of control from below, the opposite happened. Ministries as 'founding bodies' were given a right of veto. In any case, their legal and market control made it unlikely that the hierarchical dependence of enterprises upon ministries would weaken in any real sense. It is not accidental—and I believe this to be the most important element, from the point of view of the present phase—that many directors, rather than feeling any slackening of dependence upon the state, notice a new kind of control from below and therefore oppose the new forms. And what sort of reform is it which fails to attract support even from the managerial strata?

Hence, not only there are no safeguards against the new enterprise democracy becoming a mere formality, or against it being manipulated, but 'guarantees' have been introduced which prevent the newly constituted management from reaping the benefits of the democratic content. For example, there is the propaganda which emphasizes over and over again that there is no question of autonomy—that the new forms mean no change in ownership. Even more important is the 'guarantee' that the trade-union hierarchy, which has consistently opposed the reform, will end up dominating enterprise councils and elected organs. This is what happened when a plenum of shop stewards chose the first 'experimentally' elected director at Glovina in Győr: the final decision was in fact left to the trade-union hierarchy.

The other reason why enterprise managers do not feel that the new management structures would significantly increase their independence—why they lack optimism in the future—is that other elements of the economic mechanism do not provide a favourable environment for their realization. Regarding the planning system, the principle that there should be no institutionalized link between national and enterprise plans, elaborated in an earlier phase, was not adhered to. This stipulation was finally left out of the text. And the actual practice was even more telling: 1984 saw the ratification of 'agreements' or 'production contracts' between ministries and enterprises. Nor was it possible to harmonize changes in economic regulation with company autonomy. I want to highlight the results of new regulations in three fields, leaving aside wage regulations (the modification of the income-regulating system is aptly characterized by the paradox: everything changes while nothing has changed).

a) The increase in levy in proportion to energy resources will create an artificial differentiation between enterprises and is unlikely to be tolerated in practice. After all, the earlier and milder 'natural' differentiation did not prove tolerable either. The bargaining about exceptions and concessions will continue. I regard the energy-related levy as 'malpractice', leading in all probability to a reversal of the original aim of efficiency-related differentiation.

b) As far as one can see today, the bank hierarchy too has succeeded in forestalling attacks against its monopoly. Limited decentralization does not touch this monopoly, since the units that have been detached engage in providing loans to such clients as are refused by the 'remaining' Hungarian National Bank. In other words, there is no change in the situation where enterprises are at the mercy of the Hungarian National Bank, which since 1968 has been the most important and perhaps effective element of state control over enterprises.

c) In the price system, a peculiar duality is emerging which to some extent resembles the situation prevailing in the seventies, prior to the 1980 price adjustments. On the one hand, our economic policy announced the gradual elimination of irrational constraints stemming from 'competitive' price principles. On the other hand, in wishing to push down the rate of inflation it inevitably leads to the placing of informal obstacles in the path of free price fluctuation. This is what is promised by the new law aimed at prohibiting dishonest economic behaviour and extending the compulsory announcement of price increases.

It is worth looking, in this context, at the relationship between politics and inflation. We look in vain for a clear position in the *Directives*. This is probably due to a compromise between economic rationality and the trade-union demand for a price freeze. In the press, in speeches and in general propaganda, however, there is a growing campaign against higher prices, especially in the free-market sector. This is, I believe, a somewhat dishonest

practice. The inflation which has taken place since 1979 understandably irritates people more and more. Those familiar with the macro-economic problems of the Hungarian economy know that this inflation finances the deterioration of exchange-rates—initially with the capitalist countries and now most of all with the Soviet Union. Year after year, ever-increasing exports are necessary to enable the repayment of loans and interest (loans taken in the first place to counteract the earlier deterioration of exchange-rates and their depreciation today). Even in those years in which, at current prices, we had an export surplus—which we have even now in relation to the Soviet Union—the volume of exports had to increase faster than imports. Under these circumstances, internal demand necessarily increases faster than internal supply—hence the inflation. It is not accidental that the greater part of the inflation has been caused by central measures. However, not everyone sees these interconnections and—because of the deteriorating exchange-rates with the Soviet Union—official propaganda is not keen to enlighten the people (the article by Under-Secretary János Hoós in the Christmas *Népszabadság* was an exception). To leave these basic interconnections unexplained, and to direct public irritation against free-market prices—demanding a price freeze—is what I call a dishonest practice. I repeat: the result can be only an increasing rigidity of prices, the preservation of a 'distorted' and untrustworthy profitability. This, in turn, once again challenges the validity of the concept of enterprise autonomy, of entrepreneurial freedom.

7 While the consistent advance of reform policy, our main means for solving our economic problems, becomes blurred in the *Directives*, the programme which they present—the 'intensification' and 'dynamization' of economic development—is explicitly formulated. Already in the introduction to the whole document, when the main task of the coming period is outlined, there appears the promise of a 'gradual intensification of economic development'. Then, in the introduction to Chapter 3 which deals with policy on the economy and standard of living, the promise reappears in the context of an optimistic portrayal of the current state of affairs: 'In the coming years we must intensify our economic development'. On the basis of what I consider to be quite false optimism, the document states: 'The necessary conditions for accelerating development either are already present or can be created. Responsible management adapted to needs is spreading and growing stronger. The formation of a directive and institutional system appropriate for this purpose is now in process. We can derive substantial reserves from raw-material and energy conservation, from improvements in quality, from the strengthening of discipline everywhere (in management, work and technology), from improvements in organization. All these can open up new resources for an upward trend of the economy.' (p. 13)

The document at once proceeds to share out the profits of this purported more dynamic growth. In paragraph 3.1, it takes a stand on an increased rate of investment: 'The investment rate must increase once the conditions are created.' (p. 13) In paragraph 3.2 it immediately commits itself to a number of priority objectives, as usual indicating branches and sectors regardless of their competitiveness. Chapter 4 promises an increase in living standards: 'In the forthcoming planning period, with the intensification of economic development, better management, increased achievements and improved work discipline, we must lay down the foundations for a perceptible rise in living standards.' (p. 17)

The optimism manifested in the *Directives* soon found its echo in the country. Witness the article entitled 'Dawn' by F. Arkus in the New-Year's-Eve issue of *Népszabadság*. This effort most probably reflects the popular reading of the *Directives* and similar official pronouncements when it proposes the analogy of a train passing through a tunnel, declaring: 'Now we are really within reach of the end of the tunnel. People say that, from the engine-driver's cab, it is already in sight.' The question is: is it really in sight or are they deluding themselves? I am afraid that the latter is the case.

It is understandable, of course, that after half a decade of holding back growth the political leadership should run out of patience. After all, not only they but society as a whole has had enough of assorted restraints, falling real income and in many respects deteriorating living conditions. The impatience of technical and economic managers is also justified, given our technological shortfalls due to investment restraints, while at the same time they see that technological advance in the West is accelerating and the capitalist world economy is once again slowly growing. What is more, in the past two years higher growth rates were reported even in some Comecon countries, so that it seems these countries have surpassed the lowest ebb. Why could we not surpass it too, after five years of recession?

As regards the economic results achieved by the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and other Comecon countries, there is no room here to prove in detail that they have not reached a turning-point; that their leaders' self-satisfaction and success propaganda is unjustified. I wish only to put it on record: in my opinion, there has been no qualitative change and the improvement in indicators is partly illusory and partly temporary. For us, however, this is not the issue. We must bear in mind that, even though it would be very good indeed if after five or six years we could really end the recession and do away with restrictions, the essential conditions for this have not materialized since the change in economic policy of 1978.

Today it is scarcely possible to judge whether it would have been at all feasible to create such conditions in half a decade. At all events, however, a great deal more could have been accomplished had economic policy not at first tried to solve the country's problems solely by decreasing the rate of growth. If, at the same time as lowering the rate of growth, it had at once put on the agenda furtherance of the economic reforms—and had done this more consistently and unambiguously from 1979 on (more than it does even today in 1985)—then more would have been achieved. But in 1979–80 growth restraint and price reform were in the forefront of our economic management's attention. Granted, opportunities for small enterprises were created in this period; but the modification of mechanisms in the socialist sector—the preparation of a 'complex development' of economic management—were at a standstill for years. The revision of foreign-trade policy was also delayed. It took the trauma caused by the fall in Soviet oil supplies to bring about a decision to join international financial organizations. This decision was taken at the very last minute in order to allow us to avoid rephasing in the situation of 1982. By then, the process of restructuring of economic management had been accelerated; but the political atmosphere had deteriorated, public debates were silenced and a compromise was reached that was 'softer' than would have been necessary or than one could have hoped for a year or two before.

At all events, during the past five or six years conditions for a new economic upsurge have not materialized. Whether they will do so in the next few years is difficult to predict today. I repeat: for the time being they are not here, so to announce a dynamization or acceleration is extremely dangerous. Especially since

increases in consumption and investment are being promised in advance—which, in practice, means doling out what has not even been produced.

I know that the planners argue that acceleration can become actual only when the necessary conditions are present: if the projected improved efficiency is realized. But let me recall the past. During the last three decades, resolutions regarding acceleration after longer or shorter periods of restraint were announced on two occasions: in March 1959 and in December 1976. In both cases, it was pointed out that acceleration is justified only in the presence of efficient production of marketable quality products—any revival of the quantitative approach was seen as inadmissible. These warnings nevertheless remained unheeded on both occasions. From these resolutions, only the acceleration—the green light for increased investment and public expenditure—was taken seriously. Why should it be different this time? One thing is clear: given the uncertainties perceptible in attempts to modify the economic mechanism, managers do not feel under pressure to go for efficient, competitive growth only. It is to be feared that the result will be the same as in 1960 or 1977–8: an upset balance. It will be the same as before, but this time at a 'higher level', in a more acute situation.

I believe that the announcement of dynamization, or acceleration, is the most dangerous aspect of the *Directives*. The question of responsibility must be posed. Five years ago, commenting on the *Directives* of the 12th Congress, I posed the question of responsibility in relation to the past. Now it is justified to do the same in regard to the future. When the politicians and economic managers now announce a programme of acceleration, they risk intensifying the crisis, which has not yet been overcome. Perhaps the politicians do not see the macro-economic connections. Maybe they do not understand that, while the acute crisis in discharging our debts has passed, we have not emerged from an equally acute structural growth crisis. (Though they, too, could perceive that what they are doing now—taming the proposed reform programme and thus rendering it ineffective, while at the same time accelerating growth and promising a rise in living standards—is, albeit on a totally different basis and in a more cautious form, fundamentally the same as was done by Gierek and Co! The difference being that in the latter case the false success propaganda came at the end, whereas here it appears at the outset.) The top officials in charge of the economy ought, however, to realize this; therefore, the brunt of the responsibility lies with them.

8 The problems of the last half-decade, including decreasing domestic consumption, have naturally had their negative influence on *living standards*. The passage dealing with living standards to be found at the beginning of Chapter 4 of the *Directives* says: 'The resolutions of the 12th Congress concerning the maintenance of living standards and the improvement of living conditions have on the whole been realized.' (p. 17) This obscures the fact that the sixth five-year plan stipulated the maintenance of real wage levels and increased consumption, whereas in reality—as one can read in the *Directives* themselves—there has been a fall in real wage levels, even though levels of real income and consumption have been sustained. The formula 'the livelihood of certain strata has become harder' does not reflect how wide the circle is of those whose standard of living has remained stagant or declined, and to what an extent social tensions have increased.

Our doubts as to whether it is feasible to create conditions for an appreciable increase in living standards in the coming years lead us to accept without reservation only the demand that 'within the increase of income for the population as a whole greater attention must be paid to the growth of earned income, without infringing on basic social welfare requirements'. (pp. 17–18) This was repeatedly announced before, then abandoned. Given our limited resources, we can or ought to economize on social welfare expenditure to the extent that would be necessary for the earned-income principle to be realized. Paragraph 4.3 of the *Directives*—in accordance with the preference for earned income—states that 'social welfare benefits must be brought in line with our material resources; means testing and social justice must increasingly prevail.' (p. 18) If this means that, in awarding benefits, objective criteria will be replaced by necessarily subjective individual considerations, then this would be a dangerous tendency. It is to be feared that in such considerations individual 'merits' would gain weight, something which is not justifiable in welfare policy and which would diminish the chances of the most needy.

A similar tendency could gain momentum in the distribution of housing, if within our institutional framework the principle were announced: 'in establishing the conditions for obtaining accommodation, we must take into consideration individual differences in capacity to carry the burden. Enterprises and institutions must increasingly assist in improving their employees' housing situation'. (p. 19) If a reduction in state assistance is again to be counterbalanced by assistance at the workplace, then—instead of social needs—merits and positions achieved will play a greater role in housing distribution: a tendency not desirable from the social point of view. Differentiation of conditions has hitherto invariably led to dubious results. It is unfortunate that, whereas the housing reform of a few years ago correctly aligned the position of small house builders more closely with that of those able to participate in large housing-estate developments, the latest assistance by local authorities once again does not cover small house builders, leading once more to unjustified differences.

In paragraph 4.2 the *Directives* repeat that the assurance of full employment is the task of the state, while the task of the enterprises consists in efficient management of the work force. The document then goes on to present as feasible mobility of the labour force through organized mechanisms, disregarding the possibility of unemployment. This is an illusion: if we take seriously the need for workforce mobility to be obligatory, then we cannot count on it always being done within an 'organized' framework. In this case, one must build into the system some sort of unemployment benefit. (To avoid misunderstanding: I do not talk about this as though I consider prolonged unemployment desirable. No, it must be avoided by all means. But the change in the structure of production probably does require a small proportion of short-term 'frictional' unemployment—such as in any case exists today in Hungary and other Comecon countries.) In the absence of unemployment benefit, there will be continuous pressure on the enterprises not to dismiss anybody. Such pressure will continue to exist, but a reasonable system of benefits should to some extent extenuate this obstacle in the way of workforce mobility.

I have strictly limited my comments to economic questions. Even here, I have omitted to deal with problems such as foreign-trade policy or attitudes to a shortage economy, where I would only repeat what I said five years ago. My comments on the text of the Congress *Directives* are critical—I have not attempted to be 'constructive'. I have tried to formulate positive suggestions in my other essays and articles and will continue to do so.

(Translated by Vera Magyar)

ROMANIA

MARK JACKSON

RECENT TRENDS

Overweight readers of *Labour Focus* will be interested in recent trends in Romania. In July 1982, President Nicolae Ceausescu presented the Romanian people with proposals for a scientific nutrition programme to combat the perils of poor diet and over-indulgence. In September 1985, he showed that he was still concerned with the health of his subjects when he promised the delegates to the Congress of People's Councils that by 1990 50% of all food would be served up in processed form through a system of canteens.

These measures are an attempt to put a socialist gloss on one part of a drastic austerity programme which has been gathering force since 1981. In that year, food rationing —involving such basic items as bread, sugar and edible oils—was introduced. Housing and health programmes have been cut back. Since August 1985, citizens are legally obliged to spend some of their free time performing public works. According to one estimate, some two million of the urban population are involved in some form or another of work connected with agriculture each year. The minimum wage was abolished in 1983—but reintroduced last year for managerial layers!

