

australian marxist review

Theoretical journal of the Socialist Party of Australia

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Moscow dialogue*
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problem today*
- ★ *4th decade of
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Australian MARXIST Review

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A high level meeting of Australian Labor Party representatives with leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Communist leaders of other socialist countries exchanging views on the great issues of the nuclear age would obviously be an important development in Australian labor movement politics. It is no unreal concept. In early October, Soviet President Brezhnev received the working group of the Socialist International, the International organisation of social democratic (Labor) Parties.

This visit was of basic import. It was the first contact between representatives of two branches of the international labor movement — the Social Democrats and the Communists.

Social democrats historic dialogue in Moscow

by I. SINITSIN, Soviet political analyst

The first dialogue between social democrats and communists on disarmament in Moscow included not only representatives of European social democratic (labor) parties.

Taking part in the talks were H. Tiam, secretary on international problems of the Socialist Party and Chairman of the foreign policy committee of Senegal's National Assembly, and Enrique Tejera Paris, secretary on international problems of Venezuela's Democratic Action Party.

It is no secret that there are ideological differences between communist and social democratic parties. But life and the urgent need to solve mankind's urgent problem — halting the arms race and averting a nuclear world war — call for uniting the efforts of the Social Democrats and the Communists and for business contacts and constructive dialogues with all other democratic and peace-loving forces.

The international working class and its ideologists have always opposed militarism and the arms race. Karl Marx pointed out that military spending seen from its economic aspect is equal to a nation throwing part of its capital into the water. Real steps toward disarmament are topical today not only because military spending is a heavy burden

for the working people: the world daily spends on military purposes more than 1,000 million dollars. Stockpiling of giant amounts of weapons and new rounds in the arms race on no account increase world stability or guarantee the peoples' security. It heightens the danger of global disaster.

The Soviet Communists and the ruling communist parties of socialist countries treat with great interest the possibility of developing and maintaining stable contacts with the social democratic parties in practical steps toward disarmament and other fields for the benefit of stronger peace and social progress. While starting a dialogue with the Social Democrats on today's most important international issue, the CPSU proceeded from its stand in the Peace Program adopted by the 24th Congress.

Such a course toward asserting a lasting peace and cooperation in these fields with the Socialists is also completely in line with the conclusions of the 1976 Berlin conference of European communist and workers parties.

Two years ago, on October 7, 1977 the USSR Supreme Soviet approved a new Soviet constitution, whose article 28 records achieving universal and complete disarmament as one of the chief directions of Soviet foreign policy. While being a consistent advocate of the implementation of this program, the USSR has advanced a number of specific and far-reaching initiatives on halting the arms race. They are now under discussion at the 34th session of the UN General Assembly.

In estimating the international atmosphere in which the meeting was held, the Socialist International representatives noted that the world is now on the brink of another, still more dangerous round in the arms race. They said that in this crucial period the signing of the SALT II Treaty in Vienna is regarded as an historic step in the process of establishing control over strategic armaments. The working group also expressed the hope that the Treaty will soon be ratified and further talks will immediately begin on another quantitative and, particularly, qualitative limitation of the strategic armaments.

In course of the meeting, Mr Brezhnev, explained the Soviet leadership's principled approach to the disarmament issue and stressed that a notable easing of international tensions was achieved in the 70s. Speaking about the SALT II Treaty, Mr Brezhnev said that the Treaty not only limits the strategic armaments numerically and qualitatively, but also opens up prospects for further advance along this road.

Mr Brezhnev added: "Everything must be done for the young generations to know only the roads of peace, cooperation and understanding." But the weapons of mass annihilation are being improved every day. The threat of its further spread throughout the world, has become real...It is necessary that the peoples should realise the imminent threat. And to facilitate it, is the duty of the Communists and Social-Democrats, and the working class movement the world over."

Mr Brezhnev called for passing from words about disarmament to concrete deeds. He stressed the intention to act precisely in this direction, seeking to create stimuli for real disarmament. The creation of the atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding is decisively important for progress in disarmament.

The Soviet Union values what has been achieved on this path and is ready to continue developing such relations.

★ ★ ★

After all, we are talking about international issues, not about the internal problems of any country or party. "Unquestionably, every party is independent. Every party quite rightly resists interference in its internal affairs. But this means it should not itself interfere in the affairs of other parties. As for international affairs, the course of which could decide the future of entire regions of the world, of all mankind, there must be coordination and solidarity. On these issues there should be no situation where each decides for himself. We do not see in this a sign of greater independence, as it is interpreted by the imperialists, who are elated every time they spot any sign of uncoordination in the socialist community. We see this as an underestimation of socialist and anti-imperialist solidarity — the supreme principle in the struggle for peace and socialism."

M. Vilner,
General Secretary
Central Committee
Communist Party of Israel

The agrarian problem today

by KARL KING

In the last half century tremendous and dramatic changes have taken place in the Australian countryside. No Marxist can ignore them or cling to old concepts. Today, we have a totally new situation.

Gone for ever is the day of the swaggie existing on little more than meagre handouts from "cockies," and forced in most cases to sleep in the open. Gone with him too is the rarer type the cross-country jockey who sent his swag ahead to the scene of a likely job, and then "jumped the rattler" to the new area.

Departed with these professional tramps are those vast armies of itinerant, poorly organised, and shamefully rewarded workers, driven by city poverty, who also often had to "jump the rattler" to provide almost slave labour to where the season and locality demanded.

Many, many thousands of workers were required for land clearing, fencing, dam building, harvesting, rabbiting, fruit picking, ploughing, stacking hay, cutting chaff, feeding pigs, milking cows, shoeing and breaking horses, weeding, shearing and cane-cutting from the temperate south to the tropical north.

Small towns and villages proliferated. Buggies, gigs, wagons and saddle horses gathered at mail time around the village post office. Big clydesdale horses waited patiently outside the blacksmith shop for their turn to be shod, or were harnessed to big table-top wagons carting bagged wheat to the station stack, or a load of wool destined for the ports.

Social centres on week days were the local pub and a small hall for Saturday night dances. On Sundays it was often the same hall, now a church; and the hired hands were often conscripted to attend same. In many centres it was only the railway station or siding which was the centre of social activity as the steam trains rolled through.

The pre-war Australian countryside absolutely teemed with people. There were the store people, the insurers and agents, the blacksmiths,

bankers, hired hands, rich and middle farmers, and, of course the small poor farmers, the share croppers and those classified as semi-proletarians who worked on the rich neighbours' farms as well as on their own, small, and insignificant blocks.

They were all inspired by the great dream of becoming rich, of acquiring more acres, of obtaining a "Chevvy" or an Overland or a big Yank Buick; and of employing labour to do the hard and dirty work.

While much of the big peasant communities in other countries were based on purely subsistence farming, this was not so in Australia. However, most farms had their vegetable gardens, their chickens, geese and turkeys, their pigs and milking cows, and of course, their pet riding hacks and many dogs.

There was also a considerable diversification of crops and the running of cattle and sheep on wheat farms, which were criss-crossed by numerous fences. Even on the more prosperous middle farms the work of the farmer, his wife and family, and of the hired hand often commenced before daybreak and continued after the evening meal.

