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The struggle of ideas in the contemporary world

Nuclear-free world versus star wars ●

**US imperial ideology in the past and
present ●**

**What is behind the "conservative turn"
concept ●**

The Novosti Press Agency

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THEORY
AND PRACTICE

The struggle of ideas in the contemporary world

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Editing completed

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I have nothing but friendly feelings for the Soviet Union which defeated nazism. Like all young people of my generation I fear war. And the risk is high indeed. I hope that understanding between our peoples—the French and the Soviet—will grow.

Gérard Guittard,
France

Before I chanced upon your publication I thought political freedoms including freedom of speech and the right to profess or not to profess any religion non-existent in the USSR. Now I know I was influenced by anti-Soviet propaganda conducted by the imperialist powers. You've helped me to sort things out—learn about life in the Soviet Union, which is still a mystery for most of my countrymen.

David O. Falco,
Argentina

While reading your articles one discovers things unknown before relating to the Soviet people's mode of life. I want to know more about your country, your foreign policy with regard to Reagan's Star Wars programme. During my college days we took history subjects but it seems to me the American textbooks we used were biased against your country.

Michael Moran,
Philippines

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PROBLEMS OF WAR AND PEACE

STAR WARS VERSUS A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD

by Valery DAVIDOV

US propaganda claims that the SDI is a "non-nuclear defence programme" which accords with mankind's dream of ridding the world of the threat of nuclear annihilation. What does the implementation of the Star Wars programme really hold for the peoples of the world? How can it affect nuclear disarmament and struggle against the nuclear threat?

UNDERMINING STRATEGIC STABILITY

In the mid-eighties the US ruling circles accorded precedence to their programme for militarizing outer space regarding it as a principal objective in the country's policy up to the end of this century. True, Washington's policymakers prefer to avoid the word-combination "star wars" because it conveys too plainly the essence of the US militarists' sinister designs. They prefer speaking about the Strategic Defence Initiative. Its main purpose is to establish

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a comprehensive anti-missile defence system which, Washington claims, could shield the entire territory of the USA from a potential enemy's missiles. A substantial part of this system will be sited in outer space and formed from weapons employing new physical principles (e.g. lasers, particle-beam weapons, and the like) that can neutralize enemy missiles. Thus, we deal here with the deployment of a large-scale anti-missile defence system with space-based elements.

Over the next five years immense outlays (some 26 billion dollars) have been made for preparations for the development and deployment of this system. All in all, this can very well cost a trillion dollars. Note that the Pentagon is not only spending these resources on research and development projects but is placing orders with armament firms for the manufacture of the projected system's elements. In January, 1984 President Reagan signed Directive 119 sanctioning the allocation of two billion dollars for the development of laser, particle-beam and kinetic weapons.

Research and development is well under way towards creating prototypes of separate elements for the comprehensive anti-missile defence system. Tests are planned to see how the entire system should operate. Special commands and control centres for space-based weapons are being established. Recently, the White House decided to form a joint space command of the US armed forces. It will have broad powers and its business will be pure research, planning and employment of military space systems. The joint command will be the head office, so to speak, but there are others too. Thus, the Air Force has long had its own corresponding body—Spacecom and the Navy—Navspacecom. This goes to show that Washington is already forming a command-staff structure for outer space military operations. The purpose is to have different elements of the anti-missile defence system placed in outer space by the close of the current decade.

In a bid to play down the resistance to its military space plans inside the country and abroad, Washington has mounted a sweeping propaganda campaign designed to justify its course for space militarization. The comprehensive anti-missile defence with space-based elements is said to be a means that can neutralize the nuclear threat. It is claimed, for instance, that this system will allow a change-over from the strategy based on the threat of offensive

might to a defence strategy "that would not threaten any country", and thus "a more stable deterrence" would be achieved.

The real state of affairs is absolutely different. The nuclear forces of the USA and the USSR have been in existence for forty years now, and all this time the Soviet Union was obliged to meet the US challenge appropriately. The strategic parity attained by the early seventies deprived the USA of the possibility to blackmail other countries with the nuclear threat with impunity. The fear of retaliation has now become one of the main factors abating the nuclear adventurism of the US militarists. It goes without saying that the Soviet Union has never accepted the strategic situation where the two nuclear powers could "assure mutual destruction" of one another and of the whole world. It has resolutely opposed the use of nuclear weapons and favoured a drastic lowering of the level of military confrontation through the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons.

In the seventies the USSR and the USA acknowledged that under the existing strategic parity the development by any one of the sides of an additional defence capability would be tantamount to its acquisition of a capacity for a pre-emptive and disarming nuclear attack. This acknowledgement of the linkage between offensive and defensive strategic systems found embodiment in the signing, in May 1972, of the Permanent Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and the Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. The former Treaty furnished the basis for an overall process of nuclear arms limitation and reduction. It states, in part, that effective measures for the limitation of anti-missile defence systems would help restrain the race in strategic offensive arms and would reduce the danger of a nuclear war breaking out.

Now some people in Washington are trying to make it appear that the USSR and the USA had earlier come to this conclusion not because they recognized the ABM systems as catalysts for the arms race but because no technical possibilities for the development of effective ABM systems existed at that time. In fact, however, the linkage between offensive and defensive systems, as most experts in the West and the East believe, does exist—objectively and permanently. Nor will it disappear when there are

possibilities for developing technically more advanced and effective ABM systems. On the contrary, the latter's development would even more markedly influence the correlation of the sides' forces and would make it extremely unstable.

Thus, the implementation of the SDI endangers the existing strategic stability. The development of an anti-missile shield could with ample reason be assessed as an attempt to secure a possibility for a nuclear offensive under its cover and thereby to neutralize a retaliatory attack.

Misleading the world public Washington declares that the implementation of the SDI is confined exclusively to research and development which, so far, does not imply a practical deployment of a comprehensive ABM system and, so, the USA does not contravene any of the existing bilateral or international commitments. However, it is clear that the US military are spending billions of dollars on research and development not because they are keen on scientific innovations and technical discoveries. The tests of certain elements of the large-scale ABM system which the Pentagon has already conducted or plans to conduct have the object of creating conditions when only a political decision on siting such systems would be required.

The SDI advocates are undeterred by the fact that the development of the ABM system with space-based elements could contravene the basic provision of the ABM Treaty—the sides' commitment not to develop anti-missile defences for their respective country.

The other multilateral agreements now in force, such as the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD Convention) and, especially, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, may be jeopardised.

The Star Wars preparations will sharply heighten the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons among countries which are hoping to acquire such weapons. The implementation of the SDI, its apologists claim, will in principle cancel the need for acquiring modern intercontinental nuclear delivery vehicles as aircraft will be sufficient to enable the "threshold" countries to threaten the use of nuclear weapons. It is not fortuitous that Israel, which

stubbornly refuses to accede to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is interested in the SDI. At the same time the participation of other advanced countries (e.g. the FRG and Japan) in the US programme can help them develop nuclear space arms.

Militarization of outer space will jeopardize the entire edifice of international law which still restrains the military activity of states, and can make it impossible to reach constructive agreements on the limitation, reduction or elimination of nuclear weapons. M. S. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, stressed in the Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress, "Before it is too late, it is imperative to find a realistic solution guaranteeing that the arms race does not spread to outer space. The Star Wars programme cannot be permitted to be used as a stimulus for a further arms race or as a road-block to radical disarmament. Tangible progress in what concerns a drastic reduction of nuclear potentials can be of much help in surmounting this obstacle."

BRAINWASHING THE ALLIES

Planning the Star Wars Washington is trying to entice its allies and Japan into the implementation of this dangerous programme. This is dictated by a desire to secure international political support and present its space militarization programme as a common platform of the North Atlantic bloc. The USA is also not averse to "sharing" the burden of expenditures with its partners and using their scientific and technological capabilities. Another reason is that Washington has not abandoned the idea of waging "limited nuclear wars" outside the American continent.

To camouflage these plans official Washington is energetically brainwashing its allies. They are promised lucrative deals and the US "defence shield" to cover them. The West Europeans are told that defensive systems are strong enough to deter a nuclear and conventional attack upon the allies. However, even US officials cannot prove this.

At the same time the US Star Wars advocates deliberately keep quiet about the role numerous US nuclear-weapon systems deployed in Europe and in other regions of the world are designed to play. That the SDI will not lead to their elimination is clear both in Western Europe and in Japan. E. Heath, Britain's former Prime Minister,

said in his speech at the Royal Institute of International Affairs that the Star Wars programme would not free the world from nuclear weapons. In the event of its implementation the role of the forward-based systems deployed in Europe and Asia will be accentuated in the Pentagon's plans for waging nuclear wars on territories of other countries. Basically, the Star Wars programme is a logical continuation of Washington's plan to place first-strike missiles—the Pershings and Tomahawks—and sundry systems of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and Asia.

The high-pressure propaganda of Star Wars and "the anti-missile shield" is dramatically reminiscent of Washington's advertising of nuclear weapons immediately after World War II. The US military then argued that a "nuclear hammer" would obviate the need for conventional armed forces and that every company commander, commanding naval officer and pilot of a fighter-bomber would receive "his own" nuclear weapons, and all divisions could be disbanded. In this connection, there was much talk in the USA about disarmament in the field of conventional armaments and about "saving" billions of dollars.

We all know how things developed later. Company commanders and military pilots were equipped with nuclear weapons—from nuclear rocket launchers to air-to-air missiles. However, during their wars of aggression in Korea and Vietnam the Americans discovered that nuclear weapons could not supplant conventional armaments. Eventually, the US partners in NATO had to pay for the maintenance of costly conventional armaments and for nuclear weapons. "Could anything like this happen should the Star Wars Programme be implemented?" they ask in Western Europe today. Many are convinced that the answer is yes!

Western Europeans fully realize that Washington's official assurances that its "anti-missile shield" would also protect its NATO allies are camouflaging the real purpose of the US militarists, i.e. to move the nuclear threat away from the USA and limit a possible nuclear war to the territories of other countries.

The mounting opposition to the Star Wars plans in Western Europe and Japan has impelled Washington to intensify the "conditioning" of its principal allies. However, only Britain, the FRG and Japan decided to join in the implementation of the SDI contrary to the will of their

opposition parties and a vast majority of their populations. These governments have thus totally neglected the interests of the security of their own peoples and of all peoples of the world demanding an end to the nuclear threat.