Most visible have been the cutbacks in domestic power supply. Since 1979, the amount of power available for domestic use has been repeatedly cut. During this winter (1985–6), 'popular' inspection teams have been recommending disconnection of refrigerators and the lighting of only one room in every household with a 40 watt bulb. In the winter of 1985–6, the use of private cars was banned between January and March, and television broadcasts were restricted. In October 1985, power stations were placed under military control in the hope of avoiding the power cuts of 1984–5. However, according to one report the performance of some key power plants actually worsened after militarization, so that the biggest coal-burning plant, the Turceni-Gorj, was operating at between 26 and 28% of capacity.

The motive for the austerity programme is the need to pay back the $12,000 million foreign debt incurred as part of the country's industrialization drive. Already in 1981 Romania was unable to meet its obligations and had to re-schedule its payments. By 1984 the total debt had been reduced to $6,500 million, by means of redirecting food and raw materials production onto the world market and at the cost of a reduction in growth rate from some 7.2% p.a. in the period 1976–80 to 2% p.a. in the subsequent five years. Ceausescu now insists that he wants a renewal of dynamic growth without any recurrence of the debt build-up. There seems no possibility that this ambitious objective can be achieved. Despite statements that no more loans would be taken up, in May 1985 Romania negotiated a loan of $80 million. The economic results of 1985, moreover, were disastrous. An absolute decline was registered in mining production and the processing of fuel. Industrial production stagnated and agricultural output fell, with cereal production down by 15% compared with 1984.

The economic crisis threatens to turn into a crisis of the whole system of rule in Romania, which is based on massive popular mobilization in pursuit of the goal of making the country into a small great power, not only independent of Moscow but also with a definite influence on world affairs. The Romanian people have been remorselessly squeezed in pursuit of this ambition. Apart from material austerity, there has been a grotesque campaign to raise the country's birth rate. In 1966 abortion was restricted; since then, women injured while undergoing illegal abortions receive no first aid until after the police and public prosecutor's clerk have turned up. Childless couples currently have to pay 300 lei a month (about £10) as a penalty, while since March 1984 women of child-bearing age have been required to undergo monthly gynaecological tests to ensure that no pregnancy goes undetected.

In addition to such side-effects, there is also clear evidence that the great nationalist mobilization is becoming counter-productive in its own terms. One indication of this is the destruction of historic buildings in the capital Bucharest to make way for a new civic centre, which has been criticized by a number of academics previously loyal to the regime. In a protest letter of January 1985 they wrote that 'Every nation legitimizes its

SOME DETAILS ABOUT ROMANIA'S RULING FAMILY:

Nicolae Ceausescu: 68 years old; Secretary General of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP); on the Political Executive Committee (PEC) i.e. Politburo of the RCP; President of Romania (i.e. Head of State); President of the State Council (i.e. Prime Minister); Chairman of the National Defence Council (i.e. Commander-in-Chief of the country's armed forces); Chairman of the Supreme Council on Economic Development.

Elena Ceausescu: his wife: officially 67 years old (but said to be 69); also on the PEC of the RCP; First Deputy Prime Minister; Minister for Science and Tech-nology. Her birthday is an official holiday like her husband's,

and she participates in talks with foreign leaders.

Together, Elena and Nicolae are 'the historic couple whose existence merges with the country's destiny' (Virgil Teodorescu in *Luceafarul*, Jan. 1986). In their own eyes, the country's destiny is embodied in their son **Nicu Ceausescu**. For some time now, Ceausescu Senior has been ill and the rise of his son appears to be related to the course of his illness. Nicu's original power base is in the *Flacara* circle, founded by the court poet Adrian Paunescu, which organizes cultural and political rallies that are essentially pro-regime mass events. Nicu is First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Communist Youth (UCY), and in 1985 was Chairman of the United Nations International Youth Year. In November 1984, Nicu was put onto the PEC of the RCP as an alternate member; in the following months he made official state visits to the Soviet Union, East Germany, North Korea and China. His wife **Poliana Cristescu** is Chairman of the Pioneers' Organization, and is also on the Secretariat of the UCY. Numerous other members of the Ceausescu family are also in positions of power—like Ceausescu's brother Ion, who is First Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Committee.

A Story

In March 1973, when Ceausescu became President, he adopted a sceptre as his symbol of office. A couple of days after his inauguration, the surrealist poet Salvador Dali sent Ceausescu a telegram congratulating him on his sense of history. The telegram was duly printed in the RCP daily *Scinteia*. It is rumoured that the editor was summarily dismissed.

existence through its creativity. When the evidence of this creativity is suppressed piece by piece, the very identity of a nation gets lost. The present generation and those who come will live in towns with few traces of our (and their) history left.'

The economic crisis has inexorably increased Romania's dependence on the Soviet Union, in particular on Soviet supplies of oil and raw materials for which Moscow drives a hard bargain. There is considerable speculation that the recent removal of Romanian Foreign Minister Stefan Andrei, who was closely identified with Ceausescu's foreign-policy line, was related to pressure from the Kremlin. At the same time, for a small nation like the Romanians genuine self-determination is unthinkable without cooperation with other nations of East-Central Europe. However, persistent attempts by the Romanian regime to invent an official pro-Romanian version of the region's history—and to make this version the sole permissible one—can lead only to conflicts with other nations. Polemics with Hungary—sharpened by the existence of discrimination against the one-and-a-half-million-strong Hungarian minority in Transylvania—are constant, and similar ideological combat has recently been joined with Bulgaria.

What are the internal alternatives? There is little organized opposition to the regime and repression is intense. Ownership of duplicating machines is illegal, even typewriters have to be registered with the police. Attempts in 1979 to found an independent trade-union movement were brutally crushed. Dissent among the intelligentsia has been dealt with by a mixture of repression and carrots (in the form of foreign travel and, if necessary, offers of exile: such offers have led to a wholesale exodus of the country's German minority, 14,000 of whom left Romania in 1984). One interesting development in recent months has been the appearance of critical statements from figures associated with the Liberal and National Peasant parties, banned in 1948 and 1947 respectively.

There is also evidence of dissent within the official structures. Calls from Ceausescu for unilateral troop reductions by the Warsaw Pact have failed to get party endorsement, while a recent spate of articles criticizing proposals for economic reform suggest that a belief in the need for such reforms is widespread. The cult of the President and his family is itself a sign of the isolation of Ceausescu within the top circles of the party and the state. Succession within bureaucratically-run regimes does not (outside Korea) take place dynastically, and the obverse of the preeminence of the ruling family is the fact that there is no obvious successor from within the bureaucratic elite. The President is reported to be very ill; with him gone, one can expect to see considerable instability in Romania as the economic and social crisis demands action in the context of a succession struggle.

THE ROMANIAN PRESS ON THE OCCASION OF ELENA CEAUSESCU'S BIRTHDAY

Snow is falling beautifully over mountains and land,
Snow is falling over our fields,
On this day of a Great Anniversary
of a Praiseworthy Daughter of Romania

Elena Ceausescu, pure name
Who carries in her heart a clear spring of water,
Is the continuation of the great scholars
Upon whom this people prides itself.

This country of today, its shoulders in the sun,
A country rich as never before,
Romanian prestige abroad
Has deep roots in her work.
Beside the Husband and Fighter
Total wife and comrade
She modelled in a determined way
The history of those years: Light.

(Stefan Dinica)

As a Communist

'January—joy of simultaneous beginning and continuity. Of the beginning of new victories . . . of the glorious achievements of the twenty years—the glorious epoch, the Nicolae Ceausescu Epoch—inscribed with letters of gold in the history of Romania . . . In these days of beginnings, promises, certainties, we render homage to Comrade Academician Doctor Engineer Elena Ceausescu, whose life, activity and entire being are indissolubly tied to our dreams, hopes and achievements. Woman. Mother. Political Personality. Scholar of world fame. Intransigent fighter for peace.'
(Katlin Bokor)

With all our Heart

'We are living in the presence of a historic couple, whose existence merges with the country's destiny, spurred on by the most noble ideals of revolution, and having as their supreme goal the prosperity and flourishing of the fatherland, the strengthening of its dignity, independence and sovereignty.'
(Virgil Teodorescu)

Homage

Immaculate, the snow on the borders
Lays a clean and shining carpet
On which all the mothers of the country
Write to you about eternal love.

Love shining in crystals
Of respect and burning adoration
For the woman who, with dignity,
Works at the side of the country's President.

The people today brings a homage to you,
Life companion to the man who,
Under the Tricolour, brings us the future,
Full of certain freedom and sunshine.

Immaculate day of celebration,
A crown laid on the forehead of the country,
And we, together with the country,
Raise a toast: MANY HAPPY YEARS TOGETHER WITH THE COUNTRY.

(George Corobea)

'Comrade Academician Doctor Engineer Elena Ceausescu's birthday is inscribed in the calendar, as in the hearts of all Romanians, as one of those events in history—history,

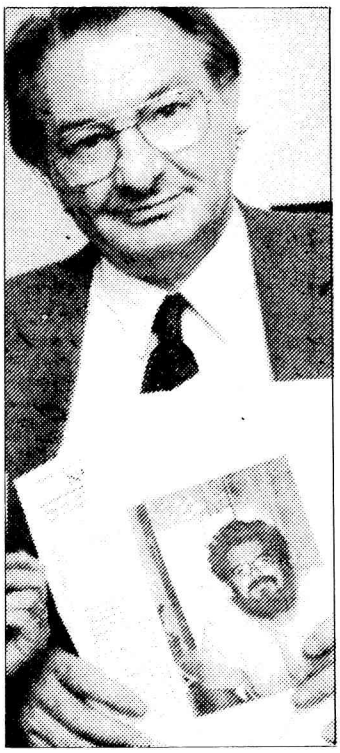
which has memory only for essential things —through which a nation, by glorifying its chosen ones, glorifies itself, through the most precious qualities, those which reveal its being. Few images of these last years have embedded themselves so deeply within us—through their frequent appearance on the screen of our vision, wide as the whole country, and through their deep intrinsic significance—as the image of this woman who, standing beside the man at the head of the Party and the Fatherland, observing and succouring his labours, sharing his great worries and responsibilities, assumes for her own self a role of creativity for the whole nation . . . For all these reasons, Comrade Elena Ceausescu is, for all of us, a great Romanian, a living conscience of our Danube and Carpathian nation, whose gifts and talents she illustrates so brilliantly. Sensitivity, modesty and the cult of toil for this land, so special to Comrade Elena Ceausescu, belong to the world from which she comes: the world of the peasantry, a universe which lies at the foundations of our history and existence. Consistency of ideals; tenacity and passion in work and struggle; the force of clear thinking, clearsightedness, visionary talent, self-discipline and determination in following one's goals: these are the quintessential qualities of our working class, in whose ranks she was hardened, acquiring the real and durable components of her personality. A creative spirit, foreign to inertia and fossilization; an intelligence and competence nurtured by solid culture and brilliantly exemplified in her scientific work: these are qualities of the intellectual creator of values . . . We have a party and a leader who, for the first time in our history, have understood who we are, what we want, what we can and what we must be. We have, at the head of the Party and the nation, a man who—knowing his people and his country as no one else does, vibrating as no one else does to their needs and interests—has made of serving his people and country his holy and unfliching aim.'

Selected and Translated by
Anna Mihaelescu

EASTERN EUROPE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign was involved in a number of campaigns in the past year in defence of groups and individuals in Eastern Europe. The first, in conjunction with the Yugoslav Defence Committee, was in defence of a number of intellectuals on trial in Belgrade for their participation in a Polish-style Free University.

The Chairperson of the EESC, Eric Heffer MP, who also chaired the Defence Committee, organized a press conference at the House of Commons around the issues raised by the trial. As a result of the protest internationally and inside Yugoslavia, a number were released and others had their sentences reduced.



Eric Heffer MP holding a picture of Milan Nikolić, one of the defendants in the Belgrade trial

The second campaign was on behalf of the Russian socialists Piotr Egides and Tamara Samsonova, now living in exile, and their family, still living in the Soviet Union, who want to join them in the West. Egides spoke at a special meeting organized by the EESC during the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth.

The meeting was chaired by Ron Keating, Assistant General Secretary of NUPE. A petition signed by Labour MPs and Conference delegates was sent to the Soviet government, requesting permission for the family of Piotr and Tamara to emigrate.

The EESC publishes a bi-monthly information bulletin, with news about events in Eastern Europe and defence campaigns in Britain, interviews, and documents from opposition groups.

The Campaign has devoted a lot of attention in recent years to the emergence of independent peace groups in Eastern Europe and its information bulletin has printed most of the major statements and documents from these groups. The issues of peace and civil liberties are intimately connected, because it is the existence of military blocs in Europe which threatens peace and provides a shield behind which even the mildest form of intellectual dissent is repressed as a threat to the state.

'Detente is very fragile and those groups in Eastern Europe who are fighting for democratic freedoms and for a peaceful Europe need our support. The left should not vacate this field to be occupied by the right. We should not let Thatcher be the champion of groups that she would put down with police if they cropped up in Britain.'
Robin Cook MP (Speaking at EESC meeting during Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth 1985)

'The overwhelming mass of the British working class are bitterly opposed to oppression in the Soviet Union, in other East European countries and elsewhere. And their opposition has to be mobilized, to help those in the East European countries who wish to build a genuinely democratic socialist society.'
Eric Heffer MP (Foreword to *The British Labour Movement and Oppression in Eastern Europe*, an EESC pamphlet.)

Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign

The EESC is a socialist defence campaign open to socialists and labour movement organisations, whose aims are:

- to defend all those suffering from repression in Eastern Europe.
- to develop contacts between the democratic and socialist opposition in Eastern Europe and socialist and trade union bodies in Britain.
- to provide information for the British labour movement concerning developments in Eastern Europe.
- to campaign for the Labour Party to give more active support to democratic and working class rights in Eastern Europe as an essential aspect of its policy towards that area of Europe.
- to unite all socialist and labour movement organisations who agree on this task regardless of differences of opinion on other questions.

President	Hon Chairman	Vice Chairman	Convenor
Philip Whitehead	Eric Heffer MP	Ron Keating	Vladimir Derer

I/We would like to join/affiliate to the EESC, and enclose £ _____

Individuals and organisations £6. National organisations £25.

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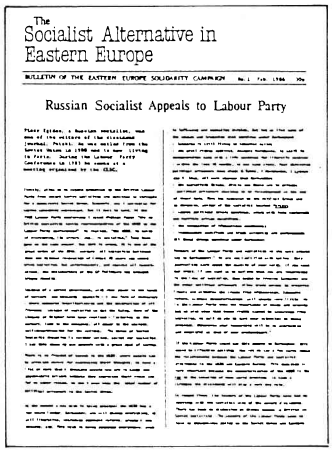
Send to: EESC, c/o Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH (01-458 1501)


The Socialist Alternative in Eastern Europe

Russian Socialist Appeals to Labour Party

The EESC Bulletin, published every two months.