Pre-war Australia had little heavy industry or manufacturing. Railways was a big enterprise and needed to get produce to the market. We had our own shipping line for the same purpose and this was later sold for nothing to a big British shipowner.

Industry had to mainly serve a predominantly agrarian country. Australia enjoyed little better than a semi-colonial status. It depended almost solely on the market at the centre of the huge British empire. Our currency had the debased position of being 25 shillings to the British pound.

British governors were foisted on us, and even with a Labor Government with Scullin as Prime Minister, we danced to the tune of the Bank of England and wages and pensions were slashed, and hours increased in the great 1929-32 crisis and the depression up to the Second World War.

This crisis phase of the industrial cycle which was followed by the great depression in which prosperity was all the time "just around the corner," was actually preceded by an agrarian crisis in Italy and Poland which spread world wide and merged with the industrial crisis. World trade fell by two thirds and production by 46 per cent.

This gave us a huge crop of ruined farmers, particularly the small and semi-proletarian and share-cropping farmers. It likewise deeply effected the country proletariat. The AWU which covered many rural workers such as shearers and sugar workers deserted them, and rank and file workers attempted revolt and suffered at the hands of right wing leadership of the union.

These pre-war depression years brought into sharp focus an economic law determining the progression of small scale farming to capitalist farming.

If we disregard the law of supply and demand for the sake of simplicity, and assume that there can be a normal period in which supply always matches demand, then we must agree that prices for farm products must relate to the cost of production on the meanest soil, the smallest viable plot with the worst climate and the furthest from the rail head or market. If not, the farmer cannot survive.

Consequently, the farmer on the richer soil, with a bigger area, a better climate, closer proximity to the market, and able to hire cheap labour and use modern technological and scientific advance, must reap a super-profit.

A severe market reversal or a bad drought puts the small farm up for grabs. Banks or other money lenders dispose of same to the wealthier farmers, or to the gentlemen of Pitt or Collins Streets.

And so the capitalist farmer does two things. He eliminates more and more small farmers; and he reduces the amount of hired labour by using STR — the Scientific and technological revolution. He rounds up sheep with motorcycles, cattle with helicopters, and commutes to the farm in a Mercedes. Dams are sunk with bull dozers. Ploughing and reaping is done with the aid of very expensive tractors.

And so we pass from the previous pre-war labour intensive agriculture, to the capital intensive. And the countryside is largely denuded of people, and small towns and villages begin to rot. We begin to look more like the USA where acres are astronomical for each farm, and the newest techniques are quickly doing away with the poor Mexican slave who abounded on American farms and orchards.

The second world war did two things for Australia. It gave a great spurt to our industrial development which took up the unemployed slack. It also gave us a respite from agrarian crisis up to 19059, when once again, crisis broke out and has raged in agriculture right to the present day.

Much is being made by the government of the pick-up in wheat, wool and meat sales. These markets have been very "dicey" for a long time, and will be again. Our apple industry has gone. 3 million tons of cane are not to be harvested. The wine industry, particularly as to brandy, is in severe trouble. And so the list could go on.

A severe budget deficit brought about by government mishandling of receipts and lavish aid to the multi-nationals and big business, determines that lending aid to the smaller farmers seeking assistance will not be granted to any but those who cannot get some from private enterprise.

No so much vertical but horizontal monopoly is developing in the countryside, although there are growing indications of both. Processing firms as in meat for instance, acquire the cattle station, process the meat and have their own retail outlets.

Flour millers I'm given to understand, are now interested in bread baking and the egg producing industry.

The variations up or down in the present agrarian crisis will hasten this monopolistic development.

The preying on farmers by money lenders, machinery firms, insurers and middlemen has in the past won a great deal of public sympathy. However, they have been moving for a long time for their own self-preservation — mostly at the expense of labour and the consuming public. Boards and commissions proliferate. They seldom attack the monopolies. Their attitude is very much like that of the "truckies."

Fruit growers co-operatives have done very well with freezing fruit, releasing below standard apples onto the market as required at high prices, or whatever the traffic will bear.

Recently, information was given to me that certain people were given the task by consent of the Coffs Harbour banana growers to place themselves at the railway station to intercept shipments of bananas and take from each consignment ten per cent of the cases and to destroy them to keep up a short supply to the market for bigger prices.

Such actions are reminiscent of other times when 2 million lbs

of coffee was spilled into the ocean, and five million pigs slaughtered and destroyed to keep up prices.

Sugar farmers have their own co-operative mills in many areas. In them they exploit human labour. They showed little remorse for "sheeding" the cane-cutter. Having the best of all lobbies in the National Party in Queensland, and the Country Party in Canberra, they have solved their marketing problem at the expense of a big sugar price rise on the Australian consumer, and this alone will give a tremendous boost to the C.P.I. as it takes effect in many areas.

If we had an agrarian bureau, or a good research organisation, we could well have a look at the many boards, commissions and other instruments serving the farmer. And it would pay us all well if we were to run classes on Lenin's agrarian theses.

The processes taking place in the countryside are just as irreversible as the developments in industry, and while it may make it easier for a Socialist Australia to establish state run farms, it must be remembered that we fight the class struggle with people; and that every organised detachment we can win to our side is of tremendous importance.

Therefore we must look to those who can be won to worker-farmer unity against, firstly, Fraser and monopoly.

There are literally thousands and thousands of these. They are the small farmers supplying milk, fruit and vegetables to processing firms. Their work is back-breaking and largely shunned by the working class. They are mercilessly exploited by these firms and middlemen which, of course, also strive to keep them on their farms in a permanent state of servitude.

Six of Fraser's cabinet are big graziers notorious for their attitude to workers and for their extreme conservatism. They seem completely subservient to monopoly or state monopoly capitalism — a subservience not untypical of that of the national bourgeoisie in the third world to imperialism and neo-colonialism.

The Liberal and Country Party Coalition served American imperialism in Korea and Vietnam. It gained us no booty and lost us much blood and treasure. It attacks health, education and social welfare. Its taxation on wages and its general attacks on living standards is also a blow to the people's consuming power and the farmer's market.

Surely then, we can win many farmers as allies in the peace struggle, against the onslaught on community needs and against the budget.

However, we should never let up on our socialist propaganda. Capitalist farming methods have given us a disastrous legacy of salinated soil, destruction of habitat and environment including expanding deserts and eroded landscapes. Only socialism can check these most damaging ravages of our country and begin to reverse them providing we can act in time.

While the farming population is rapidly diminishing and we have become the most urbanised country in the world, a people's front demands an alliance with the poor farmer, the neutralisation of the middle farmer, and class struggle against the big capitalist farmer. This cannot be achieved without paying every attention to the organisation of the agrarian proletariat.

While shearers are very important, and the hired hands of lesser importance because of their fewer numbers, the real effort must be made on the country rail centres, the big processing undertakings and in mining and wherever large numbers of workers remain fairly stable in a given locality. These are our base for worker-farmer unity.

Much that has been said here can be translated into what should be a correct approach to the small businessman. Lenin's teachings are just as valid today despite the change in the countryside and the growth of monopoly.

The forces for socialist change are there. It is our task to offer a lead.

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The author of the following article, Romesh Chandra, President of the World Peace Council sets out the objectives of the WPC to achieve a world which "will never again stand on the brink of nuclear catastrophe."