Most of the other allies officially refused to join in the SDI. But this does not stop the US military. The Pentagon does not conceal that some of its elements, for instance, laser projectors could be deployed in other countries besides Alaska. As pointed out in the Pentagon's report to Congress on the draft military budget for FY 1986, a large radar station will be completed in Thule (Greenland) later this year and the radar station in Fylingdales Moor (Britain) is being modernized. Airfields are being fitted up to receive spacecraft on Easter Island in the Pacific and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) in the Atlantic Ocean. According to Pentagon specialists, the existing military infrastructure in the partner-countries must be integrated with the Star Wars programme. Thus, the Pentagon plans using its facilities on the territories of other countries without even telling the allies of their incorporation into that country's space ventures.

The US large-scale anti-missile defence system is conceived as a shield under the protection of which it would be possible to initiate a first-strike nuclear attack against the USSR and its allies. Naturally, the US medium-range missiles sited in West European countries would also be used. But protection against a retaliatory attack would only be provided for the territory of the USA. Assurances of a US "concern" for the defence of Western Europe, coming from across the Atlantic, however strident, can hardly deceive anyone. Furthermore, the Pentagon experts in charge of the projected large-scale ABM defence system, increasingly admit that their space scheme has been conceived above all for protecting the US strategic missile bases, i.e. as an instrument for securing strategic superiority over the USSR and delivering a surprise attack.

The Star Wars programme is being increasingly condemned also by the developing countries which regard it as a continuation of the arms race course and perpetuation of imperialism's "positions of strength" policy—now with nuclear weapons and later with space deployed weapons. The main conclusion dictated by the nuclear-space epoch is obvious to many nations: the way towards the elimina-

tion of nuclear weapons lies not through its stockpiling and proliferation to other spheres, including outer space, but through the limitation and reduction of the existing arsenals. No myths about the SDI being non-nuclear defence designed allegedly to rid mankind of the threat of nuclear annihilation can deceive those who make every effort to end the arms race and eliminate nuclear weapons.

BUILDING UP NUCLEAR ARSENALS

Although starting to implement its Star Wars programme, Washington is not forgetting its multi-billion programmes for building up all the components of its "strategic triad", ballistic missiles, first and foremost. The Pentagon is not going to phase them out. Moreover, while working on its large-scale ABM defence system, it is simultaneously developing six new types of strategic offensive weapons—the MX and the Midgetman intercontinental ballistic missiles, the Trident-2 strategic sea-based missiles and the B-1B and Stealth new type strategic bombers; it also plans to have ready for action over 12 thousand long-range land, air and sea-launched cruise missiles.

Much the same is in evidence in the field of medium-range weapons (the Pershing-2 and cruise missiles) being sited in Europe, and Asia, and the battlefield nuclear systems which are being continuously modernized and supplemented with new nuclear-weapon varieties such as the neutron bomb.

According to the US press, the Pentagon is conducting intensive research under 22 programmes on the development of new types of nuclear ammunition and is extending capacities for producing fissionable material for nuclear warheads. It is precisely because the US military are augmenting and advancing nuclear weapons that the USA refuses to conclude a treaty on a total nuclear test ban, which the Soviet Union urged it to do when announcing its unilateral moratorium on such tests in 1985 and extending it in 1986.

What then is the purpose of the oft-repeated claims that the SDI would lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons especially against the background of sharply stepped up nuclear war preparations?

One answer was given by nuclear physicist E. Teller, an inspirer of this programme, the "father" of the American

hydrogen bomb. He said in Paris on June 27, 1985 that the fairytale about the SDI allegedly designed to eliminate nuclear weapons on Earth had been made up in order to deliver a blow at the anti-war movement and make it accept the SDI. This revelation exposes the US propaganda ballyhoo about the "humane" and "anti-nuclear" nature of the Star Wars programme which is intended to divert the anti-war forces from the real, everyday dangers the existing nuclear arsenals have for the Earth, from the necessity of ending the nuclear arms race once and for all.

The problem of preventing the militarization of outer space affects the vital interests of all of mankind. We cannot let outer space become an arena for the escalation of nuclear and other weapons, a springboard of aggression. The USSR is for a permanent ban on the use of force in outer space, and from outer space against the Earth and also from the Earth against space targets. Any types of weapons—conventional, nuclear, laser, particle-beam or any other—must not be launched into outer space and be placed there by either manned or automatic systems. Strike space weapons must not be developed, tested or put into orbit for action against targets on earth, in the air or on the seas. Such weapons, if already developed, must be destroyed.

The path towards the elimination of nuclear weapons lies here on earth not in outer space. To make nuclear weapons unnecessary and obsolescent it is imperative to stop all their tests, to give up the first use doctrines and start radically to reduce the existing nuclear arsenals. The resolution of the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee reads in part: "The main direction of Soviet foreign policy in the coming years should consist in efforts to implement the programme put forward in the Statement of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee of January 15, 1986, for destroying weapons of mass destruction and averting the threat of war. Fulfilment of this programme, which is epoch-making in its scope and significance, would open for humanity a fundamentally new period of development, the possibility of concentrating on constructive work alone."

The concrete programme for nuclear disarmament put forward by the Soviet Union is the only real one that would

enable mankind to welcome in the year 2000 under peaceful skies and with a peaceful outer space, without a dread of nuclear omnicide. This is precisely why, as distinct from the US Star Wars programme, it is supported by the vast majority of states and peoples.

Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnie otnoshenia
No. 4, 1986*



I think that there is no individual or groups of individuals in the USSR that stand to gain financially from manufacturing armaments. In the USA it's quite different. Corporate profits from military contracts are unlimited. Many hundreds of thousands of people, at high wages, are employed to produce "nothing of any value" to society. There are many millions of armed men and military bases all over the world waiting for a war to start. Insane, isn't it?

If the USSR can, even under the most trying circumstances, keep the idiots in Washington and London from starting the war they are looking for, then in the not-so-distant future their economic sy-

stem will collapse from within. It's inevitable!

I wonder if those Russian Jews that want to leave the USSR for Israel or the USA really know what their future looks like. I wish I could tell them. In America, when you are poor and a Black it's Hell. When they go to Israel it'll be worse than Hell. I am lucky! I have been a businessman since I was 19 years old and I am what you could say "very well off", but that has not made me blind to the injustices of capitalism and its support of dictatorships and terrorism in the world with some of my tax dollars.

Charles Kline,
Montana, USA

DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL

by Yuri TOMILIN

The struggle against the nuclear danger and the arms race, and for the preservation and promotion of universal peace is a principal direction of the Soviet Union's foreign-policy activities. The Soviet initiatives enjoy extensive support worldwide. This is why the enemies of disarmament, those who pursue the policy of confrontation and strong-arm pressure vis-a-vis other countries have to resort to sundry stratagems in order to disguise their reluctance to take arms-limitation measures and, ultimately, prevent the adoption of such measures.

The verification problem is invoked more often than not in order to block disarmament. Examination of the arms limitation and disarmament questions in the postwar period can very easily be reduced to the disputes around this problem. These disputes could be avoided but for the fact that they were deliberately started by the opponents of disarmament.

Whenever the USA and other Western powers did adopt certain arms-limitation measures questions of arms control were also tackled. But whenever the international situation worsened (for which the imperialists were guilty) and the possibilities of reaching arms-limitation agreements were hindered accordingly, the supposed verification difficulties immediately mounted. The advocates of the arms race increase these difficulties using different "tools" and "techniques", depending on the situation.

Very often attempts are made to control the arms build-

dup and not control disarmament. The Baruch Plan, the Open Skies Plan, and some others, proposed by the United States are typical in this respect. Those plans envisaged no arms-limitation measures of any consequence but instead called for total control—not only over armaments but also over a significant part of the other side's peaceful activities.

Another "technique" is to allege that the Soviet Union, by the very nature of its social system, can secretly violate arms-limitation and disarmament agreements. So, no such agreements should be signed with it. What kind of "nature" is it that does rule out arms control? The thing is, it is argued, that Soviet society is a "closed" one. The USA, Britain and other Western countries are, by contrast, "open" societies. They publish all relevant information and wear their hearts on their sleeves, figuratively speaking.

This allegation is false through and through. Not one country in the world reveals its secrets. What is said to be the Western countries' openness is an illusion, a myth. For instance, whoever has followed the hearings of the US Congressional commissions and subcommissions knows that the more important part of their materials is never published and that many of the hearings are held behind closed doors. The same is true of other Western countries. Every sovereign state itself decides what kind of information and when it will publish. As to the Soviet Union, on entering into an agreement, it faithfully abides by its provisions and provides all information required under it.

In order to delay or prevent the opening of talks and negotiations, Western and especially US diplomacy resorts to the following ploy: it is stated that before opening negotiations it is necessary to settle technical questions of verification and to determine the available (technical of course) possibilities for verifying compliance with the measures in question. These technical aspects are then literally drowned in endless discussions of minor questions.

There is still another ruse. It is said that a particular arms-limitation measure cannot be implemented because it is, allegedly, impossible to verify compliance with it. Using this ruse the United States has long been blocking, for instance, the reaching of accords on a total nuclear tests ban.

Way back in 1958, a conference of experts representing eight countries, including the USSR and the USA, came to the conclusion that such a ban could be reliably monitored.

This notwithstanding, official representatives of the Western states at the negotiations, which started immediately after the experts' conference began putting forward far-fetched verification preconditions. Several years later, a whole range of US envoys who headed the US delegation at those talks admitted that the US side had artificially used the problem of verification in order to prevent accords. Each time that the Soviet side showed flexibility and readiness to accept its Western partners' proposals, the latter immediately discovered certain "new data" and the USA would go back upon its own proposals. Thus, James Wadsworth, who headed the US delegation at the talks, admitted that the Soviet side had conducted the negotiations with a serious intention to reach agreement and that the USA was to blame that this had not been done.

One could take a more recent example—the tripartite (Soviet-US-British) negotiations on the same issue held in 1977-1980. As the talks progressed, the United States increasingly toughened up its verification demands. Having thus dragged out the negotiations the USA later simply withdrew from them.

The Soviet Union believes that the existing national technical verification means are sufficient for monitoring compliance with a nuclear test ban. But in order to remove so-called verification difficulties holding back the solution of this problem it stated its readiness to accept most exacting verification measures including on-site inspections. More particularly, the USSR has accepted the proposal made by the leaders of six states—Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Tanzania and Sweden—on helping to verify a bilateral cessation, by the Soviet Union and the USA, of nuclear tests, which would include on-site inspections.

The United States was forced to "put its cards on the table" and admit that verification was not its interest but that it needed tests to further develop nuclear weapons and check the reliability of its stockpiles. So much for a total ban. The USA, however, could accept a threshold ban but, again, verification difficulties hindered that.