BULGARIA

For decades now, Bulgaria has been a mixture of seemingly incompatible or contradictory elements. Thus, for example, the country combines the most conscientious support for every prevailing Soviet ideological or political position with a highly developed nationalist doctrine of the special worth and mission of the Bulgarian nation. Then there is the fact that Bulgaria follows the Soviet example by verbally rejecting all reforms, while at the same time conducting a (careful and limited) economic reform of its own since 1979. Again, despite the Bulgarian leadership's insistence that it at all times remains faithful to 'the general laws of socialism', Bulgaria has in fact diverged from the usual East European pattern—notably by its success in developing a thriving agriculture, which until last year was able not only to satisfy current domestic needs but also to provide a considerable surplus for export. Bulgaria has also diverged from the other countries of the camp by appearing—until the start of the last year—least affected by the economic crisis that has otherwise swept across much of Eastern Europe. And there are other differences, some of which we shall take up below.*

JANEZ STANIČ

CLOUDS OVER BULGARIA

Bulgaria was much written about in the early eighties, mainly because of her modest but nevertheless successful economic reform. This was followed by a period of neglect, when nothing new seemed to be happening in the country. Over the last few months, however, interest in Bulgaria has revived, thanks to a number of events indicating that the situation there had taken a rather sudden turn for the worse. Among such events we may include last December's population census and the 'final solution' of the Turkish question;[1] the highly unusual public Soviet-Bulgarian dispute over trade relations; the stern ideological 'roping in' of Bulgarian youth; the ambivalent Bulgarian reaction to Gorbachev's 'new style'. Recent important cadre changes at top levels of the state administration and in the management of the economy—changes whose real significance is still hard to assess—have only added to the impression of a sudden worsening of the situation in Bulgaria.

All this is taking place against a background of considerable economic difficulties, which in a relatively short space of time have deprived Bulgaria of its position among the more successful East European countries and plunged it into the grey reality of widespread problems related to energy, quality of goods, productivity, modernization and prices. Signs showing that something was going wrong started to accumulate last year. Sofia ascribed them to bad weather two years running, which has produced problems above all in agriculture, and to a marked cooling of Soviet generosity in trade, at least so far as oil is concerned.

Agriculture

1984 and 1985 were years of exceptional summer drought, separated by an exceptionally cold winter. This, one is told in Sofia, had had a catastrophic effect on an agriculture which depends heavily on irrigation. In 1984, agricultural production dropped by 7.2%. The figures for last year are not yet known, but it is estimated that the grain harvest was down by at least 25% on the previous year. According to the London-based International Grain Council, Bulgaria produced two million tons of grain less than planned in 1985. In the autumn of 1985, party and state leader Todor Zhivkov suggested in a speech that it would be necessary to import a considerable quantity of grain in 1986.

These problems in agriculture are indeed a heavy blow, since Bulgaria has been one of the most successful countries in Eastern Europe in this domain: agricultural products occupy an important place in her exports and are one of the main sources of foreign currency. In addition, the country has considerable obligations to export food within Comecon, which it cannot fail to honour especially now—when, on the one hand, Soviet readiness to help its most loyal ally in every way is no longer what it used to be and, on the other, Gorbachev has promised increased living standards at home whose fulfilment depends partly also on Bulgaria. So, of course, there is nothing to be done but to fulfil the export agreements, both to the West and to Bulgaria's Comecon partners—at the expense of the domestic market and internal consumption. Reports are indeed coming in from Sofia and other larger cities that the traditionally good supply to food shops has grown considerably worse in the last few months.

Despite the acute discomfort which this situation causes, however, the agricultural difficulties are not really serious or long-lasting, since agriculture is relatively advanced and the private sector provides a sizeable reserve to steady the domestic market. Around one and a half million peasants and half a million city dwellers work on individual plots leased from the state, ranging between 0.2 and 0.5 hectares, which add up to around 10% of the worked land. Yet this tenth supplies 37% of fruit, 33% of vegetables and 22% of animal fodder. In addition, it provides 34% of animal produce, 44% of all meat and 55% of all eggs.

Industry

Of greater and more durable importance is what is happening to industry. Since the war Bulgaria has undergone an ambitious development which has transformed it from a relatively backward agricultural country to a relatively developed industrial state. It has recently also won considerable praise for its development of more modern branches of industry, most notably electronics and atomic power.

In the late seventies and early eighties—years of crisis for much of Eastern Europe—Bulgaria succeeded in maintaining a high tempo of economic growth (around 5% per year), in part thanks to the modest agricultural reform, but thanks also to the New Economic Mechanism introduced in 1979. The basic aim of this was to simplify and rationalize the central planning system, reduce bureaucracy and widen the space of manoeuvre for the enterprises and economic organizations. NEM did not, it is true, change the essence of the existing system; but it made it more elastic and capable of tapping the reserves it still contained.

Last year, however, for the first time after a long period the rate of economic growth fell behind the plan, and also behind that of the previous year (in 1984 it was 4.6%, and a lower figure was planned for 1985: we know that this figure was not reached, though not by how much).

Relations with Moscow

There were other problems too. The most dramatic, if not the most significant, occurred in relation to the Soviet Union. Bulgaria has hitherto always been a privileged partner in Soviet eyes. Moscow has customarily rewarded her ally's unreserved political and ideological loyalty by generous terms of economic cooperation. As a result Bulgaria—60% of whose foreign trade is with the So-

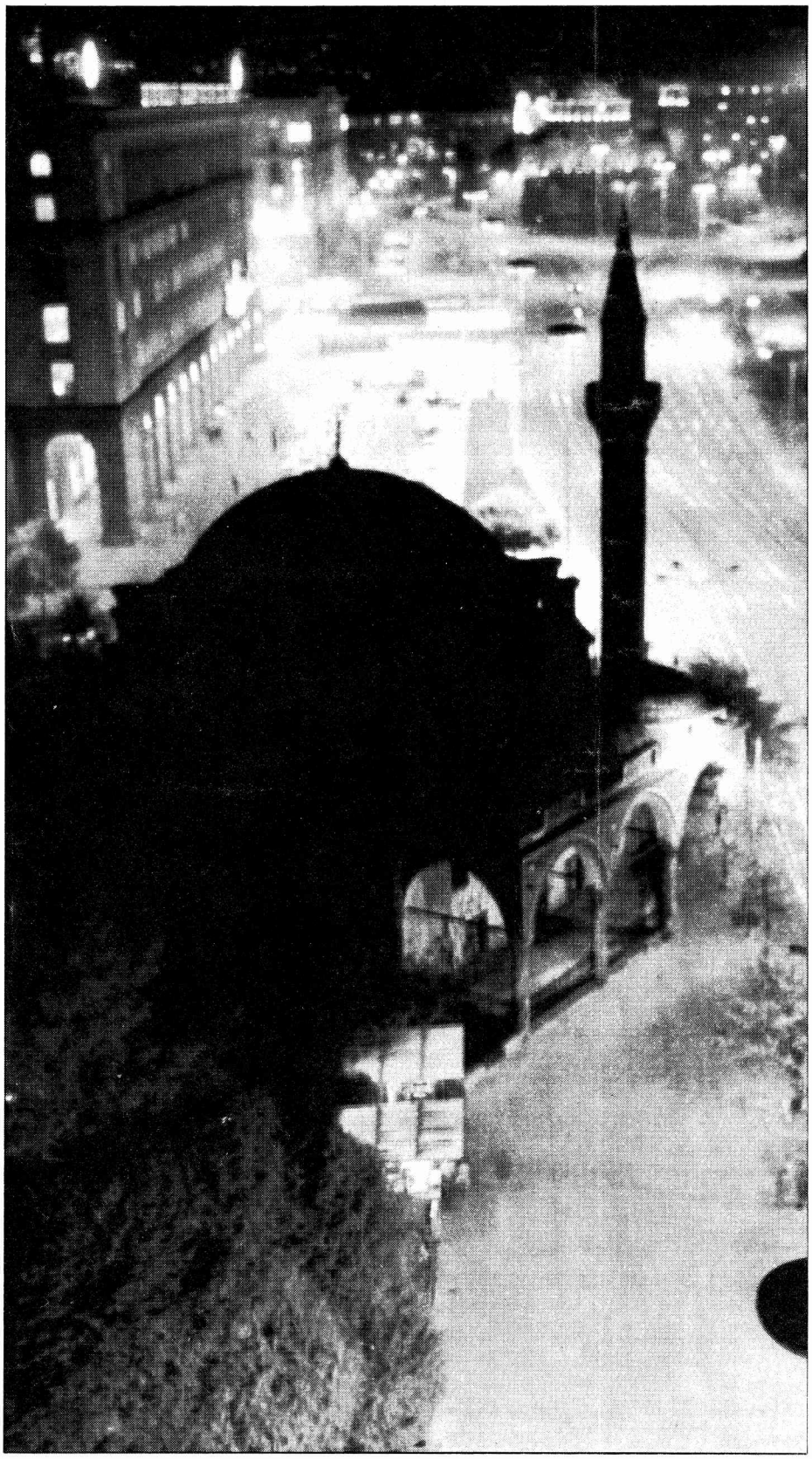
viet Union, and almost completely dependent on the latter for its energy and raw-material supplies—had until last year known few of the difficulties experienced by other Comecon countries, which had rather earlier been forced to face up to the uncomfortable fact that the Soviet Union was no longer willing to supply them with unlimited quantities of oil and raw materials at favourable prices.

How privileged Bulgaria had been is best shown by the fact that the Soviet Union was for years supplying it with more oil than it currently required. This surplus oil was then turned into derivatives and sold to the West for dollars. For this reason (unlike other Comecon countries) Bulgaria had no problems with foreign currency: its debt to the West is a meagre $1.5 billion, the smallest in the Community.

Although there are no precise figures regarding Soviet oil exports to Bulgaria, that a serious decrease has recently taken place can be judged from the fact that in 1983–4 Bulgarian export of oil derivatives plunged by 50%, while in 1985 Bulgaria was forced for the first time to buy 1.5 billion tons of crude oil from Iran. A new agreement with the Soviet Union was signed last December, according to which Soviet deliveries over the next five years will be kept at the level of 1980. Secondary sources indicate that Soviet oil exports to Bulgaria have actually declined by at least 30%. As a result, the country has suddenly discovered the energy crisis.

This development has produced a dramatic show of public disagreement between the two countries. In an unusual interview given to the Sofia weekly *View* last June, the Soviet ambassador Leonid Grekhov voiced sharp criticism of Bulgarian economic policy. He mentioned, among other things, that the many hydro-electric, thermal and atomic-power plans that have been built in Bulgaria show that 'it is easier to construct than to use well'; that Bulgaria has bought too much expensive machinery and equipment abroad, 'which is used in such a way as to cover only 10–15% of its initial cost'; that goods exported to the Soviet Union are often of poor quality; that 'productivity in Bulgaria in some areas is 2–3 times lower than in the Soviet Union'; that Bulgarian workers spend too much time working on their plots —adding, for good measure, that they 'often own weekend cottages where they do agricultural work, and when they return to the factories they behave as if they were on holiday'.

This outburst, which could not have happened in any other country of Eastern Europe, was by no means an accidental 'gaffe', since the publication of the interview was not followed by any diplomatic correction or denial. In October of the same year Mikhail Gorbachev visited Sofia and his talks with Zhivkov were described as 'quite cool', something which was confirmed by the tenor of Zhivkov's own public statements: on the occasion of a meeting with Soviet leaders these would normally be full of rapturous



emotions, but this time they spoke tersely of the need to 'search for a way out of our current problems' and reported that the talks 'had not avoided sharp corners'.

Domestic Problems

The problems, however, are above all felt inside the country. At the start of last winter, Bulgaria was swept by a wave of price rises. Electricity went up by 41%, petrol by 35%, processed meats by 40%, fresh and tinned meat by 20%, tinned vegetables by 20%. So-called luxury goods (certain kinds of cheese, coffee, chocolate, practically all domestic appliances) went up by around

33%. The rises were felt all the more acutely because they were not accompanied by any parallel increase in wages. Only the lowest pensions were increased by 10 lev, and the lowest wages by the same amount, from 110 to 120 lev (1 lev = $1 at the official rate).

Price rises and energy problems have been accompanied by drastic measures of energy conservation. City dwellings without central heating are allowed to use at most 1,800 kW of electricity per month for heating purposes. Use of electric fires and domestic appliances is regulated in detail. In Sofia, for example, they can be used for five hours a day only (10–12, 13–15, 19–20). Use of electric bulbs is also subject to restrictions: no more than 60W in the sitting room, at most 45W in other rooms, no more than 100W in a study. Those who do not observe the restrictions can be cut off without warning. Industry is also suffering from massive electricity cuts, in some cases for as much as twelve hours a day.

It is, therefore, understandable that the search for causes and solutions is now growing. The Bulgarian press has on several occasions in the past few months written about errors and weaknesses, which it usually ascribes to classical scapegoats. *Rabotnichesko delo*, organ of the Central Committee, wrote, for example, that 'the main weakness which is slowing down the tempo of our development is the absence of work discipline, as a result of which the working organizations lose 2–3 working hours every day'. At the start of 1986, the paper several times criticized bad working practices, incompetence of managers, corruption, abuse of position, falsification of statistical reports, and so on.

This is all very reminiscent of the campaign now being conducted in the USSR, so one is not surprised to find it also in Bulgaria. However, though Bulgaria has always followed Moscow's initiatives and concerns, it has never done so in a blind fashion. In the 1950s, for example, the Soviet Union allocated to Romania and Bulgaria the role of agricultural base for Comecon, and opposed their industrialization. The Bulgarians, avoiding the kind of open polemic favoured by the Romanians, did not challenge this openly; yet everything was done to industrialize the country. Again, Sofia did give a partly real and partly verbal support to Khruschchev's destalinization; but it never went as far as the Soviet Union at the time. When, in the first half of the 1960s, the USSR was fully absorbed in the battle for economic reform, there was a kind of reform in Bulgaria as well—but it was watered down from the start. On the other hand, when Brezhnev's administration came out strongly against all reform, a quiet start to modest reform was given the green light in Sofia.

So how are we to understand the present-day call to battle against incompetence, lack of discipline, abuse of power and many other weaknesses? Whether this is traditional imitation of the Soviet model or something else is hard to say right now. The problems of the Bulgarian economy are doubtless conducive to new thinking, and the Soviet example pushes this along. To judge by several unsigned articles in the national press stressing the need to apply the reform more courageously in the economy, it would appear that what is involved is not just a matter of polite reaction to events in the USSR, but also reflects in part the specific interests and preoccupations of the Bulgarian leadership itself. Things are, in any case, bound to become clearer after the Soviet and Bulgarian party congresses.

The Nationalist Card

At all events, attempts to push economic reform in Bulgaria always acquire a very specifically Bulgarian dimension. In the four decades since the war, the country has several times confronted serious domestic problems, or a radical change in Soviet policy, or both. On such occasions, it carefully followed Moscow guidelines, but always in reality opted for its own prescriptions for dealing with such troublesome moments. And the remedy has always been sought in nationalism.