The recent series of new Soviet offers to help preserve peace and build international understanding have opened the way for new possibilities in achieving this goal providing the people of the world come out for a positive response from all governments. This outline of the role of the World Peace Council is important reading for all people interested in peace regardless of political or religious standpoint.

World Peace Council — its 4th decade

by ROMESH CHANDRA

The World Peace Movement led by the World Peace Council will mark its 30th anniversary in April 1979. Three decades ago peace fighters representing public opinion in all continents came to Paris and to Prague from 72 countries for their First World Congress.

Men and women of all civilizations, all religions, all ideologies and all colors of skin, aware of the horrible danger threatening the world today — the danger of war — urged all people of good will to prevent the instigators of war from hurling the world into a new catastrophe.

For civilization the 30 years that have elapsed since the First Congress is not a very long period, but for the individual 30 years is quite a span. Many who were born then are parents today concerned with their children's peaceful future. Others, who experienced the holocaust of the Second World War and who said 'no' to war on behalf of their generation at that First Congress, are no longer with us. Let us honor their memory, let us honor their struggle and their efforts. It would be neither exaggeration nor underestimation to say that their efforts have borne good fruit. The World Peace Council, which has inherited and is continuing the finest traditions of the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist peace movements of the first half of the century, has become a powerful social force. The mighty tree of the World Peace Movement is flourishing in soil made fertile by the efforts of millions.

I often recall what Georgi Dimitrov said in 1936 when he spoke to those fighting against war and fascism: 'We need a front of peace,' he said, 'which will spread over all parts of the world, from Tokyo to London, from New York to Berlin. We must encircle the globe with such a network of friends of peace, with such a powerful movement of international solidarity, with such active initiatives of united international proletarian policy in the interests of peace, that it will be possible to stay the criminal hand of the war-mongers.'

In those days this appeal was smothered by the militarists. Today the situation is different. The World Peace Council unites representatives of political parties, organisations and national peace committees from over 130 countries in all continents. In many countries national peace movements represented in the WPC increasingly acquire the character of a front, a united body embracing all true patriots.

The WPC is winning ever greater prestige and influence and its ties with international, regional and national mass organisations and movements are growing stronger. Many political forces, which differ from each other in character and in convictions, are cooperating with the WPC on the key issues of disarmament, nuclear weapons and international solidarity.

The increasingly pronounced mass character, the growing national and international unity of the peace fighters, and the WPC's mounting authority and prestige are the main achievement of our development over the past 30 years.

The initiatives of the WPC and of national peace movements in mobilising public opinion have been a powerful factor helping to promote movements for disarmament and against the U.S. aggression in Indochina, ensure the success of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, check imperialist plans and Israeli aggression in the Middle East, and extend and strengthen massive solidarity with the liberation movement in Southern Africa and the struggle against fascist and reactionary regimes in Latin America. The influence of the peace forces and the attraction of the ideas of peace, peaceful coexistence and cooperation among nations have become so widespread that governments and parliaments have to reckon with them. This was particularly evident during the massive campaigns against the neutron bomb, campaigns that now involve a growing number of nations and which last year compelled the U.S. Administration to postpone manufacture of this inhuman weapon.

Whereas at the dawn of our movement, the French government

denied entry visas to many delegates to the First World Congress of Defenders of Peace, in 1978 members of the WPC PRESIDUM MET IN Washington, D.C., in the very heart of the imperialist world. Today the World Peace Council is actively cooperating with the United Nations, UNESCO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, the UN special commissions against apartheid and for decolonization and enjoys a status that perhaps no other non-government body has. Our Council supports all the UN actions for disarmament, peace and national independence, against colonialism, racism and apartheid, for a new international economic order and for the economic progress of all nations.

The governments working for peace and national independence — i.e., the overwhelming majority of UN members, notably socialist and non-aligned countries — cannot on their own ensure lasting peace. But together with the other mass movements represented in the World Peace Council, these governments unquestionably can defeat the forces of imperialism, aggression and war, fascism and neo-fascism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and reaction on all fronts. The unity of peace forces on a state and non-state level is another major outcome of our movement in these 30 years.

The new balance of forces in the world today has, for the first time ever, made it possible for mankind to eliminate war as a means of settling controversies between states. Implementation of the Soviet Union's Peace Program and the pressure from all the peace forces have led to detente and changed the political climate in the world. There are now grounds for new optimism and the certainty that another world war can be averted.

But recognition of this fact should not give rise to complacency, especially as some recent developments have given peace fighters cause for apprehension. For instance, there is the alarming fact that the international atmosphere has deteriorated. The consolidation of socialism's positions, the new advances of the national-liberation movements in Africa and Southeast Asia, the collapse of the reactionary regimes in Greece, Portugal, Spain, Afghanistan and Iran and, finally, the exacerbation of the crises and social conflicts in the developed capitalist countries have led to a visible activation of the opponents of detente. We are witnessing two opposing trends in international developments. On the one hand, there is a mounting tendency in the European continent toward further detente, a tendency backed by the socialist community, the Peace Movement, and progressive forces throughout the world. On the other, imperialism is accelerating its arms build-up.

We are disturbed by imperialist plans to return to the cold war and

nuclear brinkmanship. It is these forces that are fueling hotbeds of war, swelling military budgets, and fostering an unprecedented arms race. The NATO summit in Washington D.C., and the December NATO Council Session in Brussels ushered in a new quantitative and qualitative stage in stockpiling and development of bombs, of which today there are enough to destroy life on earth many times over, is a crime against present and future generations.

We are often asked if the WPC is not exaggerating these dangers. How can the cold war be revived in the face of detente, which, the peace fighters declare, is the outcome of a new alignment of forces? Neo-colonialism cannot restore colonialism.

True, neo-colonialism does not lead to a resurgence of colonialism, though their goals are identical — to maintain imperialist control of countries and peoples. But, the cold war can be revived and we see such attempts being made today in new conditions. What caused the cold war?

- ★ the mounting arms race;
- ★ the feverish drive to form imperialist military and political blocs
- ★ NATO, SEATO, CENTO, ANZUS, and others;
- ★ the sharp intensification of anti-Soviet, anti-socialist and anti-communist propaganda, intimidation of nations with the 'Soviet' and 'communist' danger and stepped-up attempts to subvert and split the emergent socialist community, the communist movement and the international democratic movements.

The imperialists believed that because they had a nuclear monopoly they could dictate their will to peoples and countries. Therefore, the peoples are rightly apprehensive of the development of qualitatively new weapons of mass destruction in the imperialist countries — the neutron bomb, the cruise missile, the laser weapon and others. Western strategists and the military believe this will shift the balance of strength in their favor. And all this accompanied by a sharp upswing in anti-Soviet and anti-socialist propaganda, by new fabrications about the 'Soviet danger,' by a new explosion of anti-communism, and by attempts to split and weaken the communist movement, international democratic organisations and movements, and the socialist community.

Equally suspicious are the dangerous plans to extend NATO's influence on the African continent, 'reanimate' CENTO and ANZUS, create blocs of all sizes in various regions of the world, 'security pacts,' joint armed forces and much more, all of which has one aim —

to protect imperialist interests.