The "threshold" ban needs more explanation. Such a ban on explosions with yields higher than a certain fixed "threshold", is much more difficult to monitor than a total ban on nuclear tests. All the same it is possible. In 1974, the Soviet Union and the United States signed the Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests

prohibiting such tests exceeding 150 kilotons. To extend this document, the USSR-USA Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes was signed in 1976 to regulate their conduct under the terms of the "threshold" ban on nuclear weapon tests. A detailed system for compliance verification was elaborated for both Treaties including appropriate data exchanges and on-site inspections in respect of peaceful nuclear explosions. Later the USA refused to ratify them, on the plea that verification measures were insufficient.

The United States proposed that Soviet experts visit its test range in Nevada to watch a nuclear weapon test explosion. US propaganda made much of this invitation. But no one in the USA could explain its purpose. Why should Soviet experts watch a US nuclear explosion? Perhaps, to sanction it by their very presence? As to the verification of the sides' compliance with the 1974 and 1976 "threshold" Treaties, both envisage a dependable verification system. To make sure that this is so it is necessary to put them into effect. In other words, relevant data must be exchanged and other terms honoured, including the conduct of verification explosions as envisaged in the 1974 Treaty and on-site verification procedures taken as stipulated in the 1976 Treaty.

Likewise, Washington artificially and deliberately raises "verification difficulties" in the matter of banning chemical weapons.

For a number of years the United States has been delaying the opening of negotiations on prohibiting chemical weapons seeking to "prove" that a ban on these weapons is impossible to verify. Later, under pressure from a large number of states and world public opinion, the USA entered into a bilateral and then into multilateral negotiations concluding a convention on prohibiting and eliminating chemical weapons. Having thereby admitted the possibility of verification, it, nevertheless, tried to complicate the negotiations by putting forth demands unacceptable to many countries. Thus, the US proposed that state enterprises should be subjected to a most stringent control, i.e., to special inspections at short notice. Plainly, if this proposal had been accepted the countries with the state sectors predominating in the economy, i.e., the socialist countries first and foremost, would have found themselves in an unequal position vis-a-vis states where the private capita-

list sector is dominant, first of all the United States. Upon encountering sharp criticisms of this absurd proposal, the USA had to withdraw it last April.

The Soviet Union stands for an early prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons under a most stringent international control including on-site inspections by international experts. Another confirmation of the Soviet Union's constructive position are the proposals announced by M. S. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, in his speech at the 11th SUPG Congress, on April 18, 1986.

In that speech the Soviet leader put forward a new initiative for a significant reduction in the conventional armaments and armed forces in Europe, thus stressing the need for a dependable control at all stages of the process. He spoke of national means and of international forms of verification, including on-site inspections, if necessary.

The Soviet Union suggested a similar approach to the verification of compliance with its programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons throughout the world by the year 2000, announced on January 15. Control over the arms being completely eliminated or limited would be exercised through national means and on-site inspections. The USSR is ready to negotiate any additional means of control.

Thus, in every arms limitation area the Soviet Union stands for effective control which would make the sides absolutely confident that the agreements are faithfully observed. This readiness of the Soviet Union to accept the most exacting international forms for verifying compliance with the agreed disarmament measures deprives the opponents of disarmament of their means of camouflaging their negative approach.

The Soviet position is as follows: disarmament without control is impossible and control without disarmament is meaningless. This position is as clear as it is fair and honest.

In the Soviet arms-limitation and disarmament proposals control has always been closely tied in with the process of arms limitation and elimination and it has never been regarded as an end in itself. Therefore, control must be part and parcel of a disarmament agreement as an instrument promoting its implementation.

There are no weapons which the Soviet Union would

not be prepared to limit or ban on a reciprocal basis, under effective control. This is declared in the updated edition of the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted at the 27th CPSU Congress.

Pravda, May 13, 1986



Capitalists manufacturing various weapons receive huge profits and wax fat on the highly dangerous arms race. In the Soviet Union there are no capitalists and, consequently, no one benefits from this dangerous industry. This harms everybody—not just because of the threat of mass annihilation it creates, but also because of the enormous natural resources wasted on it. If the arms race were not forced upon the USSR, living standards of the Soviet people would rise much more rapidly.

Mark Turner,
Australia

I fully subscribe to the Soviet policy of peace and condemn the American Star Wars programme.

Florencio Campos Zanabria,
Bolivia

I don't know what mankind's future will be like—whether it will die or build a better world for itself. Thanks for the enlightenment you offer people. Try to write more on socialism.

Oyegabtune Abejirne,
Nigeria

TWO WORLDS—TWO WAYS OF LIFE

by Gennady KOPYAKOV

Way of life is among the social and political issues which are now in focus of ideological struggle between socialism and capitalism. Western ideologists realize only too well that the attractiveness of one or another way of life—socialist or capitalist—in the eyes of the working people influences the course of competition between the mutually opposed social systems.

The bourgeois press would like to make people believe that socialism is in no way better than a "free-enterprise society", and that in some ways it is about the same. The intricate verbiage used by bourgeois ideologists often has the desired effect on the innocent Western reader. People live in different countries and under different social and political systems, but they experience a similar sense of hunger or thirst, engage in a great deal of similar actions—go to work or to the cinema, raise children... In what way do they differ then? And here it begins. Western propaganda is out to prove what cannot be proved, to dim the fundamental class difference between the opposing social systems and ways of life.

WHEN PERSPECTIVES ARE LOST

Marxists have always believed a way of life owes its distinctive features primarily to the type of the social and economic system and the individual's class or social affiliation.

Capitalist society based on private ownership and exploitation of

● G. KOPYAKOV, world news analyst.

working people and torn asunder by class antagonisms has no uniform way of life. Western ideologists praise and extol the capitalist system, especially the American way of life which they describe as the highest achievement of capitalism. To give it a second thought, the American way of life as they see it, as something common to all groups and classes of the population, is nothing other than propaganda myth. What can monopoly owners and workers at the bench, rich landowners and farm hands, financial tycoons and small clerks have in common?

Can all people have the same way of life in a country where, according to official statistics, two per cent of the population, the wealthiest ones, draw 15 per cent of all incomes and own 30 per cent of the finances, 20 per cent of all property and 33 per cent of private enterprises? This upper crust of society is in possession of 50 per cent of all shares, over 70 per cent of bonds and other securities and 20 per cent of land. At the same time 34 million people in this richest country of the capitalist world live in poverty, while 20 million go hungry.

Things are no better in other capitalist countries either. In Britain, for instance, one per cent of the population own over a quarter of the national wealth. In the FRG, 1.7 per cent of the population own three-quarters of all means of production. Ten per cent of the French families possess 60 per cent of the country's wealth, while fifty per cent of the population own only 5.5 per cent of it. According to UN statistics, the ratio between the average income of 10 per cent of the poorest and 10 per cent of the wealthiest is 1 to 76 in France and 1 to 20 in Denmark.

The Western propaganda myth of all people in the capitalist countries having the same way of life and equal opportunities crumbles as it comes up against social reality. Take such social aspects as employment, education, public health and housing. In the USA, for instance, according to official statistics, there are 8.5 million jobless. But only one in four gets some kind of social security. Nearly 4 million are homeless. Those who have homes pay one fifth of the family budget. There are only 24 doctors and 58 hospital beds per 10,000 of the population. The cost of medical services goes up annually by an average of 7 per cent, while the cost of medicines rises at a rate of 10 per cent a year. Tuition at Texas University, according to Associated Press, runs into 6,000 dollars a year, while at Harvard University it is in excess of 16,000 dollars. How many children of working class families can, in this situation, avail themselves of the capitalist-style "equal opportunity" to receive an education?

Probably, the situation is different in the political sphere? By no means. According to Americans themselves, US governmental bodies are something like rich men's clubs: 30 Senators and 23 Congressmen

own property estimated at a million or more dollars each. There is not a single worker in the US Congress.

Things are not much different in other "free world" countries. Western Europe alone has 18 million jobless. The number of redundant people keeps growing. In the Common Market countries over 21 million can neither read nor write. It is not simple for children of working people to get a higher education. In Sweden, for example, young people from upper classes have twenty-six times more chances to enter university than those from lower classes. In France, this gap rises to 30, in Italy to 34, and the FRG to 48 times. There are 18 doctors per 10,000 population in Britain and Japan, 20 in France and 27 in the FRG. As to hospital beds per 10,000 population, the figure is 81 for Britain, 102 for France, 112 for the FRG and 116 for Japan. Things are just as bad with housing. Over 1.5 million are homeless in the EEC countries.

It should be added that every ninth person in the EEC countries lives in poverty. In the FRG, there are 4.5 million poor, or 6.6 per cent of the population, in Britain 6.3 per cent and in the Netherlands 4.8 per cent.

In all "prosperous" countries in the West, working people have to pay considerable sums in the form of insurance contributions towards their retirement pensions. Thus, over the past 30 years the Americans' annual contributions to their pension funds have increased more than 100-fold. Furthermore, the retirement age of men and women in the USA, Sweden and Canada is 65, and in Britain 65 for men and 60 for women.

Finally, in many capitalist countries an acute social problem is overt discrimination against women. They are paid less than men for the same job. Particularly interested in this is Big Business extracting fabulous profits from exploiting women. The US Constitution does not yet contain an amendment making women's rights equal to men's. According to official statistics, women in the United States are paid 30-50 per cent less than men for a comparable job. In the Common Market countries women's pay is 60-70 per cent of men's.

Facts thus show how bourgeois society treats the overwhelming majority of its citizens. Developing in conditions of antagonistic contradictions ruling out comprehensive progress, bourgeois society deprives most of the population of the fruits of civilization. The wealth, extravagance and luxury of the privileged exist side by side with the misery of the working masses, while relative economic progress goes alongside economic depressions. Antagonisms are inherent in both production and distribution.

Imperialism brings innumerable hardships to developing countries. Carrying out its policy of colonial plunder the bourgeoisie had for

centuries kept the peoples of those countries away from the mainstream of civilization. Today, imperialism is seeking through a sophisticated system of neocolonialism to doom these countries to misery, to perpetuate their role of a raw material appendage of monopolies.

In the capitalist countries, the masses suffering from ruthless exploitation and experiencing political and ideological pressure from the powers-that-be live in conditions of rampant gangsterism and drug addiction, these unavoidable components of the bourgeois way of life. On top of this is age and nationality discrimination.