For the Bulgarian party, the preferred way out of difficulties has always, without exception, been the mobilization of public opinion on a nationalist, Great Bulgarian basis. The trick consists in trumpeting the great role played by Bulgarian civilization in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and the glory of the national liberation struggles—against the Turks, in the Balkan Wars and in World War II. In the official version, Bulgarian modern history is always positively linked with first Imperial Russian and later Soviet interventions in the Balkans, and is always directed against the neighbouring nations and states of the peninsula itself. One can say without exaggeration that nationalism, for the Bulgarian leadership, has been the 'magic cure' against all ills. Nationalism, moreover, has usually been accompanied by a reinforcement of political orthodoxy and moral puritanism.

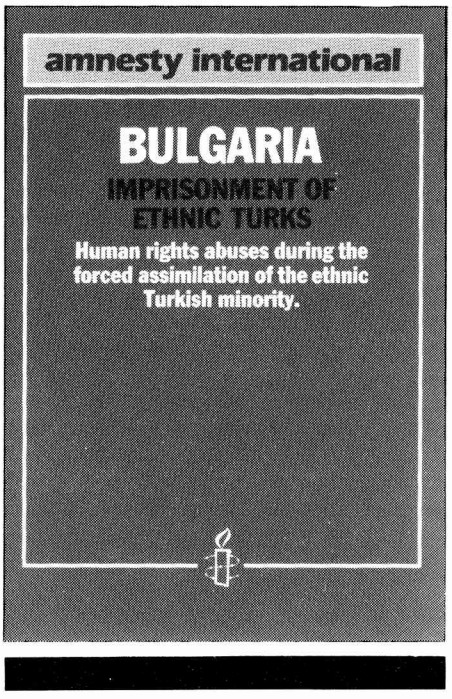
In the 1960s, powerful convulsions linked to economic reform shook the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, culminating in Khrushchev's 'resignation' and the abrupt cancellation of the Prague Spring. In Bulgaria, however, they welled over into a great and successfully managed eruption of nationalism. The price at that time was paid by the Pirin Macedonians, who were forced to 'disappear'. Today, twenty years later, a strong wind of reform is once again sweeping Eastern Europe, bringing as yet unpredictable earthquakes. It is already becoming clear that we are in for another powerful outburst of Bulgarian nationalism, in an even more naked form, which is once again being marshalled to play the role of substitute for a deeper political and economic reform.

This price is being paid by the Bulgarian Turks, a powerful national minority who today—like the Macedonians before them—are being compelled to 'disappear'. At the beginning of last year, they were simply 're-christened' as Bulgarians, through a combined action by the police and the army. The population census consequently had no need to register national origins, thus proving the official stance that Bulgaria is inhabited only by Bulgarians: that the Bulgarian nation is united and homogeneous, without any national impurities.

The revived nationalist campaign is once again accompanied by a return to stricter moral codes. Twenty years ago, young Bulgarians were forbidden to wear beards or dance the twist and other 'decadent' Western dances. They were not to admire abstract art, avant-garde theatre or anything like that. Two months ago, the Bulgarian Ministry of Public Education published an order according to which Bulgarian teenagers—who now run around in jeans and T-shirts—are obliged to wear school uniform, of sober grey or some other dark colour. They are no longer allowed to be out in the streets after nine in the evening, to sit in cafés or attend cultural or similar events unless accompanied by parents, teachers or youth leaders. They must at all times carry the special new identity cards for schoolchildren and students which must be produced at police request. They are forbidden to drink or smoke. The local authorities are also now obliged to keep detailed files on young citizens, and to make regular investigations to discover those among them who either do not work or do not go to school. In Bulgaria, it seems, history is repeating itself yet again.

* This article was first published in February 1986 in the Zagreb magazine *Start*.

1. See the Amnesty International report *Bulgaria: imprisonment of ethnic Turks*, London 1986; see also Michele Lee, 'The persecution of the Turks', *Labour Focus*, vol. 8, no. 1 (Summer 1985).



ALBANIA

There has been widespread speculation as to whether, now that Enver Hoxha is dead, Albanian politics will move away from the orthodox Stalinism which has long been its chief characteristic.[1] Will an Albanian Khruschchev arise to bury the Hoxha myth? And if so, will this person be Ramiz Alia (the new party leader) himself, or somebody else? Will the change, if it comes, be sudden and explosive, or will it proceed slowly and without convulsions? Will it be superficial or affect the regime's very substance?

ARSHI PIPA

HOXHA'S HERITAGE

Everybody seems to believe that, whatever happens, the country's isolation must end. In that case, the options would be: to rejoin the Warsaw Pact, thus reentering the Soviet orbit of influence; to open simultaneously to both East and West, in alignment with Third World countries (which could entail a certain rapprochement with Yugoslavia and/or China); or to open to the West only. No such clear choice, however, would allow the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA) to remain unchanged. A new leadership would have to emerge—accompanied, as is usual in such cases, by a major purge. Minor purges may also occur as a consequence of less radical changes. So the question of evolution of the Albanian leadership is necesarily at the centre of any discussion of the perspectives facing the country.

In other words, to answer the questions adumbrated above with some measure of conviction presupposes an understanding of the political, economic and cultural situation created in the country by an authoritarian regime long dominated by the personality of Hoxha, the chief ideologist and artifex of Albanian-style socialism. Always very great, his control became absolute after the sweeping purges of the seventies, which (in relative terms) compare in scope with Stalin's in the thirties. Like Stalin, Hoxha was able to eliminate one after the other all his real or potential rivals. The history of the PLA is thus marked by continuous and, in part, bloody purges. Whether a change in orientation will occur in the near future depends, ultimately, on whether the Stalinist carapace of the Party cracks under pressure from anti-Stalinist elements. A summary survey of Party purges will provide a point of departure for assessing the extent and depth of Hoxha's Stalinist legacy.

Through the Prism of the Purges

Initially tutored and organized by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the Communist Party of Albania (predecessor of the PLA) was reared in the Stalinist mould. But in 1948 the CPY broke with Moscow, whereas the CPA's relations with Stalin by contrast acquired a new dimension. Just prior to the Yugoslav-Soviet split, Mehmet Shehu had lost his position as Chief of General Staff of the Albanian Army and Hoxha's own position as party secretary had become precarious: Albania had, in fact, appeared to be on the verge of joining Yugoslavia, as a seventh republic of the federated state. So when in 1948 Stalin accused the Yugoslav leadership of deviationism, Hoxha and Shehu seized the opportunity to denounce Albania's alliance with Yugoslavia and return to power. They managed to purge and then liquidate the pro-Yugoslav faction, with support from the Soviet Union and Stalin—who was impressed by their anti-Titoite zeal. He calmed their fears by guaranteeing the independence of Albania from Yugoslavia, as well as Albania's contested southern frontier with Greece.

These events made the party leadership devotees of Stalin. When, after the latter's death, Khrushchev made his secret speech criticizing Stalin and his tradition, the Albanian leadership found themselves exposed to a similar critique within their own party. Khrushchev's attempt to bring Yugoslavia back into the Soviet bloc, moreover, was seen by Hoxha and Shehu as implying the removal of outside support for their continued leadership. So taking advantage this time of the growing rift between the Soviet Union and China, they sided with the latter and branded the former as revisionist. A fresh purge of the party followed (it was during this process that the CPA became the PLA).

A third wave of purges took place in the mid-seventies, when China established diplomatic links with the United States. Once again, a change in the external environment became the occasion for striking at the internal 'enemy': at all those who might now hope for a liberalization of cultural, political or economic life and look forward to a more flexible foreign policy. The purges struck the 'liberal' intelligentsia and the leadership of the Youth Organization, followed by the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff of the Armed Forces (who were showing signs of reluctance to break with the one strong ally and supplier of the Albanian armed forces). They went on to engulf those in charge of economic planning and industry, who—faced with economic problems growing out of a rigid policy of economic centralization—had experimented with methods of partial decentralization, thus making themselves liable to the charge of pro-Yugoslav deviationism.

In all these purges, lasting from 1973 to 1976, Shehu faithfully supported Hoxha. Yet they fatally weakened his position as Premier, involving as they did the dismissal of his cabinet colleagues one after another. Shehu's turn came only years later, in 1981. During the last years of his dictatorship, Hoxha saw new purges clean out the last governmental sectors that had so far escaped his wrath: the Ministries of the Interior and Foreign Affairs. Exactly how and why Shehu was eliminated remains a mystery; with his departure, however, the whole party and state leadership was overhauled, with Hoxha as now the sole survivor from the old communist core.

The Albanian Road

Hoxha studiously copied Stalin in building up his dictatorship, with the difference that his rejection of all existing socialisms—which entailed total isolation for Albania—came at the very time when polycentrism began to flourish in the communist world. The method of using sweeping purges to establish an undisputed personal rule is particularly akin to Stalin's practice. Hoxha also emulated his master—this was a logical consequence—by writing a series of books aimed at establishing his own brand of 'Marxism-Leninism' as against all others.

All other forms of existing socialism were denounced in the name of the Albanian—i.e. Hoxha's—road to socialism. Only by purging dissident party members—even more dangerous than the class enemy—could the Albanian party become a model of this 'Marxism-Leninism'. And, while strenuously preaching socialist internationalism, Hoxha in fact severed all ties with it. *The History of the Labour Party of Albania*, written under his close supervision, served the same role as the *History of the Communist Party of the USSR (Bolshevik)*—to provide the first atheistic state in the world with a New Testament.

In his *Philosophy of History*, Hegel defines as 'historical individuals' those 'whose particular aim involves those large issues which are the will of the World Mind'. These people, Hegel adds, may be cruel at times; may trample down and crush their opponents. But, even in doing so, they have an

insight into the requirements of the time and strive to actualize them. They have, in other words, a sense of history. Could it be said that Hoxha had this sense of history? Did he try, in Marx's elaboration of Hegel's postulate, to answer questions that were raised because they could be solved? Has Hoxha's brand of socialism responded to the Albanian people's real needs?

Balkan Context and Albanian Specificity

Albanian socialism can be seen as the outcome of a combination of factors, in part common to all Balkan nations and in part peculiar to Albania. Among the common Balkan factors, two are especially important: the backward agrarian condition and the Byzantine-Ottoman heritage. We shall confine ourselves here, however, to the factors proper to Albania: the last Balkan country to achieve independence and the only Balkan country with a majority Moslem population.

With Orthodox and Catholics constituting one third of the population and the rest subdivided into two Moslem faiths (Sunni and Bektashi), Albania has been a country of four religions inhabited by a population that remains 'pagan at heart'. This judgement of Fan Noli, an Orthodox bishop and former Prime Minister of Albania, is somewhat exaggerated; it is true, however, in the sense that the Albanians have always identified with their language rather than with a religion or state, as was the case with other Balkan nations. Religious differences were played down in the name of a common ethnicity—as expressed in the old slogan of Albanian nationalism that the favoured religion of the Albanians was Albaniandom (a slogan that long survived the achievement of national independence, when it was re-adapted as the slogan of the mass media under Hoxha). Nationalism, which keeps the past alive, is thus one fundamental trait of Hoxha's brand of socialism.

The fact that Albania was the last Balkan country to achieve independence is no less relevant for understanding Hoxha's heritage. Except for the short period 1920–4, during which Albania began functioning as a properly independent state, the country has never had a democratic regime allowing for the existence of more than one political party. The diversifying function of political parties had traditionally been devolved to tribes, clans and extended families, with nepotism as one of its main characteristics. This feature of the old pre-capitalist society remained a pillar of Hoxha's regime.

In the past, Albanian politics had been dominated by powerful landowners, men such as Esad Toptani, Ahmet Zogu ('King Zog') or Shefqet Vërlaci. Enver Hoxha and Mehmet Shehu became their modern equivalents, with party members playing the role of old retainers. The way Shehu terrorized the population from his fortress of the Security apparatus, first personally and then through members of his clan, is strikingly reminiscent of the manner in which an Ottoman lord treated his bonded peasantry. It was by such means, for example, that the party leaders achieved the collectivization of land in record time.

As for Hoxha, he treated the party as his fiefdom, shuffling and reshuffling the Central Committee and the Politburo like a pack of cards. A shrewd gambler and broker, he was one of the most unprincipled politicians of his time—albeit *principialnost* was a favourite word on his lips. Hoxha's rule, based on an absolute and exclusive monopoly of power, is yet another relic of the Albanian past, diverging increasingly from the aspirations and needs of the Albanian population as a whole.

The Balance-sheet

As the only interpreter of Marxism, monopolizing indeed the formulation of ideology in general, Hoxha was decisive in producing a cultural atmosphere totally dominated by a doctrinaire propaganda exalting nationalism. Linguistics, literature, history, geography, folklore and ethnology have been cultivated, not only to give the people a sense of their own past, but also to spread and inculcate xenophobia, slavophobia, isolationism, ethnic compactness and linguistic uniformity. The result has been a systematic falsification of history and of historical materialism.

Forty years of uninterrupted Stalinism have left scars on almost every aspect of Albanian life and culture. Albanian art remains undeveloped (with the partial exception of music); Albanian literature has largely remained within the confines of socialist realism; economics has been reduced to a 'science' of increasing percentages. (When Albanian leaders proudly declare that their economic growth is due only to Albania's own efforts, and that Albania does not owe a penny to anybody, this is simply not true: every time Albania has shifted allegiance from one country to another, it has automatically written off all debts to its former ally—the debt to China alone has been calculated as amounting to $5 billion.[2])

This is not to argue that Hoxha's record has been completely negative. On the contrary. There have been real achievements in agriculture and industry; the standard of living has risen as a result. Diseases are under control; the social status of women has greatly improved; illiteracy has nearly disappeared. The question is whether it was necessary to pay such a high price. When the Albanian leadership tells the workers that exploitation does not exist in Albania, because the Albanian state is not a capitalist state, they circumvent the real question of who controls the party and the state—the question of class self-determination.

'Nationalism, which keeps the past alive, is one fundamental trait of Hoxha's brand of socialism.'

Prospects

What now that Hoxha has gone? So far, it would seem that his image is being allowed to fade, just like Stalin's at first. The dictator killed and persecuted many old comrades, including the old proletarian core of the party; he segregated the country from the world and from other socialist states; he has left behind a highly embarrassing version of 'Marxism-Leninism'. But he was for too long the embodiment of the Albanian Party of Labour for the party simply to abandon him to his deserved fate. Those who are now in power were, after all, his disciples—and many have vested interests to protect.