The West is dangerously crusading to set up SATO in the South Atlantic, a bloc similar to NATO, which would include some Latin American states and the Republic of South Africa. And now the press writes of METO — Middle East Treaty Organisation.

It is apparent that in its self-styled 'mediation' between Israel and Egypt, U.S. diplomacy is pushing in precisely this direction. We have seen that without waiting for an agreement to be signed, some of those directly concerned have already coordinated their political and military plans. With Cairo moving toward a separate treaty, Israel is becoming free to attack Lebanon at will, shell Palestinian refugee camps, and commit other acts of a similar nature.

The proposed 'security pacts' in the zones of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf are equally sinister, for imperialism plans not so much to rely on the local feudals and bourgeoisie for support as to protect them from explosions of mass disaffection. The signs are many that the United States and its allies intend to establish direct military control over sensitive regions in Asia and Africa.

The 'Vietnam syndrome,' the bitter experience of defeat, had caused many American politicians to stop and think before agreeing to dispatch U.S. soldiers to some distant corner of the globe. But this does not mean imperialism has abandoned its hopes of restoring its might of bygone days by 'making Asians fight Asians, Arabs fight Arabs, Africans fight Africans and Latin Americans fight Latin Americans,' as Prime Minister Pham Van Dong of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam said at the Fifth Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Colombo.

All this is particularly dangerous in the light of the obviously coordinated actions of the U.S. imperialists, the West European reactionaries and the Peking leaders. Having totally abandoned the principles of 'Pancha Shila,' which the Chinese People's Republic had endorsed, the Peking leaders have now become the mainstay of imperialism's plans in Asia and are allying themselves with reactionary regimes in Africa and the Pinochet clique in Chile.

Considerable apprehensions are aroused by imperialism's undisguised intention to play the Chinese card against the USSR. Four decades ago plans of this nature to use Hitler's Germany led to Munich, the Second World War and the loss of more than 50 million lives.

China's treachery against Vietnam shows clearly the extent to which the Peking leaders, in their subservience to imperialism, have departed from socialist ideals and goals, and their indifference to the destinies of the world. By their actions they have challenged the socialist nations, the non-aligned countries, national-liberation movements and all decent people in the world. The World Peace Council demands that China stop its aggression against Vietnam and urges all peoples, governments and the United Nations to denounce the aggression.

Imperialist extremists who prefer 'non-existence to coexistence' are becoming more active. Invariably, it is the military-industrial complex, the arms merchants and their political puppets who are behind the arms race, the anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns, and the plans for military and political control and outright military interference in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Though this group of schemers is not too large, it has tremendous material resources and a huge propaganda machine, and to defend its social system it is ready to risk life on earth. This is what motivates us to focus attention on the seriousness of the imperialist threats.

This is no simple task. It is complicated by the fact that the Peace Movement itself is constantly attacked. The imperialists use their mass media to spread lies about the World Peace Council, to weaken our struggle and blunt its anti-imperialist edge. Imperialist propaganda claims we are prejudiced. Why does the WPC accuse only imperialism, the United States and NATO of intensifying the arms race which, supposedly, is no more than the objective consequence of recarving the world into new spheres of influence? Are not the USSR and the other Warsaw Treaty countries also arming? Why does not the WPC call upon the socialist countries to disarm unilaterally? This, according to Western propaganda, would show the world socialism's good will and peaceful intentions.

To this we can say that the past 30 years have taught us that questions must be answered. Does the WPC represent the 'hand of Moscow?' Is it an instrument of the communists? Certainly not. The WPC Presidential Committee is composed of over 120 members. Among them are leaders of political parties in many countries — socialists, labor, social democrats and communists, liberals, Christian-democrats, national-democrats and others. Every regional national-liberation movement is represented in the WPC by its leaders. There are representatives of the biggest international and national

mass organisations, churchmen, writers and scientists. They do not attempt to impose their convictions upon one another but strive for common positions and common viewpoints.

Our movement is accused of being one-sided. Indeed, our movement is one-sided in its anti-imperialist efforts. Our generation has seen the disintegration of many 'independent' pacifist-type movements which tried to defend peace by preaching political 'non-interference' and standing aloof from social problems, thus isolating themselves and losing the support of the masses. Neither the Peace Movement nor the WPC have ever stood on such positions nor will they.

As for socialism, there is no need to popularise its ideas by force of arms. It is not states or groups of states that dictate social transformations. Social transformations develop as conditions mature ensuring the victory of progressive forces in specific areas of struggle. However, to protect itself and its allies from imperialism, socialism was forced to respond to imperialism's challenge and start arming although this does not correspond to its ideals and goals.

That is why on all questions of disarmament we insist on the principles of equal security and parity. Any shift in favor of imperialism would open the doors to imperialist aggression, local conflicts and a world war. There is but one way to preserve and strengthen peace and that is through coordinated and balanced steps leading to general and complete disarmament allowing no unilateral advantages.

This is what the socialist community, the Warsaw Treaty countries propose. The WPC, supports these proposals and calls on all national peace organisations and all peace fighters whatever their political views and creeds to compel their governments to proceed from talk, to concrete and practical steps in the direction of disarmament.

The World Peace Movement is the largest mass movement of international solidarity today.

This simple fact is gaining ever wider recognition. The peoples of all countries would be more certain of the future if the goals that the peace fighters are working for, for instance the conclusion of SALT II between the United States and the Soviet Union, were attained. The success of the Vienna talks on a reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe would greatly consolidate world peace. The peace forces are calling on the United Nations to convene a World Disarmament Conference that would open up opportunities for the peaceful economic, social and cultural development of every

country.

Two years ago at the World Assembly of Builders of Peace in Warsaw, the delegates of the peace forces — political organisations, and mass international and national movements — endorsed an Appeal to the Peoples of the World. This was a broad program in defence of peace, freedom, social justice and progress.

This program has lost none of its meaning today. It helps mobilize public opinion for the struggle for disarmament, against the danger of war and to coordinate efforts of various organisations, and to strengthen their solidarity. However, the lofty goals set down in this Appeal of the World Assembly of Builders of Peace can only be fulfilled by involving the broad masses in the fight against the militarist and imperialist conspiracies, which can lead to a military holocaust. For this reason the special session of the World Peace Council held this February in Berlin called on all who are striving for and are ready to help preserve peace *to mount an energetic drive to stop the arms race.*

Through mass meetings, demonstrations, and marches, through petitions, protests and demands sent to parliaments and governments, through national and international meetings of the peace forces, and by taking advantage of all available means of expressing the peaceful aspirations of the peoples, efforts must be concentrated on the following urgent issues:

- ★ a ban on nuclear weapons: we demand that SALT II between the United States and the USSR be signed and put into force as soon as possible; we demand that all the five nuclear powers — the USSR, USA, Britain, France and China — start negotiations immediately to exclude all forms of nuclear weapons from their armouries;
- ★ the struggle against the neutron bomb: we must expose militarist manoeuvres to deceive public opinion and arm NATO with the neutron bomb; we demand an end for all time to the production of all new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction;
- ★ the struggle to replace war budgets with peace budgets: we demand a halt to the steadily rising war expenditures, a reduction of military budgets by the leading military and economic powers, especially permanent members of the UN Security Council; the funds thus released should be channelled into improving living standards, helping the developing countries, and abolishing hunger, poverty, disease and illiteracy.