The dominant feature of the system of private ownership is a runaway drive for profit. Material wealth is considered the highest value, a universal yardstick of all other human assets. As a result, both social and personal relations between many members of this society are marked by stiff competition leading to mutual enmity, hostility and the struggle of every one against all. Such are the social, ethical and psychological aspects of the system of relations born of the capitalist system.

The facts mentioned above show that capitalism breeds in the working people uncertainty of the morrow, downgrades human dignity, and leads to the individual's alienation. It cannot offer a life worthy of man.

A SYSTEM ELEVATING MAN

As distinct from capitalism socialism approaches way of life problems from fundamentally different positions. Socialism ensures a way of life worthy of man. To quote Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, "it creates new and superior forms of human society".¹ Its nature and essence consist in the fact that in the USSR and other socialist countries there is no private ownership of the means of production, the source of crises and unemployment. There is no exploitation of man by man here, nor are there class or national antagonisms.

The individual in socialist society has confidence in the morrow and social optimism. His social prestige depends on his personal qualities, work, and the quantity and quality of values he produces for society. The forms of social relations between people change accordingly, and new ideals and orientations—team spirit, a comradely attitude to one another, mutual assistance and support become established.

Social conditions prompt the masses to adopt the values of science, culture and art, and offer opportunities for boundless spiritual

development. The gap, existing in exploiter society between the benefits of education, science and culture and the working masses is being bridged under socialism. This is borne out by the upsurge of the technical ingenuity, mass-scale innovation and invention movement, working people's massive involvement in disseminating progressive production methods, the development of amateur art, and so on.

The socialist state's profoundly democratic nature consists in its being a state for working people and of working people. Genuine democracy here is ensured through the participation of the masses in running all affairs of the state, their active influence upon the country's domestic and foreign affairs.

True, if we take a purely material aspect of the new system, it has not yet outrun capitalism in everything. Why then has socialism, which shows higher growth rates than capitalism, not yet won out in the economic competition?

What should be taken into account first is the level from which the Soviet people started socialist construction. History had it that socialism triumphed in a country with a relatively low level of economic development. To illustrate. In 1913, the overall per capita industrial output in Russia was one-fourteenth that in the USA. The devastation caused by the First World War and then the Civil War and the aggression by 14 capitalist states against the emergent Soviet Republic after the October Socialist Revolution multiplied this gap 33 times. It would be absurd immediately to try to catch up with developed capitalist states in terms of consumption. Add to this the material and human losses suffered by the Soviet people in the Second World War. The Soviet people lost 20 million lives, while the US losses ran into 405 thousand men. In the USSR, 1,710 towns and settlements and over 70,000 villages were razed. A third of the Soviet Union's industrial potential was destroyed. In terms of money the Second World War cost the USSR nearly 500 billion dollars, and the USA, 330 billion dollars. Moreover, a direct damage caused by hostilities in Soviet territory is estimated at 128 billion dollars. The USA did not suffer losses in its own territory, and its national income rose by 96 billion dollars over the years 1939-1944. The truth, as they say, is acknowledged through comparison.

Another question arises: why should the Western media shower their citizens with anti-Soviet publications falsifying socialist reality, particularly the Soviet way of life. The answer is clear enough: an outwardly objective but actually quite distorted picture of the USSR suits those who would like to depict it as a backward country which can always be saddled with political conditions. This cliché is also designed to suggest conclusions about the way of life. Even a person with the poorest imagination will easily conclude what may take place

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 21, p. 38.

in a country described by experts as a "land of troikas, pancakes and balalaikas".

But times change. An average American or European gets to know more about the Soviet way of life and gradually learns to distinguish truth from a lie.

The country was gradually recovering from the consequences of what fell to its lot in the past. During the last twenty-five years it has scored major successes. The national basic production assets have increased seven-fold. The national income has almost quadrupled, industrial and farm output has gone up 5 and 1.7 times, respectively. The USSR firmly holds first place in the output of some key products. Looking into the foreseeable future, one can confidently say that the Soviet Union will be ahead of advanced capitalist countries in key economic areas.

However, socialist society is not seeking to catch up with and outstrip capitalism on all counts. Elements of prestige consumption, typical of private-enterprise society, especially its elite, which lead to squandering the fruits of human labour and irreparably harm the environment are alien to the new social system. Socialism is prepared to compete with capitalism in per capita output of essential material benefits and there is every reason to believe that it will win out.

It would be wrong to assume that sufficiency (to be discussed below), even surplus of material values owned by society determine of themselves the best way of life. For human life needs more than material benefits. This is admitted by many Western scholars, political writers and public figures. They come to the conclusion that to make people happy, it is not enough to increase the supply of goods and services, and that the "consumer society" has reached a deadlock.

Social development can also be gauged by other criteria—social, political, cultural and moral. Here are some essential facts testifying to the advantages of the Soviet way of life in these aspects.

First. What unemployment means is something the Soviet people have not known for 56 years now (the last labour exchange closed here in 1930 right in the run-up to the Great Depression of the 1930s when unemployment assumed catastrophic dimensions in the West). It is worth noting that the right to work is interpreted in the USSR not only as the possibility of getting any job to ensure the subsistence minimum. It includes the right, as is laid down in the Constitution of the USSR, Article 40, "to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society. This right is ensured by ... free vocational and professional training, improvement of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement".

Soviet law provides for legal protection of this right. Among other things, responsibility, including criminal, has been instituted for an unlawful dismissal of a person from work (because of personal motivations, for instance) and for other violations of labour legislation by the management.

Second. As was noted at the 27th CPSU Congress (1986), over the past 25 years per capita real incomes in the USSR have grown 2.6 times and the social consumption funds, a major means of further developing the national systems of free public education, public health and social security, and of improving working people's recreational facilities, have increased 5-odd times. In the next fifteen years, it is planned to double the volume of resources allocated for improving the quality of life. Per capita real incomes are to go up by 1.6-1.8 times. Incidentally, throughout the Soviet years, except for the war years, not a single instance of Soviet people's real incomes dropping has been recorded.

The incomes of less affluent families have been growing more rapidly. Whereas in 1965, only four per cent of the population had a monthly per family member income of more than 100 roubles, in 1985 60 per cent had such an income.

In the USSR, work remuneration is the principal source of working people's incomes. Over the period 1965 to 1983, the average earnings of urban working people rose 1.9 times and those of collective farmers more than 2.5 times. In 1985, they were 190 and 153 roubles a month, respectively. As was noted at the 27th CPSU Congress, in the 12th five-year plan period it is intended to raise the average monthly earnings in towns to 215-220 roubles, and on collective farms to 180 roubles. Together with the receipts from subsidiary holdings, the farmers' real incomes will, in practical terms, level up with the incomes of urban dwellers.

Changes in the rate and pattern of food consumption are graphic proof of the Soviet people's growing material well-being. Thus, if in 1970 per capita annual consumption of meat was 48 kg, milk and dairy products 307 kg, vegetables and melons 82 kg and eggs 159, in 1983 the figures were 58, 309, 101 and 253, respectively.

The output and use of manufactured goods are growing. Even some Western papers are compelled to admit this. The Canadian *Globe and Mail* wrote in March 1986 that in 1970 Soviet citizens spent on consumer goods 201 billion roubles and in 1984, 406 billion roubles. Over the past 15 years the number of cars owned by Soviet citizens has increased 12 times over. In 1970, only a third of the Soviet citizens had refrigerators and only fifty per cent had TV sets. At present, they all have them, the *Globe and Mail* adds.

Third. The Soviet Union now holds first place in the level of youth

education. In the USSR, over 100 million study in one way or another, which means that every third citizen studies. What's more, education is free. In the higher and specialized secondary educational establishments the vast majority of students receive state grants.

Fourth. The Soviet Union leads the world in the number of doctors (40) and hospital beds (128) per 10,000 population. Medical service is free.

Fifth. The Soviet Union was the first to write the right to housing into its Constitution and to guarantee it too. Over 3.5 billion square metres of housing have been built in Soviet years. During the 11th five-year plan period alone (1981-1985) over 550 million square metres of housing were built, making it possible for more than 50 million people to improve their living conditions. As was noted at the 27th CPSU Congress, by the year 2000 every family will have a self-contained flat or a house. Today, some 80 per cent of the urban dwellers live in self-contained flats. In the main, flats are provided free: their building is financed from the state budget or by enterprises and organizations. Housing is also being built on a cooperative and individual basis. Those building homes on their own receive extensive assistance from the state in the form of credits granted on terms unheard of in the West—at 0.5 per cent interest with repayment within 10-15 years. It should be added that housing rents in the USSR have not changed since 1928. By Western standards, they are just symbolic, not exceeding 3 per cent of the average family budget. Free housing and singularly low rents in the USSR are not conditional upon the social status and incomes of the family members.

Sixth. The pension scheme in the USSR is financed entirely by the state and the collective farms, without any deductions from the working people's incomes. Retirement pensions are set for men at 60 and for women at 55.

Seventh. The USSR is rightly considered to have the world's biggest readership. And this is indeed so. Publications brought out in the country include 8,172 newspapers, 5,195 magazines and other periodicals. In 1922, there were 16,600 libraries with 47 million copies of books, now the country has 133,500 public libraries with a total stock of nearly 12 billion books and magazines.

There are 1,400 museums, 138,600 clubs, houses and palaces of culture, and 604 professional theatres with an annual audience of over 20 million.

Eighth. Workers and peasants account for more than half of the deputies to the USSR Supreme Soviet, the country's highest body of state authority. All nationalities are represented there. A third of the deputies are women. Altogether, over two million deputies have been elected to the Soviets of People's Deputies of all levels. More than

half of them are directly engaged in production. At every election almost half of the deputies to the Soviets are elected for the first time. Every Soviet citizen over 18 is involved in one way or another in running affairs of state. In the postwar years over 35 million citizens were elected to Soviets. At present, over 30 million activists help the Soviets to handle their tasks.

A major form of mass involvement in management is the work of people's control bodies. Nothing like these is known in any capitalist state. Over 10 million citizens participate in their work on an elective basis and largely gratis. Their terms of reference concern practically all state institutions and organizations. In effect they have access to all documents.

Such are facts pertaining to the socialist way of life. Considering that at the present stage of confrontation between socialism and capitalism the way of life increasingly becomes a touchstone of the vitality of the opposing social systems, it is not hard to see in whose favour these facts speak.

The socialist way of life does not only differ from the capitalist way of life fundamentally. It is really worthy of man. Socialism provides all conditions for working people to feel real masters of their country concerned for its prosperity and responsible for the common cause.