Yet, however successful the purges in the past may have been, it was surely impossible to purge all dissidents. It is conceivable, moreover, that the process of rehabilitation of individuals may occur in the relatively near future, which would signify the beginning of the end of Albanian Stalinism. But the barometer of Albanian politics has always been its attitude to Yugoslavia. Hoxha and Shehu assumed power in 1948, after a break with Yugoslavia. They broke with the Soviet Union after Khruschchev tried to win Tito back into the Soviet bloc (1961). They consummated the rupture with China after Tito visited Peking (1977). The split between Hoxha and Shehu followed upon the mass demonstrations of Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia in 1981. Yugoslavia has been a useful scapegoat: if the anti-Yugoslav attitude of Tirana were to change, that would be a strong sign that Albania is moving away from Stalinism.[3]

But where to? It cannot move towards the Soviet Union: the Albanian pro-Soviet faction was never strong (which is why its purge was a relatively minor affair). Nor will it move towards China—the alliance with China was an accidental product of very special circumstances. It is most unlikely to move towards the United States or West Germany: socialism has come to stay in Albania and, despite their poor experience so far, the Albanians have shown a degree of preference for it they never extended to any other regime in the past. The hope must be that Albanian socialism will improve in future.

Footnotes

1. See Arshi Pipa, 'The Political Culture of Hoxha's Albania' in Tariq Ali (ed.), *The Stalinist Legacy—Its Impact on 20th Century World Politics*, London 1984.
2. Paul Lendvai, *Das einsame Albanie*, Zürich 1985, p. 70.
3. So far there is little indication of this: in March 1986 Enver Hoxha's widow was elected president of the Democratic Front of Albania, a post held previously by Hoxha himself. This is the only function of the departed leader not taken over by his successor Ramiz Alia.

The priority for the new leadership in the Soviet Union is to inject a new dynamism into the creaking mechanism of the economy. This article takes a look at some of the implications of this enterprise for developments in the states of Eastern and Central Europe which are politically and economically dependent on the Soviet Union

MARK JACKSON

GORBACHEV AND EASTERN EUROPE

Since the absorption of Eastern Europe into the Soviet sphere of influence after World War II, there have been a number of distinct stages in the economic relationship between the USSR and its allies. From the late 1940s through until 1956, the pattern was one of a series of industrialization plans based on the assumption of an unlimited supply of raw materials and foodstuffs from the Soviet Union in exchange for finished industrial goods from Eastern Europe. The post-Stalin leadership under Khrushchev, however, gave priority to the neglected consumption needs of the Soviet population, while at the same time attempting to engender technological development throughout the Soviet bloc. A period of experimentation with new economic methods and political relationships culminated in 1968 in the Prague Spring, where the dangers which experimentation posed to the system so alarmed the Soviet and East European leaders that the process was brought to a halt by the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

After the dramatic rise in oil prices in 1973, a new prospect opened up for the Soviet Union: that of trading raw materials with the West in return for much needed consumer goods and new technology. The East European countries were thus denied the promise of cheap oil, but at the same time offered the possibility of engaging in increased trade with the West. But since they had little to offer in exchange for their imports, they ran up immense debts to Western financial institutions. In Poland, the austerity measures introduced to meet the obligations incurred led to an explosion of working-class anger and the arrival of the Solidarity movement. As with Czechoslovakia in 1968, so with Poland in 1980, attempts to find ways around the stagnation of the bureaucratic economic system led to a political crisis as a consequence of which a retreat was made on the economic front.

We are now in the post-Solidarity period of Soviet-East European relations. This is to be a period of controlled introduction of Western technology, under the strict supervision of the Soviet Union, to prevent any repetition of the Polish crisis.

Comecon (CMEA)

Plans to increase the integration of the Soviet bloc economies through the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)[1] have been repeatedly under-fulfilled. The strength of Moscow's position as it fights to implement a new set of integration proposals is bringing to the East European leaderships a sense of their chronic dependence on Soviet oil and raw-material supplies and more generally on the CMEA market. Czechoslovakia, for example, despite repeated statements of intent to diversify its sources of supply, got 97.4% of its oil from the USSR in 1984. Romania, once an oil-exporting nation, is now importing huge quantities of it from the Soviet Union. The proportion of Poland's foreign trade with other CMEA countries has increased from 48.5% in 1941 to 53.3% in 1984. The Soviet Union is now Yugoslavia's major trade partner.

The present stage began in 1981, when an integration summit of the CMEA countries was first proposed—it finally took place in June 1984. At this meeting, and at a further one in October 1984, the Soviet Union promised to supply oil and raw materials, but only if other member states would provide considerable funds for investment in energy and raw-material exploitation projects in the USSR. At a meeting in Moscow in December 1985, a further aspect of CMEA integration was discussed: that of technological cooperation. This meeting sanctioned a 'Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technical Progress', intended to take the CMEA towards the year 2000.[2] One of the objectives of this programme is to ensure 'technological independence from and invulnerability to pressure and blackmail from imperialism'. Throughout these negotiations, Moscow has employed its control over raw materials and above all oil as an instrument to influence the behaviour of the CMEA leaderships.

In the first place, an effort is being made to tie the long-term future of the East European economies to that of the Soviet Union. Thus, in January 1984, Hungary signed a cooperation programme with the Soviet Union covering the period until the year 2000. There is evidence too of pressure on Bulgaria to modify its plans in accordance with Soviet economic priorities. In Czechoslovakia, the 'Gorbachev effect' works itself out rather differently. Here the extremely high existing level of integration is to be maintained, but there are moves to modify the exchange structure, with greater development of Czechoslovak agricultural and raw-material potential compensating for decreased Soviet supplies, and perhaps with an increase in imports of manufactured goods from the Soviet Union.

In the second place, the communique issued by the Havana meeting made it clear that Soviet oil and raw-material supplies will be maintained only if the quality of the manufactured goods received in exchange from the East European states is radically improved. In one country at least—Bulgaria—the impact of this new approach has already been felt. In an interview given to a Bulgarian paper in July 1985 the Soviet ambassador to Sofia, Leonid Grekov, insisted that 'economic relations must be developed at a completely new level' and that there were problems with the quality of goods imported from Bulgaria. Gorbachev, on a recent trip to Bulgaria, again made pointed references to the need for improved economic efficiency. There is much speculation now that the 75-year old Zhivkov may feel it best to retire at the Bulgarian Communist Party congress in April 1986.

The Warsaw Pact

The East European countries (with the exception of Albania and Yugoslavia) are also tied together by means of the Warsaw Pact Defence Treaty. On 26 April 1985 all the member states agreed to a 20-year extension of the pact, with an automatic prolongation for a further 10 years unless a country made it clear one year before the expiry date that it intended to opt out. In the period leading up to the renewal, there were reports of dissent by some member countries: notably Romania, but also East Germany and Hungary. These latter two countries have of late been taking something of an independent line towards Western Europe. In September 1984 East German leader Erich Honecker was pressed by Moscow into abandoning a visit to West Berlin, while the Hungarians have recently been developing a theory of

The Soviet hosts at the June 1984 CMEA summit meeting in Moscow

the special role which small and medium countries can play in European affairs. Articles of Hungarian origin arguing this case have been reprinted without criticism in the East German press. The two main themes of dissent, it was speculated, were the level of proposed integration and the impact of increased military spending on the fragile East European economies. Regarding the latter point, there is probably considerable discussion within the Soviet leadership itself about levels of military expenditure, particularly in connection with the vital debate over what course to follow in combating the menace of the American SDI programme.

Thus East European disquiet over the prospect of a new arms race is part of a broader policy debate within the bloc as a whole. On the question of integration—and thus the limit on the East European states' independence in matters of foreign policy—there is also some evidence of debate within the Soviet leadership. Thus on 21 June 1985 *Pravda* carried an article sharply criticizing the Hungarian notion that small and medium-sized countries could play a special, independent role between the two superpowers. On the other hand, the statement issued after the Warsaw Pact meeting at which the pact was ratified for another 20 or 30 years omitted any mention of the leading or special role of the Soviet Union, or any restatement of the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty articulated in 1968 to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The statement indeed explicitly gives the green light to the East Europeans to 'deepen the political dialogue among the European countries in various forms and at various levels'. So East European initiatives are acceptable, providing, of course, that they stay within the broad framework of the Soviet Union's own opening to Western Europe and Japan. Thus the Hungarian/East German position of loyal opposition is embraced, but at the same time there is increased pressure on the Romanians to abandon their more extreme assertions of independence. Consequently, Romania is in some danger of losing its privileged position as a mediator between East and West—given the Soviet Union's own determination to become an active element in European affairs.

Outlook

In all fields, the current policies of the Soviet leadership involve no fundamental break with past practices: this is true of relations within the Soviet bloc as well. The combination of discipline on fundamentals and a certain flexibility on all other matters was the basis of Brezhnev's policies towards Eastern Europe. To date, Gorbachev has remained within these guidelines. What has changed, however, is the degree of urgency with which campaigns to make the existing system work will need to be prosecuted. There are few illusions left today amongst the East European leaderships regarding the use of Western credits to solve systemic deficiencies of their economies. For the people of these countries, therefore, 'making the system work' means first of all austerity. (Bulgarians have already been confronted with massive price rises on basic products.) This will be followed by growing debate within and outside the official structures about how to resolve the crisis of bureaucratic planning. If Gorbachev proves unable to get results within a few years, a combination of popular resentment of austerity and sharpening disputes within the official institutions could lead to changes far more radical that those currently envisaged by the present leaderships.

Footnotes

1. The members of the CMEA are Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, East Germany, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union and Vietnam. South Yemen and Angola send observers, while Yugoslavia participates in some projects.
2. The problems facing CMEA integration are highlighted by the fact that the first version of this document appeared in 1971.

MONIKA HAHN

AIDS IN EASTERN EUROPE

Until six months ago, discussion of AIDS in East Europe was virtually confined to the specialist press. Most material was scientific, often reprinted from Western medical journals without comment. There was no trace of the hysteria with which AIDS has frequently been greeted in the West. More recently, however, the debate about the viral disease has spread rapidly in the more popular press.

There are three reasons for this. Most importantly, cases of htlv-3 positive have been confirmed in most East European countries (official estimates stand at around 60, excluding Yugoslavia—the real figure is probably higher). Though no clinical cases of AIDS have been admitted to, reliable unofficial sources suggest that there have in fact been clinical AIDS cases in the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the USSR. Secondly, the gay communities have tried to open a dialogue with the state authorities, in the hope of preventing a spread of the syndrome: these attempts have met with varying success. Thirdly, popular rumours and fears (noticeably among young people) have resulted in a string of letters and questions to magazines and the health services.

It is in Hungary that the most concrete measures against a possible spread of AIDS into Eastern Europe have been taken. Compulsory AIDS screening has been carried out there on all blood donors since 1 January this year, and the government has set aside 1.3 million pounds for research into the disease. In the GDR, the medical authorities set up AIDS clinics in major cities as early as 1983, although it remains the one north-east European state apparently without any htlv-3 positive cases. Although, until recently, most Soviet articles on the subject denied the possible existence of AIDS in the USSR, this did not prevent the country buying a large number of screening tests last year from the Dutch pharmaceutical firm Organon. In an article for *Sovietskaya Kultura* last December, Professor Victor Zhdanov admitted that about ten cases of htlv-3 positive had been confirmed.

There is considerable concern among gays in Eastern Europe, but the co-operation developing between them and the medical authorities is encouraging, albeit tentative. The most important exception here is the Soviet Union. The maximum penalty for homosexual activity in the Soviet Union is five years, which goes a long way to explaining the silence of Soviet gays on the subject of AIDS. It is also in the Soviet press that the crassest and most hysterical myths are propagated about the disease. Writing in August of last year in *Moscovskaya Pravda*, Academician R. Petrov, a leading Soviet immunologist, remained quite factual until he mentioned transmission of the disease, which he described as being facilitated by 'the dirty needles of drug addicts and a predilection for immoral habits which Soviet citizens could never tolerate'.

Elsewhere, patronizing attitudes are tempered by a certain compassion. In a long answer (which distinguished itself by never mentioning the actual word AIDS) to a reader's letter in the Czech youth magazine *Mlady Svet*, Sally, the resident agony aunt, had this to say: 'Men do not contract the disease because they are homosexual, but because they live risky, promiscuous lives. To an extent, attitudes of the general public encourage this. Some men are just born this way (and there are a fair number of them, an estimated 3–5% of the male population). They are not capable of changing the way they are, although many of them would like to. Even science is unable to help them.' Many such articles in the popular press exhort citizens to restrict their sexual activity to one partner, and definitely to avoid contact with foreigners and people they suspect of gay or bisexual activity. At the same time, most articles on AIDS are careful to point out that it is not a disease which affects homosexuals exclusively. Drug addiction and the use of dirty needles, in particular, are often highlighted as another major means through which AIDS is transmitted.

It is in Poland and Hungary that the most open debates have taken place about AIDS. The seeds of co-operation between gays and the authorities have been planted in these countries (though state-manufactured weed-killer has managed to prevent the germination of many of them). In the 23 November issue last year of the Polish weekly *Polityka*, an article by Krysztof Darski demanded that a state-recognized gay organization be allowed, with the aim of combating the threat of AIDS. In a powerful polemic he continued: 'Ridiculed and pushed to the edge of society, discriminated against without exception by all institutions in our society, hunted down by homophobic people, beaten and insulted, alone and forgotten by State, Church and the sciences—and suddenly homosexuals are supposed to behave like good, responsible Polish citizens? . . . For the average homosexual, the general population is a bunch of cretins who do not understand his feelings and love, who find no satisfaction in their own sex lives and therefore forbid others such pleasure. These people, this collection of narrow-minded citizens, suddenly want to be able to influence the behaviour of homosexuals. Do these people have the right to appeal to homosexuals for help in fighting AIDS?' The article was taken seriously enough for no less a heavyweight than Jerzy Urban, writing under the pseudonym Jan Rem, to reply a fortnight later. Although Urban had some pretty callous things to say, he did point out that homosexuals faced most problems in Poland because of the influence of the Catholic Church. By implication, this was probably why he rejected Darski's call for a unified organization to fight AIDS—since the government would then be seen by the Church to be identifying openly with pals of Satan.

Another section of society not exactly well-disposed to gays is, of course, the police. Last November, a series of dawn raids were carried out against known homosexuals in a number of Polish cities (Gdansk, Warsaw, Wroclaw and Kraków). The police told those taken in that this was a measure to prevent the spread of AIDS—an explanation which might have carried some credibility had not the government decided against buying htlv-3 screening tests from the West because of the cost. The raids had no real function other than to intimidate and in some cases humiliate.

The Hungarian authorities took a slightly more civil line by ordering suspected homosexuals in for screen tests. However, a month later on 9 December the police raided a gay disco, *Kis rablo*, and the estimated 100 guests present were searched and interrogated. Nevertheless, it is in Hungary that information about AIDS is easiest to obtain. Apart from the above-mentioned police action, moreover, the Hungarian government's approach to the problem appears to have been one from which the West could learn. Much factual material has been printed and broadcast, including two long television programmes. And although there is great concern among gays, it does seem that co-operation is developing positively.