Disarmament, peace and an end to the arms race are our common

and vital concern.

Our goal is not simply to exist at any cost, not merely to preserve life on earth, but to change it in such a way that the world would never again stand on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. With this as our goal the Peace Movement embarks on the fourth decade of its history, mustering under its banner all who are prepared to fight for peace, freedom, social progress, and justice for the present and for future generations.

(Slightly abridged)

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POINT FROM HISTORY

The inaugural conference of the Australian Council of Trade Unions adopted the socialisation objective of the Labor Party and decided to set up a peace committee *“whose duty it shall be to establish a Bureau of Peace, and to keep in close touch with the working class of all nations, particularly those bordering the Pacific, for the purpose of helping to prevent future war and to help bring about world peace.”*

Socialism — Australia's essential alternative

by W. J. Brown

“A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of Communism,” Marx and Engels declared in opening their Communist Manifesto.

In striking confirmation of Marxist theories, Communism is no longer a spectre. Nor is it a theory yet to be proved in practice as it was when the Manifesto was first published in 1848.

Today, the historical period of capitalism has closed in one third of the world. Socialism, the first stage of the communist society of the future, has become living viable reality.

This dynamic world-changing fact of twentieth century life is not confined to Europe. Socialist countries now exist in Asia and Latin American. On the seething continent of Africa a number of countries are opting to by-pass the capitalist stage and take the socialist-oriented road in their struggle for fully independent nationhood.

Australia is the only remaining continent (leaving aside Antarctica) where to this point in history, the capitalist system operates in exclusive command.

Today, no country in the capitalist world can evade the challenging contrast presented by the perspective of Communism.

Australia, despite difficulties and setbacks encountered by the movement for scientific socialism, can be no exception.

The science of Communism with its perspective of higher forms of communally creative life for all humanity is the most dynamic inexorable socio-political force of our time.

Since the turn into the 19th century, capitalism itself, with its recurrent economic crises and its responsibility for two world wars in the 20th century, has decisively demonstrated the truth of the science founded by Marx and Engels and developed by Lenin.

Socialism has proved itself as the essential alternative to the failed, contradiction-riven system of capitalism.

The energy crisis, the environmental crisis and the social and economic crisis of capitalism can only be solved by change to a social system based on planned effort for the common benefit of the people. The capitalist system with its anarchistic, individualist process of amassing private profit regardless of social and economic consequences must be replaced by the scientific, planned society of Socialism.

The greatest requirement of our age is to make the huge potential of modern productive forces serve the working people of the world; that the ownership and control of these forces should belong to the people who labor by hand or brain and not be used by a handful of super-rich monopolists to exploit the people and endanger the very continued existence of humanity in the process.

Capitalism's perspective offers perpetually recurrent economic crises, insecurity, mass unemployment and poverty amid plenty.

This bleak prospect is being exacerbated, not alleviated by the scientific and technological revolution.

The scientific and technological revolution has created new phenomena, deepening the contradictions which are the fundamental causes of capitalism's instability.

This new phenomena includes the interplay of continuing inflation side by side with mass unemployment. Prices continue to rise accompanied by declining capacity of workers to buy back the goods they have produced. Under labor-saving techniques of the new technology this whole process is accelerated.

The scientific and technological revolution under capitalist conditions has meant the intensification of the social and class polarisation of society. Less jobs are available for professional and white collar workers as well as industrial workers, creating a widening and deepening of the basic contradiction of capitalism — that is, social production and private appropriation.

This, in turn, is intensifying the class struggles of all sections of the working class in defence of their basic right to a job; to a say in productive processes and the right to a decent living standard. Within widening class struggles throughout the capitalist world con-

consciousness is mounting that mere struggle for this or that immediate gain is not enough. Awareness is growing that the sickness of capitalist society cannot be cured by reforms or economic modifications. Consciousness is increasing on the objective need for socialism as an essential replacement of the crisis ridden system of capitalism.

The latest world economic crisis of the 1970's has been correctly assessed internationally by capitalist and labor movement spokesmen alike as the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930's.

Over 130 years ago in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, Marx and Engels referred to the already existing experience of recurring economic crises.

The periodical return of these crises, they wrote, puts the existence of the entire bourgeois society on trial, each time more threateningly. Today, capitalism is on trial before a jury of global dimension.

“Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces,” Marx wrote. “In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you a society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist.” †

As the arrival of the steam mill demanded removal of the fetters of feudal class rule and its replacement with the rule of capitalism, so the arrival of the new productive forces of the computer and automotive processes of the scientific and technological revolution objectively require advance to the planned society of socialism with the new forces for social production under the democratic rule of the working class supported by its allies.

A democratically planned, crisis-free socialist economy in the interests of all people leading on to the communist or modern communal way of life is the rational and logical destiny of human social development.

† **Marx, The Poverty, of Philosophy, Ch. 2, section 1.**

The Communist science founded by Marx and Engels and creatively developed by Lenin proved this is not some utopian visionary concept but an objective, law-governed social process.

Today, socialism is not the vague dream it was in the days of Australia's

well-intentioned utopian socialists in the 1890's.

More importantly Socialism is a vastly more viable reality now than in the difficult years after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Then the world's first socialist state, the Soviet Union stood alone, embattled by 14 invading armies and besieged by a hostile capitalist world; its future seemingly uncertain. Today, the Soviet Union has moved to the advanced stage of developed Socialism.

Various other socialist countries have emerged in Europe, Asia and Latin America and, together with the Soviet Union, make up a world socialist system. This system is presenting a new feature in international socialist co-operation. This is reflected in the Council of Mutual Economic Aid which has already been functioning with increasing effectiveness over 30 years.

In sharp contrast to capitalism, the planned, people-governed societies of Socialism provide a society free from exploitation of man by man, free from economic crises, mass unemployment and insecurity. Instead of the scientific and technological revolution threatening to become a social bane, the socialist countries welcome it, confident that social ownership, control and planning over these great productive forces will assuredly open the way to new, undreamt of heights of cultured human living.

Unable to deny the great progress made by the Soviet Union and the socialist world system, the capitalist world and its media take up the false cry that socialism allegedly represses "human rights."

The reverse is true. Socialism, as any objective examination of reality in the socialist countries will show, guarantees human rights. Human rights is a class question. In the capitalist world people's "human right" to demand change from capitalist to working class rule is repressed, often by most brutal methods, when capitalist profit and privilege is really under threat from popular protest.

While guaranteeing all basic human rights of freedom from want and insecurity and the right to a life of culture and freedom of expression, the socialist countries take steps to maintain the fundamental new class feature of their society — that is, the maintenance of the rule of the working class supported by their allies. Any attempt to weaken this rule and open the way to the historically retrograde return of capitalist class rule is illegal under Socialist law and is met with appropriate legal measures.

In other words, the basic approach of Marxist-Leninist science is that all phenomena in human society must be approached on the basis of class relations in modern society. The fact of the capitalist world with its millions of unemployed and otherwise deprived working people is that it denies basic human rights to the working class which makes up the majority of any community.