We do not idealize our society. We still have quite a few difficulties and outstanding problems. There still occur instances of behaviour contradicting socialism. The point is that human mentality changes far more slowly than the material foundations of life. Such vices as departures from the standards of public morality, embezzlement, bribery, profiteering, parasitism, drinking and hooliganism, proprietor mentality and money-grubbing do not disappear automatically. Communist education does not yield immediate results, since social consciousness is distinguished by relative independence and stability. Backward ideas, habits and views are tenacious and survive the historical conditions which have engendered them.

A course has now been taken in the country of vigorously combating negative phenomena conflicting with the socialist way of life. We are trying to improve it in the interests of everyone and all.

US IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY IN THE PAST AND PRESENT

by Kamaludin GADJIEV

World development today is characterized by the sharply increased aggressiveness of the more reactionary imperialist forces. It is seen in the escalation of military preparations in the USA and its NATO allies, the wanton arms race and mounting political and ideological attacks on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, on all forces fighting for national and social liberation.

The aggressive foreign policy of the Washington administration stoking up tensions, escalating military-political ventures and the arms race takes particularly extreme and odious forms. Through this strategy the US ruling circles hope to prevent the further consolidation of the world progressive forces, to buttress the system of neo-colonialist oppression in the developing countries, and also tie their NATO allies and Japan still more firmly to their military-political bandwagon and ultimately to tilt in their favour the existing strategic parity and affirm the United States' dominant role in the world.

Speaking at the 27th Congress of the CPSU, CC CPSU General Secretary M. S. Gorbachev stressed: "Today, too, the right wing of the US monopoly bourgeoisie regards the stoking up of international tensions as something that

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justifies military spending, claims to global supremacy, interference in the affairs of other states, and an offensive against the interests and the rights of the American working people. No small role seems to be played by the idea of using tensions to put pressure on the allies, to make them absolutely obedient, to subordinate them to Washington's dictation."

This hegemonist strategy is the product of the US socio-political system. It is embodied in the imperial ideology, the official foreign-policy doctrine of the monopoly bourgeoisie. Dating back to the time of the USA's formation, this ideology passed through various stages of evolution and has become particularly vicious in recent years.

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHTS

The USA is one of the first countries of the West to establish bourgeois-republican institutions and principles of bourgeois democracy in their more or less consummate form. It is also a fact that from the very first days American republicanism carried strong elements and prerequisites of imperial expansion and the bid for world supremacy.

One of such elements was the idea of the Americans' superiority over other peoples and America's special mission in world history. The very nature and ideology at the early stage of American history promoted the emergence of the myth that the English colonies in North America were destined for a great experiment. Like in the early utopias, Europeans in the 17th and 18th centuries pictured America as a paradise island separated by seas and oceans from the rest of the world. Puritan historians and ideological leaders created the impression that the first settlers who had crossed the ocean, fought against the Indians and harnessed wild nature implementing the postulates of Providence. They saw a direct analogy between their own settlement in North America and the legendary exodus of the "chosen people" from fallen Egypt, presenting America as the Promised Land expressly chosen by God as the place for a "new Zion", a "town on the hill", as a model for other peoples to admire. Thus, the idea of a "God-chosen nation" was cultivated among the Americans back at the dawn of American history.

After gaining independence the belief in America's special destiny became a major component of nascent American nationalism. In the middle of the 19th century an

attempt to assert the idea of America's superiority and exclusiveness and its mission to rule the world was made in the Manifest Destiny doctrine. The ideology of "American exclusiveness" embraced the principle of racial segregation or "ethnic aristocratism" practised by the US ruling circles almost in America's early colonization period. The mass expulsion and destruction of Indians and Negro slavery largely contributed to the formation of the American concept of the "white man's burden". American geography textbooks of the mid-19th century scornfully referred to the "lazy and good-for-nothing" peoples of the East and "inferior" Latin Americans and Europeans unable to dispense with the old ways and follow the American pattern.

Excessive enthusiasm with regard to America conduced to the development of patriotism, nationalism and the legitimate pride in the country's achievements into chauvinistic and jingoist moods, non-critical laudation of all things American. In the long run this cleared the path for the conversion of the "town on the hill" myth of the first Puritan settlers of the 17th century into the concept of a "world empire" and, simultaneously, the belief in America's absolute and constant rightness.

Obsession with idea of "American exclusiveness" was the breeding ground for American chauvinism in all its forms. It also formed the basis of the global-hegemonistic "imperial" ideology, the idea of Pax Americana which the US ruling circles made the guiding principle of their foreign policy.

Back in 1823 the Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed to oppose the imminent intervention by the Holy Alliance in Latin America. Its proponents asserted that the Western Hemisphere should not be viewed as an object of colonization by any of the European powers and that the USA would regard any such attempt on their part as jeopardizing its peace and security. At the turn of the century, at the period of transition to and the onset of the imperialist epoch, Washington's official interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine became clearly expansionist, serving to substantiate the US dominant position in the Western Hemisphere.

Pursuing these principles the US ruling circles increasingly resorted to the "big stick" to establish their domination in the Western Hemisphere. They argued that America's allegiance to "civilization" gave it a special right to

interfere in the internal affairs of countries "guilty" of "bad actions" or "impotence".

The popularity and tenacity of this nationalist syndrome were largely sustained by the fact that the United States had never experienced any more or less destructive wars. Separated from the rest of the world by two oceans and holding a dominant position in the Western Hemisphere, the USA gradually became convinced of its omnipotence. As for the expansion in the North American continent and the accompanying wars with Indians and Mexico and, at the turn of the century, with a weakened and decaying Spanish empire, this entailed insignificant human and financial losses for the US ruling circles.

If initially, American expansionism was purely regional and confined to the Western Hemisphere, the war with Spain in 1898 and the occupation of the Philippines heralded the extension of imperial claims beyond the Hemisphere. The elastic Manifest Destiny concept and the Monroe Doctrine were complemented with the "open doors" principle claiming a free hand for American monopolies in their chase for world markets.

In the modern period the missionary and also aggressive, expansionist and outspokenly imperialist components of the "American mission" doctrine are distinctly traceable in the American dominant class' conviction of the superiority of the country's socio-political institutions and moral-ethical values, the excellence of its system and infallibility of its foreign policy, of the prolific social and historical concepts making the United States a model for other peoples to copy. They are traceable both in the programme documents and political actions of the more aggressive and bellicose grouping of the US ruling class, which has for many decades countered the realistically-minded section of the bourgeoisie attempting to pursue a more flexible course, namely, considering the changes taking place in the world, to replace the methods of open dictation and strong-arm pressure by more camouflaged forms of economic and political expansion, to accept peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union, etc.

After the Second World War the US ruling circles set out to translate the slogan of the "American age" into practice. This was to be achieved through the economic expansion of US monopoly capital. The military and political ties which linked the USA with Western Europe and

Japan in the postwar period were conceived as a guarantee assuring US firm trade and economic positions there. At the same time, these ties enabled the US ruling circles to use nearly all means at the disposal of the capitalist world for "containing" the Soviet Union and also for countering all revolutionary changes in the world. Thus, the USA became the bulwark of imperialism's reactionary and aggressive forces.

In the USA, they take it for granted that because of its special interests and common interests, that country must interfere in the affairs of other nations until its world empire is established and, later, use all means for preserving this empire. The USA is practising this basic strategic principle in Latin America, the Middle East and elsewhere. It is present in the zigzags and evolution of foreign policy doctrines and programmes—from the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, "massive retaliation" and "rolling back of communism" to the Nixon-Kissinger "realistic policy" and Carter's human rights rhetoric.

After the Second World War nearly all US foreign-policy programmes and actions were openly expansionist and imperialist, regardless of whether the Democratic or the Republican Party was in office. It is indicative that the postwar Truman Doctrine was hailed by the reactionary, aggressive circles of the US dominant class as a "world-wide equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine". Later the motives and signboards of the foreign-policy strategy of the successive American administrations changed, but the aim was still the same, namely, to achieve the world hegemony through the build-up and use of military force. This is also the aim of the foreign-policy strategy pursued by the present American administration.

In pursuing their global-hegemonistic, imperial ambitions, the US ruling circles keep in their cupboard "gun-boat diplomacy" which they have applied repeatedly and more and more impudently in different corners of the world. Moreover, assuming the functions of a world policeman after the war Washington brought the colossal destructive power of nuclear weapons into the service of its foreign-policy objectives. The American leaders have always used their nuclear weapons as an instrument for blackmail and intimidation of the peoples in their foreign policy.

They were the first to use A-bombs which they dropped

on the peaceful population of the Japanese towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, although there was no military need for this. They put into their service the policy of nuclear deterrence repeatedly threatening to use nuclear weapons. The United States initiated an unprecedented arms race, creating ever new and ever more destructive types of mass annihilation weapons and thereby further aggravating international tensions, poisoning the world political atmosphere, fanning religious conflicts and setting some countries and peoples against others. The US ruling circles set up a ramified network of military bases and their occupationist forces are stationed in Western Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Oceania.

All US presidents, from Truman to Reagan, have viewed nuclear weapons as offensive, which could be used against other countries, nuclear and non-nuclear alike. The Soviet Union was and remains the main target of US nuclear blackmail.

THE IMPERIAL SYNDROME

During the postwar decades the myth about the "American age" rapidly dissipated. The successes of world socialism, the demise of the colonial system, faster rates of economic growth in Western Europe and Japan, the restoration of relative independence of developed capitalist countries and US setbacks and reverses in many regions of the world have considerably subverted the Americans' belief in their omnipotence. In face of these factors many ideological precepts of the US ruling circles in the sphere of foreign policy have become an anachronism.

For the first time in American history the factor of territorial invulnerability of the USA has become ineffective. The ending of its nuclear monopoly confronted the United States with the real danger of destruction in the event of a war unleashed against countries of the socialist community. In these circumstances many realistically-thinking politicians had to recognize the irreversibility of the changes in the world and the need to revise the most odious dogmas of the American bourgeoisie's foreign policy doctrines.

The set of ideas entertained by the American population about their country's place in the world and the main trends of world development changed substantially under

the impact of the US defeat in the Vietnam war. A new, anti-interventionist mode of thinking is evident in public consciousness. Ordinary Americans began to realize the ruinous nature of the White House's orientation on maintaining the USA as the "No. 1 Power" and "the strongest nation in the world". The public increasingly favoured the idea of renouncing the cold war policies and furthering international detente. The realization struck deeper roots that the road to security and peace passes not through the struggle against the imaginary "Soviet threat" but through improvement of the US relations with the Soviet Union, through the easing of tensions between the East and the West.