AIDS is not spreading in the West as fast as was being predicted two years ago. There are obvious reasons too why its introduction in Eastern Europe will be perceptibly slower than it has been in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the disease has already arrived and it will spread. There are signs that suggest a rational approach to the problem is being taken by at least some East European governments. Primitive anti-gay sentiments are a widespread social evil in Eastern Europe. The governments of the region have a clear responsibility to protect their gay communities against any intimidation or hysteria which the spreading of AIDS may cause.

How can social tensions be managed and policy differences resolved by ruling socialist parties in poverty-stricken Third World states? On 13 January 1986 this question defeated the Yemeni Socialist Party in a devastating spasm of civil war. Parallels can be drawn between the South Yemeni trauma and the equally tragic collapse of unity within the New Jewel Movement in Grenada, although the regional conjunctures in which the two crises occurred were different and the geopolitical context of the Yemeni Republic precluded a Reaganite outcome.

FRED HALLIDAY

THE TRAGEDY IN SOUTH YEMEN

The South Yemeni state emerged in 1967 from a victorious struggle against the British. A population of some two million people live in an almost totally barren country, only two per cent of which is cultivable and only one percent cultivated. (Expanding the agricultural area is almost impossible because of the lack of water.) Two land reforms since the revolution have brought the majority of the land into about sixty collective farms and twenty-four state farms. Some private peasant plots have been allowed, but under stricter limitations than, for example, in the Soviet Union.

Despite efforts to achieve self-sufficiency, only about half the country's food requirements are met domestically. Lack of capital inputs, and of adequately trained agronomists and managers, have caused severe problems, especially in the state-farm sector, where a great deal of investment has been wasted. In 1984 only 3% of the 24 state farms operated profitably. Since the late 1970s, fishing has developed as the one non-industrial sector able to expand successfully: fish has become the country's major export, both to the Soviet Union and to highly specialized markets in the Far East. In 1982, per capita income was $460. In 1985, agriculture provided 10% of output but 42% of employment, industry 16% and 11% respectively.

The Soviet Alliance

For almost all of its eighteen years of existence, the South Yemeni state has been a focal point of continuous war between revolution and counter-revolution in the region. But the country has gained a measure of strategic security through its uninterrupted close relationship with the Soviet Union. Politically, the Soviet view has been that it is absolutely premature to speak of any transition to socialism in a country with such a weak natural endowment, massive illiteracy, great shortage of cadres, and so on.

Right from the beginning, Soviet advice has been strongly against what it sees as domestic adventurism, favouring caution, accommodation to Islam, liberalization, a conditional opening to the oil states, the loosening of controls on the peasants and fishermen for fear of alienating the population. Thus Soviet views have always been more moderate than any of the indigenous South Yemeni political currents, on both internal social policy and foreign policy. They have favoured efforts to normalize relations with the Saudis and Oman, arguing that this would, in the long run, weaken the position of imperialism more than efforts to support movements against the surrounding regimes.

Abdul Fatah Ismail

The Soviets have sought to avoid becoming too deeply involved in the internal politics of the country (it is only in the last few years—under the government of Ali Nasser, overthrown in January—that Soviet and South Yemeni views of how to proceed internally and externally have drawn closer). In the last 18 years, Moscow has given about $270 million of aid, out of a total (to 1982) of $785 million the country has received. The non-Soviet contributions have come from other socialist states including China ($133 million), the Arab states and multilateral agencies. The Soviets do not maintain a military base in Aden—in the sense of a sovereign area or permanent troops—but it is valuable as a naval port and depot more secure than any other in the region, and they do no doubt maintain some intelligence-gathering facilities there.

Political Developments Since Liberation

The South Yemeni ruling Party was founded in 1963 as the National Liberation Front, which carried the guerrilla war against Britain to victory in 1967. It transformed itself into the Yemeni Socialist Party. It has had a membership of about 26,000, about 20% of whom have been army personnel. Less than 15% are members of the working class, by official criteria. A large number of others are intellectuals and party officials of one kind or another.

Throughout its existence, the organization has been marked by factionalism. First of all, the liberation struggle itself was at least as factional as those in Angola or Zimbabwe: the NLF's victory of 1967 was not just over the British, but also over FLOSY, the rival more pro-Egyptian group with whom it had been impossible to achieve unity. In that conflict, a mixture of personal, political and regional issues had been in play. Tragically, more people were killed in the struggle between the NLF and FLOSY than either of them had lost fighting the British.

After the Liberation, there was an initial rivalry between a quasi-Nasserist faction under President el-Shahbi and what were regarded as the 'Marxist-Leninist' Left. The latter came to power ousting el-Shahbi in a bloodless coup on 22 June 1969 (he remained under house arrest for most of the rest of his life and died in his home in 1980). The Front then began transforming itself into a 'party of a new type', following what it regarded as a Leninist model. It unified with two smaller political groups—a pro-Syrian Baathist faction and a small, pro-Soviet Communist Party, the Popular Democratic Union. This was a fusion in some ways similar to that between the Castroist movement and the PSP (Communist Party) in Cuba, with the difference that the Cuban PSP was a much larger political force than the PDU had been. On the other hand, the Yemeni PDU had supported the armed struggle (though not actually taking part itself), and had provided intellectual ballast to the NLF from the very beginning: there

had not been the deep conflict that had occurred in Cuba between the Castroists and the PSP.

In 1978, the first congress of the YSP took place. But just before this, another major factional conflict had broken out. On 26 June 1978, the President, Salem Robeya Ali, tried unsuccessfully to seize power against the majority on the Central Committee. Though not strictly a Maoist, Ali was influenced by Maoism to the extent of being against an orthodox party and in favour of spontaneity: he believed in appointing people on the basis of political principles rather than functional competence and in the early 1970s had tried, with catastrophic consequences, to imitate the Cultural Revolution in South Yemen. But he had remained a popular leader, with a larger following than the party leaders who defeated him in 1978.

The man who emerged as President in 1978 was Abdul Fatah Ismail. He survived in office for less than two years, before being ousted in a bloodless change of government in April 1980. He went into exile in the Soviet Union, but he was able to return in 1985 and was a prominent figure leading the movement against the government in January 1986, until his death in the conflict.

Abdul Fatah had been removed from power in 1980 on the grounds that he had promised too much from the alliance with the Soviet Union and had mismanaged the economy. His opponents dubbed him derisively—using the label applied positively to Khomeini—the *faqih*, the interpreter of religious law. In the other words, he was viewed as a dogmatic Marxist, who buried his head in books but was technically and administratively incompetent. He had risen to prominence in the mid-1960s, proclaiming the need for a Marxist-Leninist line—by which he meant a struggle against the 'petty bourgeoisie'. In domestic policy, this entailed combating the petty traders on whom the prosperity of Aden depended and those whom he chose to call the 'kulaks' in the countryside. This catastrophically dogmatic view of economic and social development scarcely equipped him for managing the country's affairs competently, yet many people remained loyal to him.

Abdul Fatah was succeeded as President in 1980 by Ali Nasser Mohammed, who remained in power until the January crisis. Continuing tensions during these last five years indicate that factionalism has been an endemic feature of the Socialist Party: not just a left-right conflict, but a complex web of shifting alliances and currents. One source of this factionalism has been the divergent forms of radicalism: an indigeneous, Yemeni trend and a more orthodox, bookish one. The revolution's origins lie very much in the former; but the latter, regarding itself as orthodox 'Marxist-Leninist', grew in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the recent past, under Ali Nasser's Presidency, these contrasting trends seemingly did not disagree over relations with the Soviet Union or China or the West. But they did clash over two, partly inter-related issues: internal economic policy and external policy in the region.

Economic Policy

On economic issues, the key question was: how far does domestic economic development require the loosening of state controls? The ten years of highly centralized economic regime that followed independence in 1967 did not yield many results. When the leadership began to loosen state controls in the late 1970s, and to an even greater extent under Ali Nasser Mohammed in the 1980s, living standards rose; there was more foreign aid; the private sector in trading was given greater lee-way; the peasants were allowed to sell about a dozen different products at prices ranging up to 150% above those in the state markets; the controls on fishermen's sales were also relaxed. This was not a case of completely free markets, such as exist for peasants in the *kolkhozni rinok* of the Soviet Union. It was a controlled liberalization, nothing more.

There was also an attempt to encourage Yemeni workers abroad to send back more money. These workers are a very important group, amounting to perhaps one third of South Yemen's able-bodied young men. They send back over three hundred million dollars a year, which amounts to between sixty and seventy percent of all South Yemen's foreign-exchange earnings. (Exports brought only $21 million in 1982, contrasted with imports of $747 million!) The contribution of the workers abroad, moreover, came not only in foreign exchange but also in imports of consumer goods. Their role in the society can be better appreciated when it is realized that by the age of about 35 such workers are worn out and have to be replaced by younger workers going in search of jobs abroad. The government now gave these workers greater freedom to go abroad and send their earnings home.

This economic liberalization, however, was also a source of tensions. When people in the private sector begin to have higher incomes, people on party salaries become nervous. The result was a growth of the classic pattern of party privileges. In the middle seventies, special shops for members of the Central Committee; then privileged access to certain goods; then increased licence as to what people could bring back from foreign trips, special allowances for state functionaries to buy foreign-exchange goods, the provision of air-conditioners, video machines and cars. This was carried out from the top downwards.

Ali Nasser Mohammed

One very revealing episode from the mid-seventies, under the old leadership: the army had been completely re-equipped by the Soviets, so they decided they would get rid of all the old British arms by taking them to the frontier with Saudi Arabia and selling them to smugglers, in return for Toyota cars (the arms probably ended up with the Afghan Moujahedeen, probably the only people in the world who wanted Lee Enfield replacements); the Toyota cars were given, on a planned basis, to officers in the army and members of the party.

But in a very small and very visible society like that of the South Yemen, this type of development created great tensions. When everyone had been poor, there had been less tension; but when more goods became available, competition became greater. There was doubtless an increase of corruption in official circles as well.

To all this must be added the dimension of class forces within the country and outside. There were clearly internal social groups who realized that such developments increased their leverage. There were also both emigrés and foreign governments who realized this provided a wedge for undermining the socialist experiment. We must remember that, just as people in Havana are aware of Miami, so people in South Yemen know the very high living standards in the Gulf: they are not isolated as people were in the 1930s in Russia.

Such awareness has come not only from the migrant workers, but also from people being able since the late 1970s to pick up colour television programmes from North Yemen: they both gained an idealized picture of life in North Yemen itself, which they had been officially told was in terrible poverty, and saw American films as well. So this economic loosening-up certainly created social tensions and instability (as a similar process had done in Cuba in the late 1970s, leading to the Mariel crisis of 1980). And insofar as Ali Nasser promoted this policy, tensions focused upon him within the party.

Regional Policy

The second broad source of political tensions within the party concerned external policy in the region, and relations with neighbouring states. In the cases of Saudi Arabia and Oman (since 1975), there has been no dispute that South Yemen has to find ways of living with these conservative states. But in the case of North Yemen, the South had until 1982 supported the National Democratic Front there, the successors of the radical republicans of the 1960s. The decision to stop supporting the rebels and to

press for normal relations with the Sana government involved bringing some 2,000 Northern rebels south and settling them in camps.

The policy undoubtedly produced serious internal tensions. These tensions can be appreciated when we remember that there had been twenty years of war in the region, from 1962 when the revolution in North Yemen began: there had been continuous revolution and counter-revolution in South Arabia for two decades. In the Dhofar province of Oman, there had been a decade of war from 1965 to 1975 (it was also in 1982 that for the first time South Yemen and Oman established diplomatic relations). Although relations with Saudi Arabia had never been that bad, there had been border clashes and it was only in the early 1980s that regular diplomatic relations were established. So it is only very recently that the South Yemeni government has established settled diplomatic relations with neighbouring states in the region.

This turn has undoubtedly been accompanied by internal accusations of betrayal. In the cases of Oman and North Yemen alike, such accusations cannot be justified: the revolutionary movements had been decisively defeated, and in such conditions there was nothing unprincipled about ending material aid to the resistance and establishing diplomatic relations with the two regimes. (The withdrawal of support for the Eritrean movement is a different matter: there, the withdrawal of support was unprincipled and was done unconditionally—in the name of solidarity with the Ethiopian revolution, but in effect as an act of *Realpolitik*).

Nor was there any sign that the Ali Nasser government had in fact moved to the right in international terms. It clearly remained a strong supporter of the Soviet Union, backing the invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet boycott of the Los Angeles Olympics and so on. Nevertheless, internal tensions and suspicions may well have been fanned by the very wide coverage in the Western press and Arab media of Ali Nasser's supposed reasonableness and moderation, with papers like *Newsweek* suggesting that he was 'opening up' to the West.

The Crisis Explodes

Such tensions over economics and external policy cannot easily be handled in a highly centralized power structure, where all but the President are in fairly marginal positions. In such circumstances, personal tensions can easily arise. To complicate matters, Abdul Fatah, the former president ousted in 1978, returned from the Soviet Union in the spring of 1985; the Soviets hoped he would accept an honorary position, but he did not do so. The tribal factor is also important. In the still basically peasant society of South Yemen, tribal loyalties remain and extend even into urban life, since most urban people are first-generation migrants. So people naturally still tend to trust and distrust on a tribal basis. And when the party recruits from one area, it is likely to recruit from one tribal group; this also holds, of course, for the militia and border forces—*quwat sha'abin*—created in the 1970s. Such tribal allegiances have been clearly visible in the recent conflict.

The first major sign of the new political crisis appeared when inner-party elections took place in June 1985 in preparation for the YSP's Third Congress, to be held in October. The June elections gave 70% of all posts to supporters of the President, Ali Nasser. His opponents, Abdul Fatah and others, started to protest and to distribute arms to their people, with the result with political, personal and tribal tensions all came to be focused on the struggle over positions in the party.

We do not have any certain knowledge of the precise chain of events that precipitated the tragic, sanguinary convulsion that began on 13 January—who fired the first shot and why they did so. The form the fighting took involved the capital Aden being sacked; but this was no example of a traditional Yemeni conflict in which the rural hinterland takes revenge on the city, even if that appears to have been the unintended result, since the fighting seems to have been largely concentrated in Aden. Geographically, Ali Nasser seems to have drawn support from the regional base he has always had in Dathina, north of the capital, while his victorious opponents drew support from other regions north of Aden as well as from areas to the East, and also deployed the guerrillas of the North Yemeni NDF.

The Navy seems to have supported Ali Nasser, and by and large the Airforce too. But the Army split, with the tank corps in Aden apparently playing a key role on the side of the opposition. This corps had been formed by the former Minister of Defence Ali Antar (1978–81), allegedly assassinated by Ali Nasser at a leadership meeting when the crisis broke. This killing of Ali Antar on the first day supposedly turned the loyalty of the officer corps of the army, when it became known to them on the third or fourth day of the fighting. This seems to have been decisive in the military struggle. It seems that the intelligence service also sided with the rebels; its former leader, Mohammad Said Abdallah (known as 'Mohsen'), previously sent into exile, is now back in office. The militia apparently split on regional lines.