The socialist countries approach human rights on the basis of providing these rights to the working class, and all other sections of socialist society — the collective farmer, intellectual, etc. The only “right” that is denied is restriction democratically placed on those who would misuse the working class democracy of socialism to destroy working class rule.

This approach guarantees enduring human rights for all who live under and enjoy the privileges of a people’s society which has abolished the basic source of inhumanity — the inhuman system based on exploiter and exploited.

Unfortunately even some supporters of socialism have departed from a class understanding of the realities of capitalist and working class states and lapsed into misrepresentation of the reality of human rights in the socialist world.

But this misrepresentation is being met with inexorable emergence of the truth. More and more the truth emerges that socialist society by its very nature guarantees basic human rights while capitalism denies them.

An important local reference validating this was a four page statement signed by 20 Australian trade union officials representing fourteen unions on June 12, 1979, after a six week study delegation to the Soviet Union.

After highly evaluating the extensive democratic rights of unions in the Soviet Union the delegation unanimously and unequivocally testified that:

“We have enjoyed the natural freedom of movement which every citizen has, to move about the towns, cities and republics in this vast peace loving and progressive nation and have seen for ourselves the giant strides which have been made since their socialist revolution in the various areas that go to improve the living standard and general well-being of the people of the USSR.” (The delegation was made up of men

and women of differing party political standpoints; non-party, Australian Labor Party, Socialist Party of Australia and Communist Party of Australia. The statement was made in a period when the capitalist world media's campaign attacking the Soviet Union on the human rights issue was at a high peak.)

The real menace to democracy and human rights today rests with imperialism and the super-powerful multi-national corporations.

The great central fact of our time is that we live in the era of transition from capitalist to socialism.

This fact is confirmed not only by emergence of the world socialist system but by the increasing trend by the developing countries of the Third World to opt for the socialist-oriented path as their revolutionary movements for independence achieve their objective.

Unable to stem the advance of socialism, certain irresponsible sectors of the capitalist world intensify the arms race and even dream of reversing the objective course of world history with the inhuman and insane concept of destroying the socialist countries in nuclear conflict.

Again, more and more people, including the more thoughtful and responsible forces of the capitalist world, are showing ascending awareness of the serious world destroying capacity of modern military technology.

The Socialist world, together with supporters of the common-sense objective of durable peace and abolition of war from human affairs put forward peaceful coexistence and peaceful competition between countries of different social economic systems.

People of the three worlds, the socialist world, the capitalist world and the Third World are coming together in a steadily ascending world mass movement to demand peace and peaceful coexistence as the only realistic course for human passage and social advance through the nuclear age.

Within each capitalist country in the world today, the struggle for scientific socialism, despite problems, is steadily advancing. Again, Australia is no exception.

The Australian people's best interests lie along the path of scientific socialism applied on the basis of Australian national conditions side by side with drawing on appropriate international experience.

In Australia today, evidence is amassing daily that the capitalist system cannot provide the Australian people with the basic right to a job for all, for security in sickness and old age, to adequate funding for public education and public services generally.

The great challenge before all who think with an open mind is to face the fact that Australia needs a basic change in social system.

And the evidence is amassing daily that there is an alternative; a democratic socialist system that works. A system that works in the interests of the whole people, not in the interest of a few corporations.

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“The creative Marxist concept of mature socialism defines the historic place of our present development stage and gives us a clear periodisation of communist society and its evolution to its highest stage. It proceeds from the premise that socialism is not a brief, passing moment, not something shortlived, but a relatively long stage of development with its own quantitative and qualitative features. On the other hand, developed socialism is a society which directly tackles and solves the problems of communist construction, i.e., creation of the material and technical basis of communism, formation of communist social relations and of the communist personality.

The conclusion that the USSR has built a developed socialist society is a continuation (based on our achievements in the 1960s and 1970s) of the earlier conclusion that socialism’s victory was complete and final and that the next job was all-out building of communism.”

*Vadim Medvedev
The Marxist-Leninist Concept of developed Socialism
Social Sciences 4/1979*

Basic journal of international Communist science:

Significance of the World Marxist Review

The *World Marxist Review* was founded in response to a need felt by the international Communist movement and all progressive thinkers.

The desire to have such a joint publication was expressed at the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in November 1957. The decision to launch one was taken at a conference in Prague, March 7-8, 1958. The representatives of 20 Communist and Workers' parties who gathered at that conference were motivated by the need to strengthen the unity of the revolutionary forces and rally everyone who was ready to work for democracy, peace and a bright future for the peoples. The founders of the journal appealed to all Communist and Workers' parties to join them, to participate in any way they might find convenient in producing this new international publication.

As time has shown, there was a ready and sustained response to this appeal.

The first issue of the *WMR* appeared in Prague in September 1958. It has been appearing regularly ever since and its 20th anniversary in September 1978 will be marked by the 240th issue.

The general intent of the journal's founders may be expressed in Lenin's words, "...to write the history of the present day, and to try to write it in such a way that our chronicles will give the greatest heroic proletarians there, on the scene of action — to write it in such a way as to promote the spread of the movement, the conscious selection of means, ways and methods of struggle..."

In their decision to launch the *WMR* the Communist and Workers parties defined their basic aims as follows:

- ★ to propagate and further elaborate Marxist-Leninist theory on the basis of generalisation of the key processes of contemporary international development and the building of socialism and com-

munist in the USSR and other socialist countries; exchange views on questions concerning the international workers' and Communist movement; report the activities of the Communist and Workers' parties in their struggle for peace and socialism and against the forces of imperialism and the various manifestations of bourgeois ideology;

- ★ spread knowledge of the fraternal parties' strategy and tactics;
- ★ report on the theoretical problems encountered by various countries in the transition to socialism, on the experience gained in combining the general laws of building socialism with the specific national features of individual countries, and on economic, political and cultural cooperation between the socialist countries;
- ★ strengthen proletarian internationalism in the working class movement and the unity of all peace-loving and democratic forces;
- ★ combat revisionism and dogmatism in the international Communist movement.
- ★ strive for unity of action by the international working class movement, promotion of contacts and cooperation between the Communist and Social-Democratic parties, helping the Communist parties to overcome reformist views among the working class;
- ★ elucidate problems encountered by the national-liberation anti-imperialist movement at the present stage and the prospects of social and political development for the dependent and colonial countries.

The basic directions of the journal's work were thoroughly discussed and put into concrete terms at subsequent specially convened conference of the Communist and Workers' parties.

With a broad international audience in view the journal's contributors seek to answer the new and complex questions that confront the revolutionary forces. The hundreds of articles, studies and other contributions published in the *WMR* over the past twenty years testify to the ongoing development of the revolutionary process, the progressive strengthening of the unity of the Communist movement, the truly international nature of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and its effectiveness when creatively applied by Communists in the specific conditions of their various countries.

As the Document of the 1969 International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties emphasises, there is at present "no leading centre in the international Communist movement." Who, then, organises and guides the journal's activities?

This is done by those who participate in its publication, who work in a spirit of equality, mutual respect and comradely cooperation.

At present there are 57 Communist and Workers' parties taking part in the *WMR*.

The fraternal parties send Communists with wide experience of theoretical, political and organisational activity and occupying a prominent place in Party life to work on the journal. More than two-thirds of the Party representatives on the journal are members of Central Committees and other leading organs.