In the mid-1970s, different tendencies prevailed in the country's social and political life and in mass consciousness, which were due to objective and subjective reasons. Significant and influential groups of the population, refusing to reconcile themselves to the changed balance of world forces, reacted to it by increasing their enmity towards other peoples and countries. Chauvinistic and nationalist moods surged up again and the chimeric dreams of US world supremacy ran high. These moods led to the revival of the imperial syndrome, and the more aggressive, chauvinistic and reactionary forces of American imperialism that brought the present administration to power came to the fore.

Rabid anti-communism and virulent anti-Sovietism were the driving force of the imperial syndrome. Their advocates appealed to most diverse groups that were discontent with the American foreign policy—from those who saw the main aim of the USA in peddling the American ideals all over the world to the nationalists who stubbornly clung to the simplistic schemes of the "American age".

Noteworthy is the intensification of research and propaganda in the second half of the 1970s and the spate of publications by various conservative and ultra-conservative "brain trusts" and "think tanks". They began to shape US foreign policy and military-political strategy. As a Western observer put it, these right-wing "propaganda ministries", just as sundry conservative organizations like the committee on the present danger, see their main task in substantiating and inculcating the idea circulated by the reactionary forces about the United States' military lag behind the Soviet

Union. This thesis was designed to justify the further build-up of the US nuclear potential.

The neo-conservatives urged Americans to overcome their "guilt complex" and "national inferiority complex". Many of them are out-and-out anti-communists devoted to the cold war concepts. With the aim of consolidating "social stability" and "national unity" they propose laying greater emphasis on the propaganda of the invented "communist threat".

To support their hegemonistic ambitions the Washington "hawks" brought into play a colossal propaganda machine in order to form the world image of the USA as the sole guarantor of peoples' freedom, and impose their social system and life-style on all mankind. Various programmes like "defence of human rights", "public diplomacy" and so on are aimed at "promoting democracy in the world" and cultivating American values in other countries.

An important role is assigned to the expansion of subversive activity to destabilize the situation in recalcitrant countries, to erode their political and economic structures. Lately, this activity has become particularly bare-faced and dangerous. As proved by the CIA's actions against Nicaragua, terrorism and "secret warfare" are components of US state policy. Attempts are being made to impart a semblance of legality to these actions. Thus, Reagan signed Directive 138 which sanctions the principle of "pre-emptive strikes" abroad with the alleged aim of combating terrorism.

But the main stake in its hegemonistic ambitions Washington puts on "gun-boat diplomacy", crass military force. It has resorted to a bare-faced show of strength in Central America, the southern Mediterranean, the Middle, the Far East and elsewhere. This was graphically demonstrated by the piratical action of this great imperialist power, possessing huge military might, against the tiny and defenceless Caribbean island of Grenada.

To provide ideological justification for regional and local conflicts, for the policy of the export of counter-revolution and persecutions of the forces of national liberation and social progress, Washington's top echelon devised the concept of "neo-globalism". The most ominous step in its implementation was the US piracy against Libya. That was state terrorism in action.

The declarations about "self-defence", "defence of democracy" and struggle against "international terrorism" made by high-ranking US officials to cover their aggressive policy, are a real mockery at a time when the list of bloody crimes of American imperialism against other peoples is growing with every year, when more and more countries are becoming victims of brazen US interference. Examples are galore. Nicaragua is living with US guns trained on it, unprecedented support is extended to cut-throats in Angola, bandits in Afghanistan and the blood-stenched Pol Pot gangs in Kampuchea. In all cases we see open acts of violence against sovereign states, attempts to bring down lawfully elected governments. Each of these crimes is an attempt to translate into practice the Reagan Doctrine, or neo-globalism.

The present American administration and the aggressive, militarist circles of the US monopoly bourgeoisie standing behind them are well aware that the main obstacle to their imperial expansionist plans is the Soviet Union. In their election platform the Republicans declared in so many words that the Soviet Union is today the main threat to the "democratic institutions" of the USA. It is not surprising therefore that the White House views all events in nearly all regions of the world through the prism of Soviet-American rivalry. Using outright lies and slander, Washington attempted to mount a global military-political and ideological offensive or, in the US leaders' parlance, a crusade against the Soviet Union, against socialism as a social system. To give more credence to his aggressive foreign-policy strategy, President Reagan christened the Soviet Union an "evil empire" confronting the "centre of kindness"—the United States of America.

In line with this the USA is making intensive preparations for war, rapidly building up its strategic nuclear forces that would be able to deliver a "disarming strike" at the USSR. In their lunatic dreams of world domination the US ruling circles are threatening the world with a "star war". Their large-scale programme for militarizing near-terrestrial space is a dangerous step toward transforming outer space into a source of mortal danger for mankind. The relics of the abortive "American Age" with its cowboy Western mentality are now being rejuvenated with the help of Star Wars scenarios Hollywood-superman style.

* * *

The foreign policy of the American administration is a grave threat to universal peace and is contrary to the idea of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, to the peoples' vital interests. Although it has no future it is extremely dangerous for human civilization. To oppose it requires high vigilance by all who cherish peace.

Routing the nazi Reich over four decades ago, the Soviet people convincingly proved the absurdity and futility of the Hitlerites' claims with their slogan "Deutschland über alles" for recarving the world to the national-socialist model. The reactionary, aggressive circles of imperialism standing behind Washington's current administration and trying under the slogan "America above all" to repattern the world according to nationalist-American principles would do well to grasp the fact that the Soviet Union, which is not seeking military superiority over others, will not allow superiority to be established over itself, will not permit the USA to mould the world strategic situation in its favour, to achieve world hegemony.

As stressed in the Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress, "the policy of total contention, of military confrontation has no future. Flight into the past is no answer to the challenges of the future. It is rather an act of despair which, however, does not make this posture any less dangerous. By its deeds Washington will show when and to what extent it will understand this. We, for our part, are ready to do everything we can in order radically to improve the international situation".

Kommunist, No. 7, 1986*

THE "CONSERVATIVE TURN" CONCEPT AND MASS SOCIO- POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

by Grigory VAINSHTEIN

Capitalism's onward march in the 1980s is noted for its growing instability. Crisis trends mount in different spheres of society's life. The political and economic structures that have taken shape in the postwar decades are increasingly revealing their inability to cope with the new situation.

Modern capitalism's attempts to get adjusted to the objective realities of today, its search for ways to surmount the crisis are reflected in the evolution of bourgeois ideology, in changes in the party and political system. As capitalism's socio-economic instability grows, sentiments are growing within its ruling class in favour of revising the previously used methods for social manoeuvring.

In some leading capitalist countries these changes are marked by the growth of right-wing forces catering to the interests of the bourgeoisie's extreme conservative section. There is a rise in reactionary trends towards restricting democratic liberties, attacking working people's rights, curtailing social security programmes, and mounting aggressiveness on the international scene. "A tendency towards an all-round intensification of reaction is characteristic of imperialism in the political field," says the new edition of the CPSU Programme adopted by the 27th Party Congress. Furthermore, conservatives are resorting to a variety of

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means in a bid to impose their concepts on the broadest sections of the population, combining partial concessions with downright violence. Reaction is seeking to cultivate in public consciousness principles to its advantage in order to manipulate the political conduct of various social strata. Bourgeois authors tendentiously interpret political and other aspects of popular moods. Under the circumstances a Marxist analysis of the processes now taking place in the political consciousness of the masses becomes particularly important.

SEARCHING FOR A COMMON DENOMINATOR

The concept of prevailing conservative trends in public consciousness has lately become widespread in the works of many Western politologists and in statements made by political leaders and observers. It is argued that the socio-economic crisis has eroded liberal-democratic views that developed at the previous stage, caused a substantial shift to the right in mass socio-political consciousness, and ultimately determined the prevalence of conservative ideological and political principles in it.

In some Western countries (the USA, Britain, the FRG) the influence of reactionary, right-conservative political forces has indeed increased. The axis of political life has shifted rightwards in France too. The March 16, 1986 parliamentary elections were a success for the right-wing forces. The French Socialist Party (FSP) that had ruled the country over the previous five years lost both the majority in the National Assembly and the right to form the government. However, the FSP retains the status of a major political party in the country (it secured the votes of nearly a third of the constituents). The result is impressive enough. It shows, among other things, that for all its waverings the FSP was seen by the French as a kind of barrier withstanding the powerful pressure from the right. At the same time, the election returns in such countries as Spain and Greece have upset predictions about a general "conservative turn" in the West's political life. The recent elections in Italy, Sweden and Finland have shown the weakening—not massive but tangible enough—of those countries' right-wingers.

The changes in the correlation of modern capitalism's political forces show that the precursors' predictions

concerning the advent of a "conservative era" are far from reality. Their assertions prove groundless even with respect to countries where a rightward turn in the ruling circles' policies is much in evidence. Mounting reactionary trends in them do not offset the masses' really diverse positions. Indicative in this respect are the Green Party's involvement in big politics in the FRG or the consolidation of the centrist forces in Britain that resulted in the emergence of the election alliance of Liberals and Social Democrats, eroding that country's traditional bipartisan system. More examples can also be cited to this effect.

What's more, far from all aspects of the public mood in those countries, contradicting the "conservative turn" concept, are conditioned by the masses' electoral forms of conduct. As a result of the growing political alienation the activity of capitalist society's broad sections goes beyond the framework of traditional party and political institutions and stimulates a search for new forms and methods of manifesting their views and demands. Of late such trends have been expressed in the spread of mass protest movements involving advocates of environmental protection, civic initiatives, and an alternative mode of life.

A particular role in the West is played by the peace movement which has in its ranks hundreds of thousands of people fighting against their governments' aggressive policy, for a constructive solution of today's key issue—the prevention of a nuclear disaster. As an outlet for public sentiments on concrete issues the mass actions within the anti-war movement, as in other non-party initiatives, constitute a mighty factor of political life with which the capitalist states' ruling circles have to reckon.

Many bourgeois authors ignore such aspects of the public mood which do not square with their concept of a general shift to the right or mention them only as temporary, purely transient features having nothing to do with the allegedly deep-going conservative reshaping of public consciousness. The political and ideological thrust of such an approach is clear enough: it aims at creating an impression that the policy of the right-wing forces accords with the basic interests of the popular masses, while opposition to it is devoid of a historical perspective.

PREVALENCE OF CONSERVATIVE MOODS OR GROWING HETEROGENEITY OF PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS?

To support their thesis about the conservative reorientation of public consciousness, bourgeois authors speak ever more frequently of shifts in the people's attitude to the "social state".