Much remains obscure about the tragic January conflict in South Yemen, but we must, on present evidence, conclude that it was a largely self-inflicted catastrophe. It occurred at a time when the country was under less pressure from external counter-revolutionary military threats than at any time since the 1967 liberation. The only substantive policy issue that Ali Nasser's opponents have specifically brought forward as a charge against him is that of excessive licence for the private sector and corruption of officials. Yet, on all the evidence available up to now, Ali Nasser's policy seems to have on balance been positive.

No doubt there was corruption and many problems connected with it. But the fact is that living standards rose substantially and general popular contentment did so even more, because the people's sense of having been left out of everything was reduced. The confidence of Yemeni workers abroad in conditions at home increased: remittances rose from $119 million in 1977 to $307 million in 1982. Prospects for increased aid were also much brighter, not only from the Soviet Union, but also from the Arab states and even from multilateral agencies such as the World Bank.

It is also the case that many of the key figures in the new government were themselves key figures in promoting this policy. For example, the new President al-Attas was one of the chief organizers and negotiators of the economic opening to the Arab oil-producing states under Ali Nasser. So he and others in the new government must have been as responsible as anyone else for the state of affairs under the former President.

A comparative perspective indicates that, whenever a transition is made from a highly austere, state-controlled economy towards a certain degree of economic liberalization, all sorts of problems are bound to arise. This has been the experience in Cuba, in Poland and above all in China. It was even a problem in Grenada. People are, of course, going to want more consumer goods, there is going to be corruption, foreign companies will take the government for a ride with various projects. All this is inevitable. The question is what the extent of such problems is: whether they affect the social character of the state, basic property relations and so forth. No evidence has yet come to light that qualitative problems of this kind were surfacing in South Yemen.

In the absence of such evidence, we must be drawn towards more narrowly political explanations for the upheaval, and towards a parallel with the political crisis in the New Jewel Movement in Grenada before the American invasion. There too issues of personal style and elements of corruption certainly existed; but they were generally exaggerated in a highly pressurized system. The South Yemeni crisis is another case of that same broader political problem of highly centralized political systems in socialist states, where politics is very much confined within the leadership and all sorts of disagreements can expand and acquire an explosive potential out of all proportion to their substantive significance. Conflicts then spill over into wider circles of highly politicized but also inexperienced and undisciplined youth, who very quickly escalate the struggle, resorting to arms in a primitive and uncontrolled way. The result in Aden was the death of up to 15,000 people, equivalent to 5% of the total population of the city, and the killing of perhaps half of all leading cadres of the regime.

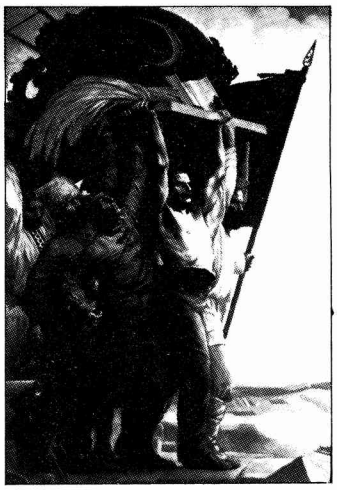
BOOK REVIEWS

Moshe Lewin
The Making of the Soviet System
Methuen 1985, £19.

This book is a collection of articles on inter-war Russia, written between 1965 and 1986. Their common element, says the author in the introduction, is that they are all written by 'a social historian of 20th century Russia'. The emphasis is on the word 'social'. This is a field of research in which there tends to be a one-sided concentration on political power: Soviet-type societies lend themselves to such one-sidedness, given the obvious importance in them of the state, the leadership and ideology. Not only in academic writings, moreover, but also in the works of dissident literati from Kundera to Konrad, or in the articles, statements and appeals that fill the pages of journals like *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, the image is created and reinforced of a society which is dominated, censored, muted and atomized. But 'society', in fact, can create insuperable obstacles to the activity of the state. Workers can make a nonsense of productivity drives; officials be sluggish and dishonest. Intellectuals create their own moods and trends. Youth follows its own fads.

And society does more than passively resist the state. As the studies in this book clearly demonstrate for the post-revolutionary period, the historical-cultural traditions of Soviet society, in particular those of the mass of the peasant population, stamp their own image on the state, blocking certain developments and favouring others. The present collection is principally an in-depth study of the gigantic conflict between the Soviet state and the Russian peasantry. In this conflict between an urban, 'socialist', industrializing, 20th century state and a 'medieval peasantry' (Bukharin), the state that emerges triumphant is one profoundly stamped with the values, images and traditions of the pre-revolutionary era.

It was, almost inevitably, the 'state' which confronted the Russian peasant. War Communism had already brought with it the practice and ideology of 'statism'. The whole social matrix bred authoritarianism, as the state replaced the proletariat as the agent of socialism and acquired its own social base: the bureaucracy. A number of factors favoured this reliance on the might of the state: the unhinging of social structures and the 'quicksand society' created by the industrialization drive; the growth of bureaucracy; the historical-cultural traditions of the country. Eventually this idolatry of the state became the central ideological tenet of Stalinist 'state socialism'. But it was not a purely ideological product, hence a historical approach is needed if we are really to understand and situate the specific form of Stalinism—a remodelled autocracy, renewed nationalism, and a dogmatic orthodoxy with strong pseudo-religious overtones.



Not only apologists for Stalinism, but also a great deal of the non-Stalinist left influenced by the Left Opposition tradition, have accepted the image of a recalcitrant Russian peasantry, essentially petit-bourgeois, with its lust for property, its intrinsic indiscipline and incapacity for co-operation, its inherent capacity for recreating capitalism. More than half the articles in the present collection—from 'Who was the Russian kulak?' (1966) to 'Grappling with Stalinism' (1985)—provide a detailed and fascinating alternative to this stereotype.

They show how, under the impact of world war, revolution and civil war, the Russian peasantry regressed to an economy more 'natural' than had existed in Tsarist times, shedding whatever capitalist development it had hitherto experienced. 'Still a world of its own, the *mir* now turned even more deeply into its own shell and separated itself from educated, urban and official society by its village and commune, its customary law, and its own form of religion—a ruralized ancient Christianity, complete with devils and witches.' The ethical-religious world of the peasantry, influenced by these forms of communal life, rejected imposed dogmas and, in particular, any clerical or secular hierarchy. Traditionally, the peasant masses of Russia had a non-political but nevertheless suspicious, even hostile, attitude towards state officialdom and state coercion.

But those same traditions provided starting-points for the gradual transformation of this pre-capitalist society, along the lines favoured by the 'socialist' state—the village commune; customary law based on the right of labour (*pravo truda*); the tradition of land redistribution. The clash between the state and the mass of the peasantry, misnamed the 'collectivization drive', was not some ineluctable historical necessity. Nevertheless, it occurred. And it not only transformed the Russian countryside, having first 'drowned the peasant uprisings in blood'. It also had a profound effect on the state itself, that agency of 'progress'.

It is now a commonplace to compare Stalin with Ivan the Terrible or Peter the Great, those great state-builders and most absolutist of Tsars. This return to the models of earlier Tsardom is no accidental feature of Stalinism. On the basis of Soviet experience, Lewin proposes the maxim: 'the quicker you break and change, the more of the old you re-create'. In its need to come to terms with that other great force in the nation, the peasantry, the Stalinist state gave secular form to much of the latter's spiritual and religious tradition and tapped the imperial past for whatever it could offer. The peasant tradition of 'Tsar Batyushka' (Tsar Father) was replaced by the Stalin cult, the linchpin in a revamped secular orthodoxy and a far more potent symbol than is suggested by the official term: 'cult of personality'. Stalinism absorbed some of the age-old values of Russian orthodox civilization: 'The traditional devotion to and worship of icons, relics of saints, and processions, was apparently being replaced by a shallow imitation of icon-like imagery, official mass liturgy, effigies, and especially processions and pilgrimages to a mausoleum sheltering an embalmed atheist.' Russian demonology and the belief in the 'evil force' (*nechastaya sila*) was fully catered for in Stalin's 'ritual of liquidation', a most extreme and demented form of secular demonology—what Bukharin, at his trial in 1938, called the 'medieval principle'.

That many people in Russia responded to this is beyond doubt. But was this development a genuine response to the muzhik mentality, to what the peasants really wanted or needed? Lewin suggests not. Apart from the cynical use of such symbolism by the new autocracy, it was also perhaps an expression of 'the psychic and mental tensions and values of the officials and leaders of the state machinery that was rapidly growing within and in conflict with a still age-old rural civilization'.

This then is the principal, but not the only theme in this remarkable collection. The industrialization drive and the inner-party conflicts of the period are also studied in depth. As in all such scholarly and profoundly historical studies, where the canvas is broader than the struggle for power at the top, one is left with a strong sense of inevitability. History is a ponderous beast, not easily diverted as it 'slouches towards Bethlehem'.

Was it all inevitable then? For Lewin, the relevant question is not the 'unhistorical' one of whether Leninism inevitably led to Stalinism, but rather the concretely historical one of whether the particular variant of oligarchic system developed under Lenin had any other 'potential' within it. Was the violent statization of the Stalinist model the only possible outcome? Lewin's answer is no. There was also the NEP variant, the Bukharinite model. Leninism, Stalinism and, one might add, the various post-Stalin variants such as Hungary's 'NEP socialism' are all 'a succession of different political forms' within a larger political system. But was the system itself, which in all its variants presents itself as oligarchic and authoritarian, inevitable? Here Lewin is more pessimistic: 'One does not see a possibility of any democratic solution in those days—even if Lenin wanted one. More pertinently, socialist solutions were not available either.'

Lewin's work over the years has been a major contribution to our knowledge of Russian society. The present collection gives a good idea of how great that contribution has been.

Gus Fagan

Gregory Flynn and Hans Rattinger
The Public and Atlantic Defense
Croom Helm 1985, £25.00

Time was when the parties didn't think and the people didn't care. In the cosy world of defence and foreign policy, old assumptions held fast, the political parties left policy-making to a handful of gurus, and a change of government meant scarcely the slightest difference in the policies pursued. It was a comfortable world for NATO, as it meant that its lack of accountability went unchallenged, and that its decisions on how best to destroy the world could be taken without any awkward questions being asked by the public at large.

This world was rent asunder by

one historic NATO decision in 1979. With this decision, which has since brought us Cruise and Pershing II missiles and the promise of more to come, NATO's leaders opted to take on those groups in NATO countries who were concerned about the arms race and to defeat them in the public domain. However, the plan backfired and they were in no way prepared for the explosion that resulted.

This fat volume, put out by the pro-NATO Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, is concerned with the fall-out from this popular explosion in seven NATO countries. Has it irrevocably undermined popular support for NATO policies, perhaps even for NATO itself? Has it democratized defence and foreign policy-making? Is there a new mood that NATO needs to adapt to? Seven noted social scientists from the countries concerned seek to answer these questions.

The conclusions vary widely. Reagan has little to fear from public opinion in the US, provided that nobody reveals the contradictions in his Star Wars propaganda. Public opinion in Italy, West Germany, Holland and Britain, on the other hand, is critical of much of what NATO stands for. Norwegian opinion is generally happy with the status quo, so long as there are moves toward nuclear disarmament. Most of the rest of NATO Europe wants to see more meaningful change in the bloc structure, in the US-European relationship and in the levels of nuclear armoury, before the protests and demonstrations cease.

Overall, the picture is one of a great sea-change in opinion across NATO Europe, but without any settling down of that opinion into a new set of beliefs, norms and values. The peace movement has undermined support for the surface reality of NATO and superpower confrontation. Now the bloc structures themselves would appear to be on the agenda, if only it finds the will to move in this direction.

The surface reality manifests itself variously in the shape of NATO's nuclear policies; the deployment of new nuclear weapons; the rhetoric of Cold War; the US military presence in Europe; the activities of intelligence agencies against the movement; the erosion of civil liberties; the constant threat of war.

The polls quoted in this book reveal beyond all doubt that people not only care about the nuclear and military aspects of bloc confrontation, but are for the most part actively opposed to many present policies. Furthermore, the notion of a Soviet military threat no longer holds the grip on mass opinion that it did in the 1950s and early 1960s. There is not much support for continued increases in military budgets, especially if this conflicts with maintaining social spending. As for attitudes to America, only in West Germany and Norway is there a strong undercurrent of support for a close alliance with the world's most powerful country. Otherwise, the opinion is widespread that western Europe should assert itself inside NATO, stand up to the Americans and even sever existing links. (The last viewpoint, however, is only supported by a small minority in the NATO countries.)

One of the real strengths of this book is that it brings together views on NATO from so many of the member countries. But there is more, too, for the polls cited in the volume indicate clearly that attitudes to the Atlantic Alliance vary widely depending on the question asked. This has pertinent lessons for propaganda work. In Britain, for example, the typical response to the question 'do you favour the withdrawal of Britain from NATO?' is between 8% and 14% in favour. However, a question by Gallup in 1982 which offered a number of alternatives to NATO and some other options within the alliance, found as many as 26% in favour of withdrawal (10% favouring a western European military organisation instead, 11% an isolationist policy, and 5% accommodation with the Soviet Union). A further 5% favoured leaving the military wing of NATO, and only 37% favoured the status quo with the Americans remaining dominant over western Europe.

In polling I have been involved in myself, I have found that nearly 30% support the proposition that 'Britain should be neutral between East and West', with about 55% against. This lends support to the view that more people will support a positive idea than a negative one such as 'withdrawal from NATO'. In West Germany, in polls conducted through the 1970s, over 35% supported the idea of that country being neutral. Indeed, when such figures rose above 40% at one point, former NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns caused a stir by declaring that a 'neutral government in West Germany would not last 5 days'. Other polls, which test the level of support for withdrawal from NATO, find similar figures for Britain, i.e. 8–14% in favour. (Only the Green Party supports withdrawal in West Germany, while a number of peace movement bodies support a more cautious approach.)

Apart from Spain and Greece, which are not included in this book, the largest minority in favour of 'withdrawal from NATO' is in Italy, where around one quarter of the population supports the proposition—much of this linked to Communist Party support, even though the CP does not formally support withdrawal. Holland is in many ways similar to Britain and West Germany: no major party or peace organization supports withdrawal. In Norway, the support for withdrawal is lowest among the countries included, perhaps because NATO has formally agreed over a long period not to station nuclear weapons in the country in peacetime.

One of the polls that one sees least often is on American views of NATO. Elsewhere, I have seen polls that indicate that fewer than 25% of Americans have any idea what NATO is, so the figures in this volume on support for either withdrawal or a reduced commitment to NATO must be treated with caution. Nevertheless, it is interesting that only 4% favour withdrawal, and 11–12% a reduced commitment, given that the pressure has mounted from Congressmen to reduce the commitment, and that votes in Congress tend to be much more evenly balanced. The right-wing support for switching America's commitment to the Pacific and elsewhere, leaving Europe to its own devices, thus appears to be largely an Establishment concern which has developed with no pressure from the electorate. Other polls on US opinion show the background to Reagan's Star Wars propaganda. They show a large majority favouring a 'tough' stance in relation to Moscow, but a larger majority wanting America to talk to the Russians. Even more people—no less than 80% in 1983—favoured complete nuclear disarmament worldwide, while a majority did not believe that America could win a nuclear war, or that it could survive one. Finally, there is enormous support for a freeze on nuclear weapons development, and little support for increased military spending. (Star Wars neatly transcends the contradictions apparent here, in so far as it is explained as a programme which will render nuclear weapons redundant, make America strong and save the United States from nuclear annihilation. It is also argued by its proponents that it has brought the Russians back to the negotiating table, and ensured America a position of strength there; as such, it has all the ingredients for popular support. If this is perturbing, it is nevertheless surely important to know.)