The highest forum for assessing the work done and defining the journal's future objectives are the periodical Conferences of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties. This forum, as noted above, was launched by the 1958 Conference; the results of the first two years of the journal's work were summed up at the 1960 Conference, and subsequent conferences were held in 1969, 1971, 1974 and 1977. These gatherings have become progressively more representative and authoritative. Thus, 36 parties took part in discussing the work of the journal in 1960, 58 in 1969, 63 in 1971, and 67 in 1974. At the April 1977 Conference for discussing the work of the journal, 75 Communist and Workers' parties were represented. Delegations were led by 14 General (First) Party Secretaries and Chairmen and more than 50 of the delegates were members of leading Party organs. The participants in the Conference were asked to consider a report of the Editorial Board and Editorial Council giving a detailed account of the work done by the editorial office on the tasks set by the previous Conference, on reporting the successes scored by the countries of world socialism, and the working class and national-liberation movements, and the experience accumulated by the fraternal parties in various countries. The delegations at the Conference took an active part in the debates, which were held in a frank, constructive and fraternal atmosphere. They drew up their evaluations and recommendations with a view to promoting the journal's further activity.

The team of writers built up by the *WMR* is unique in the world of publishing.

Among its first contributors were such veterans of the world Communist movement as Maurice Thorez, Wilhelm Pieck, Victorio Codovilla, Johann Kopenig, Jacques Duclos, Max Reimann and Harry Pollitt. Their articles for the journal were like the baton that one runner passes to another in a relay race, thus allowing his comrades to continue the struggle.

The *WMR* has carried contributions from General (First) Secretaries

and representatives of more than one hundred parties. The reader will find such articles regularly in current issues. The journal is steadily expanding its circle of contributors. It carried articles by writers from 41 parties in 1958, from 52 in 1968, and from more than 80 in 1977.

In the past five years alone the journal has published over 400 articles by leading members of the fraternal parties and hundreds more contributions from Marxist scholars. Prominent statesmen and public figures, leaders of democratic international public organisations also contribute to the *WMR*.

The *WMR* is constantly expanding its ties not only with the Communist, but also with the revolutionary-democratic and other progressive organisations and movements. Over the past five years, for instance, nearly 100 members of such organisations and movements in more than 20 countries have contributed to the journal.

In the course of a year the *WMR* publishes reports on life in not less than one hundred countries, giving full coverage to all events and problems that are of any significance.

The active cooperation between the Communist and Workers' parties and progressive people across the world has established the *WMR* as a widely circulated international publication. Since it first appeared, it has increased the number of its national editions from 22 to 57. In addition, the associated organisation, Peace and Socialism International Publishers, regularly puts out books and brochures covering international conferences and discussions and collections of articles on various subjects published in the *WMR*. The past five years have seen the publication of more than 100 titles in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, Arabic and other languages in an edition totalling over two million copies.

The *WMR* is linked with its readers all over the world by thousands of living threads. Its daily post includes letters from all continents, letters that describe actual life in the socialist countries, their difficulties and successes in building a new and just society, letters that record the intense struggle waged by Communists in the capitalist world and the movement of the young developing countries for national independence and social progress, letters that have literally escaped to freedom from places ruled by fascist terror and reaction, letters written by Communists working underground, or in prisons and concentration camps, letters that testify to the courage, endurance and great ideological conviction of these fighters for the freedom and happiness of their peoples.

The correspondence addressed to the *WMR* often travels half way across the globe. Fresh issues of the journal go out to meet it. Friends of the *WMR* across the world regard it as an important tribune of the most progressive, Communist ideas; even our opponents cannot afford to ignore the impact of Communist opinion and moral prestige. This is why the *WMR* has gained such wide acknowledgement. This is why it is known in every corner of the globe as an impacable adversary of imperialism and reaction. This is why it is steadily gathering friends and readers among those who appreciate its message of truth about the modern world, its appeal for peace and socialism, its work for the benefit of all humanity.

(Slightly abridged)

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What is the WMR?

Introducing the World Marxist Review (Problems of Peace and Socialism).

WMR is a theoretical and information journal jointly produced by the Communist and Workers' parties.

WMR is the only international publication of its kind.

WMR is a platform of Communists the world over.

WMR appears monthly in 34 languages and is distributed in 145 countries.

Collective strength of the communists of the world

Of all the political movements of our time, the communist movement is the only one equipped with a scientific theory of social development.

By creatively elaborating the fundamental ideas and competently applying the methodology of scientific socialism, founded by Marx, Engels and Lenin, the communists identify the main, deep-lying trends of the historical process. They bring to light factors decisive at a given stage, distinguishing them in the complex intertwining of the wide spectrum of political and economic phenomena and forces.

The communists draw upon their knowledge of objective laws to exercise a growing influence on the course of events. They generalise the requirements, aspirations and sentiments of the working class and the masses, and this gives them the possibility of ascertaining the outlook for advance at national and international levels with scientific objectivity multiplied by proletarian class firmness of principle. They have repeatedly demonstrated their ability to work out action programs meeting the objective requirements of social development and therefore possessing a great political potential.

It would be appropriate to recall this now in connection with the tenth anniversary of the 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow. The CPSU has always regarded that meeting as a milestone of the revolutionary movement of our day. At the meeting communists summed up and generalised that had been achieved in the struggle against imperialism and comprehensively analysed the real alignment of forces in world politics on the threshold of the 1970s, the likely course of events, and what had to be done for these events to develop in the interest of peace, democracy, national independence and the freedom of peoples.

In their main aspects, the estimations and forecasts collectively worked out by the communists ten years ago have been borne out. The Marxist-Leninist analysis and the prognostications based on it have reasserted their unfading significance.

Let us recall the situation in the late 1960s. The difficulties

encountered by the revolutionary process in some countries and the break in unity in individual links of the liberation movement, as well as the advances made by capitalism in certain economic spheres confused some democrats, on the one hand, and gave rise to a wave of illusions, on the other. Bourgeois ideologues were programming radiant prospects for capitalism for the last third of the century, claiming that revolutionary changes in the 'non-communist' world were neither necessary, nor possible, that they were a thing of the past.

The International Communist Meeting made an entirely different estimation. It stressed that a powerful liberation process was unfolding in the world that the possibilities were accumulating for a further advance of the revolutionary and progressive forces.

Whose forecast has proved correct? The answer is obvious. The Soviet communists note with satisfaction that since then the great worldwide movement of the forces of progress has been marked by impressive gains. The countries of the socialist community have registered further successes in economic and social construction. Fraternal co-operation among them has grown stronger on the solid foundation of a common social system, common basic interests, and loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. The socialist community owes it largely to this that today it is the most dynamic economic force and the leading factor in world politics. Every socialist country and the community as a whole benefit more and more from constant exchanges of experience and what is in the full sense of the word a thoughtful and well-meaning approach to one another's specifics and needs. 'Without taking these peculiarities into account,' Leonid Brezhnev stressed during a recent visit to Hungary, 'it is impossible to develop sound cooperation to solve this or that problem to our mutual satisfaction.'† In the past decade, the communist parties of the fraternal socialist countries have learned still better to take into account and use both the general laws governing the construction of the new society and the peculiarities of each country.