Indeed, from the mid-1970s, as the economic crisis was growing deeper, more and more Westerners began expressing dissatisfaction with the ineffective state-monopoly regulation of the economy and the state's social policy. Such a reaction from public psychology is intensified by "neo-conservative" propaganda. Playing on such sentiments and appealing to bourgeois-individualistic stereotypes of thinking, right-wingers are seeking to cultivate anti-state ideas and to turn the mass discontent with the limitations of the state's social policy into the negation of this policy. All this, needless to say, cannot but affect the consciousness of different social strata, including the working class. According to a 1983 international survey, in nine capitalist states (the USA, the FRG, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, etc.) the rightists-advertized idea of the need to reduce the scale of governmental interference in the economy and to revitalize the free market mechanism (as a means of surmounting the current economic difficulties) has influenced the major proportion of these countries' populations.

At the same time, socio-psychological trends developing under the sign of criticism of social policy and state-monopoly regulation appear to be far more complicated and diverse than what bourgeois propaganda is painting.

The majority of working people realize the impossibility of solving acute social problems without state assistance and favour greater state expenditure to improve health care, education, environmental protection, and many other spheres of society's life. Thus, despite the Americans' dissatisfaction with federal taxes, in late 1981, 73 per cent of the US population spoke out for greater state spending on improving the health system, 72 per cent, for promoting environmental protection and 63 per cent, for bettering the employment situation. In January 1984, 51 per cent of the Americans favoured a rise in federal expenditure on assistance to the less affluent (with 41 per cent insisting on retaining the same level of spending, and only 8 per cent, on reducing it). In Britain in March 1979, only a third of

the population favoured tax cuts entailing respective decreases in state services in the fields of health care, education and social security. A similar proportion felt social services should be expanded even if this implied a certain rise in taxation. By February 1985, the percentage of advocates of greater social spending, even through a certain increase in taxation, had risen substantially to 63 per cent of the population.

Consequently it would be more appropriate to speak of the deepening contradictoriness of the people's positions, not the mounting trend towards dismantling the "welfare state".

Adherence to the traditional values of material well-being in present-day public consciousness is being increasingly combined with a sharply intensifying need for improving life's qualitative aspects. Appraising this phenomenon Western sociologists usually contrast socio-economic with "anti-consumerist" values of life. Such interpretation simplifies the real trends in the development of public consciousness, when some value orientations are not ousted by others but rather relationships between them become more intricate.

There are two fairly stable categories of people, one adhering to purely "materialistic" realities and the other giving priority to purely non-economic, "anti-materialistic" values. Members of the more educated and affluent social groups embrace "anti-consumerist" values more readily than socially and economically less affluent ones (small farmers, manual workers). On the whole less than a half of the capitalist countries' population adhere to the opposing orientations. More widespread is a category of individuals with a complicated, heterogeneous set of value orientations geared to meeting both material and non-material requirements.

The working people of the Western countries by no means confine themselves to fighting for a higher standard of living. They also put forward democratic demands and protest against the spiritual poverty of life. The emergence of new ideals in people's consciousness imparts a broader political character to public movements like the anti-war, women's equality, environmental protection and civic initiative movements.

The findings of numerous sociological surveys indicate that the crisis trends of capitalism's socio-economic deve-

lopment at the present stage and the more intensive propaganda of conservative ideology in the West have not "purged" mass consciousness from the earlier liberal-democratic and progressive ideas. The most active carriers of such principles are young working people and representatives of the so-called new middle strata, particularly scientists, engineers and members of liberal professions who have higher educational standards and greater intellectual, cultural and professional requirements. At the same time, a rise in cultural and general educational standards is characteristic of people with proletarian backgrounds. Also, this substantially expands the working class' requirements.¹

In a situation like this it would be inappropriate to absolutize any specific aspect of public consciousness. Its development implies not a conservative reorientation or a return to the traditional individualistic and "materialistic" values but the complication of its structure.

On the one hand, this process is expressed in the polarization of the people's socio-political positions and value orientations. We are witnessing the emergence of socially heterogeneous "blocks" of the population adhering to opposing socio-political principles. On the other hand, alongside the polar types of consciousness, wider currency is gained by one distinguished by complexity and deep-seated inner contradictions. Since the process of public consciousness is getting more and more complicated the most diverse socio-political, moral and behavioral principles and values accumulate in public consciousness and coexist in conditions of constant confrontation. Such processes reflect contemporary capitalism's objective reality.

PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDEOLOGY

In view of the increasing variety of social concepts and value orientations of the masses ever less appropriate becomes a traditional approach to evaluating public con-

¹ Indicative in this respect are the results of polling American workers which show that in the early 1980s, only 20 per cent of them gave priority to economic stability in the set of their requirements, while 22 per cent gave preference to requirements assuring their "self-respect", and a further 24 per cent singled out "self-realization" and self-improvement as principal values.

consciousness determining whether it shifts to the right or to the left, whether liberal ideology is crowded out by conservative ideology or the other way around. To all appearances, such one-dimensional evaluations no longer reflect the existing diversity of ideological views.

At present the evolution of public consciousness means not merely a periodic change in the scale of spreading traditional liberal-reformist and conservative ideological views, but also the holding of the most diverse ideological and political views by most members of society.

Needless to say, today too, substantial sections of the population largely lean towards progressive, democratic or conservative social ideals. However, we no longer see a one-time, relatively clearcut ideological stratification of society. The whole picture is getting ever more complex and multi-dimensional.

The above-mentioned trends, naturally, are adopted in different ways by capitalist society's different social groups. The inner contradictoriness of consciousness is particularly typical of the new middle strata, intellectuals, young people, and better educated persons. These groups have a relatively wider range of requirements, and their hierarchy is less distinctive.

Conditioned by the objective contradictions of social life, the diversity of public requirements and needs intensifies the disharmony of the people's ideological and political orientations. The conflicting nature of contemporary public consciousness is reflected on the ideological plane as well.

The growing complexity of the public ideological and political orientations in all developed capitalist states is manifested today in the weakened partisanship of various strata of the population, in the retreat from the previous forms of political self-expression to a search for new ones. There are growing numbers of "vacillating" voters who change party preferences from election to election as well as of those speaking of their "independent" party identification.²

A situation arises in which supporters of some parties back certain provisions in the programmes and slogans of

² According to the 1982 poll in Britain, only 31 per cent of those who voted for Conservatives, 31 per cent for Labourites, and 12 per cent for Social Democrats, expressed close adherence to these parties. In the USA in 1980, the "independents" averaged 38 per cent of the nation's electorate, and in the younger age groups they were the absolute majority.

other parties, while individuals declaring their loyalty to one ideological-political concept approve these or those principles of another concept. Such inconsistency of views is expressed in essentially conservative orientations making inroads into the consciousness of advocates of liberal ideology and supporters of social-reformist and even leftist parties, and vice versa.

THE MASSES' POLITICAL OPTION—SHIFTS IN THE MOTIVATION MECHANISM

How does the complicated structure of the people's socio-political moods and the greater variety of their political requirements agree with the strengthening of the rightist forces in some Western states?

To all appearances, there is no single socio-psychological explanation for the axis of political life shifting to the right in those states. When bourgeois authors argue that these shifts are predetermined by the people's ideological reorientation, they deliberately simplify the matter, belittling the degree of the polarization of public consciousness and concealing the existing contradictions. Meantime, the broad sections of the population are still disillusioned with bourgeois policies, distrust all bourgeois parties and doubt the latter's ability to find solutions to socio-economic problems in the people's interests.³

In view of this one can hardly conclude that support by a section of the electorate for right-wing political forces signifies their shift to the right, to the positions of conservative ideology. Asserting that the shifts that have taken place in the political power system in some capitalist countries are a result of the masses solidly assimilating the new ideological and political concepts would mean plain simplification of an intricate phenomenon whose essence consists in lodging the masses' previous ideological positions and the attendant general complication of relationships between ideology and public political conduct.

The growing inner conflict of public consciousness makes it even more susceptible to all sorts of ideological and political influence. Increasingly important for the vo-

³ For instance, in 1982, 62 per cent of the Americans negatively appraised the effectiveness of the economic programmes offered by both the Democrats and the Republicans.

ters becomes not the feeling of identity shaped in their consciousness through previous experience, not the traditional image of some party or political institution but the real content of the latter's activity and programmes. Such intensified pragmatic aspects of the voters' behavioral motivation played a no small role in political changes at the turn of the 1970s. Many voters' enhanced concern about the socio-economic problems, in conditions of the economic crisis, combined with their disillusionment with the ineffective liberal-reformist methods of the economy, bolstered up the positions of right-wing forces that proposed revising the economic policy.

Of course, when speaking of the electorates' motivations in voting for right-wing leaders one should not overrate the significance of their pragmatic attitudes to central problems of political struggle. Broad sections' disenchantment with bourgeois ideals and values more often than not strengthens irrational elements in the public world outlook. Symptomatic in this respect are trends towards reviving such phenomena as mysticism, interest in all sorts of "new religions", a desire to flee the "modern technological world", nostalgia for the past and romanticization of patriarchal social structures. Such tendencies also lay their imprint on the masses' political conduct. The advent to power at the end of the 1970s of such political leaders as Ronald Reagan in the USA or Margaret Thatcher in Britain was largely facilitated by the striving of certain groups of voters for a "strong personality", spurred up by the feeling of confusion and fear in face of increasing socio-economic and foreign political instability.

At the same time, the "economic egoism" of certain groups, their unwillingness to "pay" for the continuation of social security programmes with their worsening economic situation can stand behind the strengthening of conservative political forces. Such "pragmatic" considerations are most characteristic of bourgeois strata. But they make their way into the midst of the working class, as expressed in the concern of highly skilled workers and technicians over the preservation of their narrow-group interests during economic crises.

There is another aspect to relations between the rationality of the people's consciousness and their support for right-wing political forces. Seeking to camouflage the conservative forces' inability to cope with social problems,

bourgeois ideology presents socio-economic crises only as the result of objective difficulties of social development and passes over in silence the fact that the very crisis nature and spontaneous development are a natural form of capitalist production. So in appraising social phenomena the masses all too often tend to absolutize the significance of factors uncontrollable within the system of political power. The spread of such moods is largely explained by the appeal of the conservatives' "rationalistic" demagoguery activating purely pragmatic motivations in the public political conduct.