The book poses other awkward questions for the peace movement. In some respects, opinion on nuclear weapons has changed little since the 1970s, despite massive peace protests. Many who have expressed support for the movement on specific issues, such as Cruise, are people who long for a return to the cosy world of detente, even though detente as we knew it rationalized and legitimized the nuclear arms race. The polls show that a minority was opposed to all nuclear weapons before 1979, while in some countries few new people have been won to such a view since then.

The main changes which have taken place are:
a) support for unilateral nuclear disarmament has increased: polls indicate that in Britain support is now 27–35%, as against 15–18% in 1979–80;
b) anti-Americanism is now much more widespread in western Europe: this change can be traced directly to the impact of the administration now in power;
c) opponents of nuclear weapons have not grown in numbers, but they are more vocal and active in their opposition.

This book shows that movements *can* undoubtedly change opinion at a mass level, even though the results are often contradictory and can be transitory. It gives ground to the belief that suitably targeted campaigning could undermine support for NATO itself. This is vital if we are to make sure that the Cold War is never revived. Why return to detente, if all it does is provide the weapons, the policies and the raw material for the next period of high tension? Next time, detente could help to undermine rather than prop up the structures and policies of Cold War. But that depends on the peace movements.

Ben Lowe

Mark E. Schaffer (ed.)
Technology Transfer and East-West Relations
Croom Helm 1985, £22.50

'Technology transfer' has become a popular phrase for policy makers at all levels of government. Local authorities are preoccupied by notions of 'technology networks' and 'product development'. At national levels there is concern with technological backwardness in the manufacturing sectors. The worry is that the nation is not benefiting fully from 'the New Technology' while someone else is. Every town with a science park seethes with indignation at the thought of science parks in Japan, the USA or France with more high-tech companies per square inch. But the attitude that technology is a scarce resource is revealed most clearly in the debate focusing round the Soviet Union.

Technology Transfer and East-West Relations is a series of papers dealing, in essence, with the West's economic war against the Soviet Union and the COMECON countries. A range of positions are represented, but none questions the ethics of economic warfare. What emerges, however, is that the media

view of high-tech trade which portrays the East as evil Reds just dying to get their hands on the computers in order to launch World War III is naive to the point of imbecility.

It is along the East-West axis that the contradictions and shortcomings of the notion of technology transfer are seen most clearly. Technology transfer presupposes that technology can simply be moved from one place to another. In this book, editor Mark Schaffer tries to clarify some of the terms associated with technology transfer, distinguishing between 'embodied' and 'disembodied' technology and between military 'application' and military 'significance'. In doing so, he only underlines how ill-informed the notion of technology transfer is.

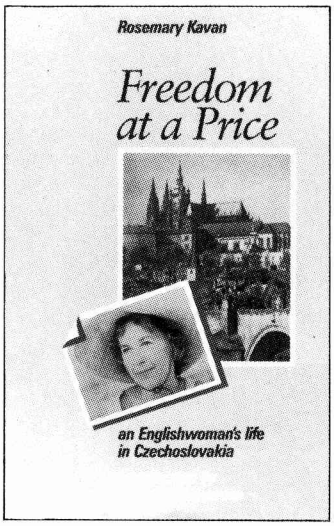
It becomes clear that the concept of technology here is limited to the technology of microelectronics, in particular that revolving round the use of digital integrated circuits made of silicon. The main concern is that the USSR might get hold of the latest Bloggs Super-Duper Computer. This area of technology is of course highly important, but it is only one among many: to say that the Eastern bloc lags behind the Western in the fields of large-scale integrated circuit manufacture and digital computer design is not to say that it is technologically backward. In rocketry, for instance, the USSR is easily the equal of the USA. In optics, East Germany is probably superior to Japan. In precision mechanical engineering, the Czechs are second to none.

As most contributors to this book point out, the real meaning and significance of East-West technology transfer is economic. The importing countries, like the USSR, must decide whether it is a more intelligent use of resources to buy high-tech products than to develop them. For exporters, like the USA, it is a question of the long-term profitability of their industry. As Julian Cooper of the University of Birmingham points out, the USSR has not depended on technology imports to any great extent since the twenties. Indeed the most ardent proponents of embargoes against the Soviet Union are those who argue that it has become a major military threat with very little help from foreign technologies.

So what are the motivations behind the drive to restrict trade in New Technology? Having grounded firmly the question of technological exchange in the field of economic relations, the book leaves it unclear why the West should try to block Soviet access to computers and related equipment. One cannot help thinking that the resistance of the United States to technology transfer to the East is, above all, guided by the desire to prevent its allies from gaining a substantial market which, for purely political reasons, it is denying to itself. The Japanese certainly have no qualms about trading with the USSR, nor—so it seems—does the British Secret Service. IBM is another matter.

A question not tackled in this book is why the New Technology developed when and where it did. Political considerations and strategic decisions by the state, regardless of allegiances, may motivate technological development. Alistair McAuley points out in his contribution that the Soviet system places great obstacles in the way of new ideas and technologies. Much of the argument in this book, however, sees the state as beyond technology and this must surely be wrong.

Gary Harman



Rosemary Kavan
Freedom at a Price
Verso 1985, £9.95.

Rosemary Kavan's book is a political biography of unique interest. It is the story of a life intimately linked to the experience of Czechoslovakia from 1945 to post-1968. These were the two periods of the country's history when new hopes were being raised, only to be followed by massive political repression—first in the show trials of the 1950s, later in the 'normalization' purges of the post-invasion days. *Freedom at a Price* is a moving personal exploration of the deep contradictions within those periods of Czechoslovak history.

Herself British, the author married a prominent Czech communist Pavel Kavan to join him in building a 'brave new future', based on the attractively simple vision of a society where exploitation of man by man would cease. She did not realize, however, that this vision was taking shape against the background of an already distorted reality at the height of Stalin's power.

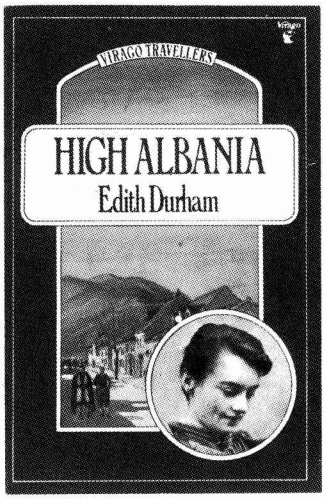
Her eyes were first opened when she learnt that Pavel's own communist principles did not apply at home: he expected her to be a companion and helpmate with few rights of her own. These 'feudal assumptions' which he brought into their relationship shocked her greatly. Then came the realization that most people round her could not care less about socialism if it meant long working hours, tiresome meetings, no safety at work and perpetual shortages. This was the time also when a hostile nursery teacher refused to administer medicine to one of her sons because of what communists like her husband had done to her family.

Finally Pavel—and partly Rosemary too—were themselves caught up in the monstrous political 'man-eating machine'. Pavel became a key witness in the trial of the 'anti-state conspiratorial group' supposedly led by Slansky. The 'group' was charged with attempting to overthrow the Party as vanguard of the people. Eleven of the defendants were executed; Pavel and others received sentences of up to twenty-five years.

Neither the economy nor the political climate, the author acidly comments, changed for the better as a result of removing those who were supposed to have caused the distortions. Life only became grimmer and harder. She struggled on, learning technical jobs for which she was not initially qualified (her first assignment was marked 'Top Secret', the very illogicality of which, she says, struck a hopeful note). Pavel was released after four years, and died soon afterwards. Rosemary stayed on to welcome the new radicalism of 1968—and to see it crushed.

Freedom at a Price is an indictment of bureaucratic manipulation, but it also sparkles with humour and hope for those who refuse to give up. That is the most astonishing conclusion, and a tribute to the author, who—despite being too generous to the men in her life, including her later politically active son Jan—radiates her own strength. Rosemary Kavan left Czechoslovakia in early 1972 for a colder and much resented exile. She died in London in 1981.

Karen Jones



Edith Durham
High Albania
Virago 1985, 355pp, £4.50

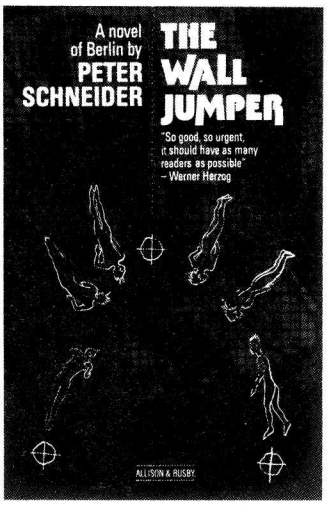
In 1900, at the recommendation of her doctor—she was suffering from nervous depression, stemming from the deep frustration of her life in middle-class London—the 37-year-old Edith Durham took a boat at Trieste and sailed down the Dalmatian coast. Thus began the engagement with the Balkans which was to remain her central preoccupation for the rest of her life (1863–1944). Like many British travellers to this part of troubled Europe, she too developed her own likes and dislikes for the different nations who—in the twilight of Ottoman rule, darkened by the shadow of the approaching world war—fought for the Empire's Balkan inheritance. Unlike most, however, she became a consistent and passionate champion of Albanian national and political aspirations. In return, Durham is to this day held in the deepest esteem and affection by all Albanians, irrespective of geography, frontiers and political parti pris (the Zog dynasty being a notable exception).

High Albania is a record of her 1908 journey through the steep mountains of the 'land of the eagles': with superb skill and much humour she brings to life the social laws, sexual mores, irreverent religions, prejudices, wants and philosophical and political reflections of Albanian men and women, providing a powerful chronicle of a society at the point of its violent and inevitable dissolution. In common with many Western travellers, Durham chose a romantic identification with the material scarcity and ancient social code of the Albanian north and her eyes remained shut to the signs of the highlanders' increasingly desperate and brutalized reaction (seen, for example, in the flourishing of blood feuds) against the rapid disappearance of their traditional way of life, its very foundation destroyed by the spread

of private property in land and by the Ottoman state's accelerating thirst for soldiers and money to fight lost wars. A necessary complement to Durham's Albania is Dimitrije Tucović's *Serbia and Albania*, published in 1914 and still awaiting its English translator. Written in reaction against the Serbian bourgeoisie's policy of expansionism, by one of the foremost leaders of Serbian Social Democracy, the book argues that only a socialist advance throughout the peninsula would break the charmed circle of backwardness and national strife which has become synonymous with its name.

High Albania is a classic which should be read. John Hodgson's introduction adds to the book's great delight.

Michele Lee



Peter Schneider
The Wall Jumper—a novel of Berlin
Allison and Busby 1985, £3.95

A plane zig-zags over the Berlin wall three times in order to land into the wind. The characters in the novel repeat the plane's toing and froing.

Many appear to trifle with the enormity of the divide. Kabe takes a run up a pile of rubble against the Wall near his home and leaps into the East. He simply wanted to get across, he tells his interrogators. Jumping the wall was more convenient than using an official gate.

Three schoolboys from the East want to go to the pictures in the West. They work out a rooftop route across the Wall. They make the trip to the cinema twelve times before the authorities find out. Nobody believes they did it just for pleasure. They are prosecuted as subversives. The ridiculous is always subversive.

The Wall, the author explains, is where 'two political continents collide'. The two masses are not so much different as mirror images of each other. Everything in one regime has a counterpart in the other, sometimes grotesque. At other times the reflections are simple but unnerving. 'I decide to visit the Wall. A tour group climb out of a bus and take the steps to a look-out tower. Up on top a few of them put binoculars to their eyes and begin waving. What they see is a tour group on the other side just climbing out of a bus run by the same travel agency.'

The Wall mirror reflects everything. The newscasters on each television channel are shadows of each other. The news on each side reports only the leaders of its own side and the opposition on the other. Classes on each side are equally far apart: '. . . an intellectual under socialism has about as much contact with the workers as I do in the West. He gets to know them when a water main bursts, a facade is restored or a chair stands vacant at a barroom table.'

Walls in East Berlin have no graffiti. Someone once wrote DUBCEK on an advertising space: he got as far as the fourth letter and was jailed for eighteen months. In the West, where there are many graffiti, three letters suffice to provoke the same reaction—RAF for Red Army Faction.

The Wall is not just concrete and barbed wire. The author shows us how it exists in our heads as well. In dialogue he demonstrates the dialectic which drives each side into a corner. Each population criticizes its own government, but permanent hostility is reserved for the other side: 'We can't speak to each other without having our states speak for us.'

Refugees never belong. Lena leaves the East but finds the West false. She is disillusioned not by anti-Communism but by the 'cocktail party nature of the anti-communism'.

The hero and his East German friend Pommerer conduct a bitter exchange of differences. Pommerer's side did not choose Communism. The others did not choose American democracy. 'But that only proves that neither system is home-grown German.' 'True. But what was better for a people who elected Hitler in a landslide: imposed communism or imposed capitalism?'

This book is superbly written, alternately sad and funny. Its effect is serious. Once you have looked in the Wall mirror and seen the images hovering on the other side of the divide, your own slogans and arguments begin to sound as hollow as theirs. A brilliant novel.

Anna Paczuska

NICOLAS KRASSÓ —IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we have to inform readers that Nicolas (Miklós) Krassó, our friend, colleague and sponsor, died in London on 10 January 1986. Nicolas was formed in the cross-currents of European Enlightenment and classical Marxism, his relationship to the world characterized by a permanent curiosity, vast erudition and exceptional intellectual integrity. A formative influence on us all, the idea of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* was born in part out of long and extensive discussions with him.

In his account of the 1956 Hungarian uprising, which combined a sense of great and irrepressible excitement with a cool assessment of the actual relationship of forces, one idea stood out that can be taken as our own starting-point: that socialism is inseparable from active participation of the masses in politics. 'I insisted that we seek not liberalization but democratization—that we must realize that our fundamental critique of bourgeois democracy is that it is deficient. In contrast, socialist democracy must be consistent democracy. Bourgeois society did largely get rid of the mediaeval notion of secrecy of politics —it provided for public elections and a free press—but within it politics never really came to be created by the masses. When Lenin talked of soviets, he was talking fundamentally of the need to create the dynamic which would lead politics to be fully freed from the principle of secrecy, because it would be done by the masses themselves.'

Nicolas was buried on 23 January at St Pancras and Islington Cemetery in London. His brother György, a contributor to this issue, is at present working on his posthumous papers.