The just cause of the heroic people of Vietnam has triumphed in the struggle against aggression. The family of fraternal socialist states has been enlarged with the formation of the Laotian People's Democratic Republic.

The dark spots representing the fascist regimes in Portugal, Greece and Spain have been removed from the political map of Europe. The working class movement in the European capitalist countries has continued to grow numerically and qualitatively. It is asserting itself as a force that is really at the centre of political life in this, the oldest

citadel of the bourgeois system.

In the struggle of the Asian and African peoples against old and new colonialism there have emerged many more progressive anti-imperialist regimes, which are successfully resisting the pressure of counter-revolution and foreign aggression.

In Latin America history witnessed a sharp turn that was tragic for the people of Chile. But the forces of reaction failed to accomplish anything else of the kind on that continent. On the contrary, not only in Chile but also in Uruguay and other countries the pro-fascist regimes are in the grip of crisis. Recent years have seen a new upsurge in the revolutionary movement in South and Central America, with the forces of progress and democracy becoming much more active.

Life has shown the complete correctness of the Marxist-Leninist approach of the Communist Meeting to assessing the correlation of the strong and weak points of contemporary capitalism. This has fully confirmed the words spoken by Leonid Brezhnev at the meeting: 'The farther imperialism goes in its attempts to adapt itself to the situation, the deeper become its inner social and economic antagonisms.' ‡

Drawing upon the foundations of the teaching on state-monopoly capitalism laid by Lenin, the communists came to the conclusion that the economic regulation used by capitalism cannot bridle the spontaneous market forces, and that under monopoly domination the scientific and technological revolution, by speeding the socialisation of the productive forces, leads to the reproduction of the earlier contradictions of capitalism and breeds new ones. Having revealed the inner dialectics of state-monopoly capitalism's adjustment to new conditions, the communists were able to predict the powerful wave of crisis processes that swept capitalism in the early 1970s. The past decade has witnessed an interlocking of different significant crisis processes of a cyclical and chronic, transient and structural and internal and international nature. Instead of capitalism becoming stronger there is a deep crisis of its entire economic basis, of its economic policy and its very strategy of adaptation. For the working class and the masses, this has meant a rising cost of living, insecurity and growing unemployment, whose scale has never been so great since the war. A further deepening of the general crisis of capitalism has generated a new upsurge in the worldwide liberation movement.

Furthermore, the course of events has borne out the meeting's warning against underrating the strength of contemporary capitalism and its capacity for manoeuvre.

The organisation of an arms race more intensive and ruinous than ever before, the certain co-ordination of economic policy through integration processes, the neo-colonial expansion, particularly with the aid of the multinational corporations, and the widespread use of the mass media for the manipulation of public opinion and in implementing an anti-communist and anti-socialist strategy have all confirmed the meeting's conclusion that imperialism is still a serious and dangerous adversary.

The 1969 meeting put it on record that in the 1970s the confrontation between socialism and capitalism would remain the pivot of all world development. The struggle between the two different social systems determines world politics to this day, holding the central place in the intellectual life of mankind. The results of the 1970s show very clearly that existing socialism is the main and most powerful locomotive of contemporary history. Its experience opens the way to the solution] of mankind's cardinal problems. The socialist community is making the decisive contribution to preventing a world military catastrophe, to ensuring conditions under which all peoples can fight successfully for freedom and a better future.

Special emphasis should be put on the fact that ten years ago the communist movement, as well as accurately defining the main lines along which the social and political situation in the world would develop, adopted a practical action program that made a great positive contribution to international development.

Let us turn to this program, unanimously approved by the participants in the 1969 meeting. The primary goal, it stated, was to extend all possible support for the heroic people of Vietnam. The provision of the meeting's Main Document saying that the final victory of Vietnam's patriots was of fundamental importance to strengthening the positions of peoples in the struggle against the imperialist policy of diktat and arbitrary action carries particular weight today. We can now draw a further conclusion, namely, that Vietnam's victory over the aggressors was a convincing demonstration of the tremendous potentialities which the forces of liberation and progress command when they act in solidarity and purposefully.

The 1969 meeting stressed that the struggle against the war danger, against the threat of a global nuclear shambles, the struggle for world peace, is still the main factor of united anti-imperialist action. Indeed, this thesis is as valid today as it was ten years ago. Imperialism continues to escalate the arms race. The threat of war persists.

Does this mean, however, that the ten years' struggle for peace and disarmament has been futile? That is the conclusion the adversaries of detente, the apologists of the cold war would like the masses to accept. But this is not only a vicious conclusion from the standpoint of the vital interests of all the nations; it cuts across the historical truth.

Indeed, we are still a long way off from the proclaimed goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Nuclear weapons have not yet been banned, their production and all tests have not been halted, and the policy of the threat or use of force has not been universally abandoned.

But there is this other side to present-day reality. The positive results in the struggle of the peace forces in advancing toward the goals proclaimed by the 1969 meeting are very considerable. Mankind has gone through yet another decade without a world war. There is fresh and convincing evidence that such a war can be averted if the efforts of those who oppose war — the socialist countries, the international working class, the national-liberation movement, and all the peace-loving states and social movements — are tirelessly brought together.

In the past decade, the principles of peaceful coexistence have won broad recognition, including recognition in the international-law documents determining the principles of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and between many other socialist and capitalist countries.

The meeting came out firmly and resolutely for detente and stressed that it was one of the most pressing and vital demands of the peoples. This is now a fact. In the swing away from dangerous confrontation, away from the cold war toward detente, the communists of the whole world, and of course, the communists of the socialist countries above all, have played a truly prime role.

A major shift toward real security on the European continent has taken place. The Conference of 35 states and the adoption of the noted Helsinki Final Act, which has become the charter of detente, were an event of historical importance. The immutability of the existing borders in Europe has been recognised. The German Democratic Republic has been recognised in international law. Mutually beneficial economic, scientific and technical co-operation among the European states has been developing as an important factor of peaceful coexistence.

Some steps have also been taken in limiting the arms race. Among them are the coming into force of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Soviet-U.S. Treaty on limitation of Anti-Ballistic Weapons Systems, and the first interim agreement on limitation of their strategic offensive arms. A convention on banning bacteriological weapons has been concluded.

All of this still falls far short of checking the arms race. But these measures show not only that political detente is possible and fruitful, but that military detente is also achievable in practice.

Exchange of views and experience, and collective analysis of emerging problems are a most important means for promoting internationalist, comradely and voluntary cooperation and solidarity among the communist parties on the basis of the great teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

As the unanimously adopted Address of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties 'Centenary of the Birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin' said: 'Communists regard it as their task firmly to uphold the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism in the struggle against all enemies, steadfastly to make them a living reality, constantly to develop Marxist-Leninist theory and enrich it on the basis of present experience of waging the class struggle and building a socialist society.' †‡

This conclusion of the 1969 meeting remains, we believe, valid in the common struggle of the communists for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

(Slightly abridged)

Igor Sokolov
Staff member, International
Department, CC CPSU

† Pravda, June 1, 1979

‡ International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1979. Prague, Peace and Socialism Publishers, 1969, p. 142.

†‡ International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1979. p. 41.

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