Among the factors that have recently influenced the political conduct of working people in some capitalist countries, we should mention profound socio-political dissatisfaction of the majority of the Western countries' populations with their situation. Some develop political apathy, failing to find an outlet for their opposition within the available conventional, "legalistic" forms, at the same time they do not know, as a rule, other ways of externalizing them or become disillusioned with them. Many shift their interests from the sphere of politics to the sphere of private life, to daily, narrow-group concerns. They are indifferent or averse to the electoral process. That this phenomenon is widespread (especially in the USA) is borne out by voters' extensive absenteeism.

There is another segment of the masses retaining its political activity. The inability of traditional parties to grasp in good time its real, vital interests and reflect them in their policies leads to this segment's involvement in public movements promoting specific, concrete causes—environmental protection, the equality of women, young people and ethnic minorities, etc. More often than not these movements are naturally transient. They have no clear-cut organizational structure and use non-traditional methods, outside the existing party and political institutions. These movements are now prominent in modern capitalism.

These trends have lately been acquiring particular significance because they express anti-war moods which are singularly important for the present-day state of the public political consciousness. Peace now proves a large-scale and, at the same time, a concrete objective which, broaching the central problems of social development, rallies ideologically diverse social sections in the capitalist countries. And this striving, reflected in actions against the

nuclear threat and for disarmament, is politically materialized in the new socio-political movements in a number of countries.

Lastly, the discrepancy between the people's possibilities of political option and their real orientations and requirements leads them to support one party or another not because they approve its aims but because they do not approve the course pursued by the opponents. The conduct of a considerable proportion of the voters striving for social change largely stems from their rejection of one course or another rather than from their support of an alternative. The negative impact on the voters' political option determined their conduct during the elections in the late 1970s—early 1980s when, being discontent with the socio-economic situation, they refused to support the ruling parties' course which fueled their desire for change.

Difficulties now confronting the capitalist countries' working people in their quest for alternatives matching their needs become all the more pronounced when it comes to concrete and effective manifestations of their anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly moods. The presence on the political scene of forces coming out with progressive social programmes is not sufficient to adequately express political protest against the existing system and put forward demands for cardinal social change. Of major importance is their ability to prove to the people that the solutions they offer to economic, social and political issues are realistic and substantiated. At present the communist parties of the capitalist countries are coming to realize that their relations with the people should be solved on a creative and ideologically sound basis.

* * *

The content of the people's socio-political views in the modern capitalist world is complex indeed. Public consciousness, influenced by the capitalistic social relations and bourgeois ideology is distinguished by deep inner contradictions. But the presence in it of conflicting features and tendencies disproves bourgeois concepts proclaiming conservatism the dominant trend in public consciousness. Its widespread social and political discontent can be the basis for stepping up working people's actions for their interests and against the bourgeois "social revenge" policy.

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PRESENT-DAY TROTSKYISM: WHOM DOES IT SERVE?

Today the problem of averting nuclear war spelling death for hundreds of millions is a Number One problem for all people on Earth. Ideological struggle between the advocates of peace and progress, on the one hand, and reactionary forces seeking to bring mankind to the brink of a world war on the other, centres around it. Therefore, highly relevant nowadays are the words of Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, to the effect that it is necessary to "expose all the sophistries ... advanced in justification of war."¹ This concerns not only the imperialist apologists of war but also pseudo-revolutionary trends and groups which campaign against the peaceful foreign policy of the socialist community countries, against the relaxation of international tensions and limitation of the arms race. Particularly active among them are the Trotskyites.

What kind of sophistry do they use to justify war? Nikolai Vasetsky's book *Present-Day Trotskyism Versus Peace and Detente*, brought out by the APN Publishing House in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch and Hungarian in 1986, analyzes and justifiably criticizes their position.

Modern Trotskyites' reasoning, the author notes, stems from Trotsky's tenet, he put forward in 1940, about the "benefit" of war for world revolution. Resorting to arithmetics (the victory of the revolution in one country after World War I and in eleven after World War II) Trotsky's present-day followers put forward the following thesis: the more destructive wars are, the greater their revolutionizing role in society's development.

What can be said on this score? Of course, any war under capitalism, the author writes, disturbs the existing state of affairs, aggravates social antagonisms, plunges the whole social system in profound crisis, and may result in the awakening of revolutionary sentiments among the masses. This was characteristic of such a

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 33, p. 448.

reactionary war—on both sides—as was WWI. It was by no means fortuitous that Lenin pointed to the need to use a war-generated crisis to expedite the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. However, he further explained that such a crisis, such sentiments among the masses come about solely “on the basis of an objectively revolutionary situation”.² On more than one occasion he stressed that such a detonator of the masses’ revolutionary energies as war is highly undesirable because of consequences latent in any war. Besides, not every war invariably leads to a revolutionary explosion. Modern history knows of quite a few wars which produced the opposite effect.

Truly adventurist are Trotskyites’ calls not to fear a nuclear war which is, allegedly, requisite for eliminating capitalism and which would ultimately square accounts between capitalism and socialist revolution. They do not realize that the emergence of thermonuclear weapons, as the author notes correctly, makes highly problematic even the very posing of the question of admissibility of socialism and capitalism “squaring accounts” by military means. Indeed, one has to be a madman or a manhater to glorify a new war which can wipe whole peoples and states off the face of the earth and leave to the coming generations (if any) radiation-contaminated ruins, burnt forests, dried-up rivers and a poisoned atmosphere.

Advocating a “revolutionary nuclear war” Trotskyites fiercely assail any actions of the socialist countries in defence of peace and peoples’ security. They claim that by campaigning against thermonuclear war the socialist countries are demonstrating their “fear” of imperialism. Inasmuch as the socialist countries possess powerful armed forces these adventurists who are a long way from comprehending today’s realities, say they ought to promote a world revolution by military means. Thus modern Trotskyism provocatively foments distrust of socialism, of the working class.

Trotskyites do not seem one bit disconcerted, the author says, that their reckless calls run counter to the demands of our age, to the peoples’ vital interests, morals and ethics, to existing socialism’s political principles. It’s hardly possible, Nikolai Vasetsky writes, that the Trotskyite theorists are not aware that the USSR will never be the first to use nuclear weapons or military force. For they know very well that the Soviet military doctrine is purely defensive. Trotskyism is out to saddle the socialist countries with the imperialist “rules of the game” alien to their class nature, that is, the policy of diktat, intimidation, and blackmail. This position plays into the hands of those interested in fanning animosity and suspicion between nations and countries, in building up international tensions.

The Trotskyite advocacy of nuclear war reflects the views of an insignificant proportion of the extremist-minded petty bourgeoisie. They shirk the difficulties of the peace struggle and do not believe that the quantitative changes accumulating in the correlation and alignment of forces lead to profound qualitative shifts. Their pessimistic evaluation of the prospects of struggle drives them to despair more often than not.

Experiencing the mounting oppression of capitalist exploitation, need and privations, these people are susceptible to all sorts of adventurist concepts promising overnight deliverance from the burdens of daily life. It is precisely in their midst, often motivated by the formula “a horrible end is better than an endless horror”, that the Trotskyites gain support.

Modern Trotskyites’ approach to the questions of war and peace, as the book convincingly shows, reveals the fallacy of their concepts, their divorcement from realities. The Trotskyites smear any actions directed at preserving and strengthening peace and spread capitulatory views about the hopelessness of the efforts by the forces opposed to the imperialist militaristic circles.

Trotskyites hold positions very similar to those of the arch-reactionary imperialist forces also seeking to foil the detente process. As distinct from the latter, Trotskyites justify their attacks on the socialist states’ peaceful foreign policy by the “highest interests of revolution”. This clearly shows, Nikolai Vasetsky concludes, how “leftist” verbiage can promote the cause of reaction and war.

Gennady GRIGORYEV

² *Ibid.*, vol. 21, p. 313.

WHEN WORDS ARE AT VARIANCE WITH DEEDS

The year 1984 saw the publication in Britain of a political pamphlet, *Thatcher's Reign. A Bad Case of the Blues*.¹ Its authors, known British journalists Melanie McFadyean and Margaret Renn undertook by means of information-documentary references to "comment" on the British premier's pronouncements concerning the different aspects of Britain's foreign and domestic policies, thereby appraising Thatcher's political course and its consequences for the country.

The authors do not seek to express their personal views. Instead they only cite Thatcher's statements on these or other questions and let them speak for themselves.

In the country, Thatcher said on more than one occasion, "there are too few rich and too few profits". As a lady of action, she "took care" to "substantially increase" the population's incomes. But what she meant by no means concerned the entire population. Her government lifted the control imposed on dividends. In 1978, the book says, the shareholders received 2,950 million pounds in dividends, while a year after the control was lifted, i.e., in the first year of Thatcher's rule, the figure rose to 4,650 million pounds, 58 per cent more. Over this period the population's incomes (in absolute figures) went up a mere 9.4 per cent.

As regards the poor, the authors continue, Thatcher did not go farther than make promises. "We shall protect the poor and those in most need of help", she said in 1984 (p. 15). Relevant promises were also contained in the Conservative Party's election manifesto. However the actual sum-total of Thatcher's "concerns" is shown as follows: in May 1977 Britain had 1.3 million jobless; in March 1984, after five years of her rule, the figure rose to 3.1 million, not to mention those unemployed not entitled to benefits, men above 60 years of age and 200 thousand young people involved in the state-run vocational training programme. The actual figure exceeds 4 million.

While in opposition, that is, before she was elected Prime Minister,

¹ McFadyean M., Renn M., *Thatcher's Reign. A Bad Case of the Blues*. London, Chatto and Windus, The Hogarth Press, 1984.

Thatcher expressed her outrage at unemployment then running at 1.3 million. "Sometimes I've heard", she said in her 4 May 1977 radio address, "that Conservatives have been associated with unemployment. That's absolutely wrong. We'd have been drummed out of office if we'd had this level of unemployment" (p. 24). Thatcher charged the Labourites with the fact that one person had joined the dole queue every four minutes of Labour rule. In March 1984 the rate became one every ninety seconds.

Margaret Thatcher, the authors go on to say, has invariably fobbed herself off as a "small business" advocate. However, the past five years have seen 80 thousand bankruptcies and closures of small enterprises. Right from the start she proclaimed a cut in taxation as one of the principal means to improve the economy. But the cut concerned only the upper crust of the propertied classes, while the less affluent are still suffering from indirect taxation, higher insurance premiums, etc. As a result of the Tories' taxation policy, the rich became richer and the poor even poorer.

While pointing to the negative effect of inflation, the Tory government through its policies has nevertheless contributed to the growth of prices. During the 1979 election campaign Thatcher paraded a bagful of foodstuffs that a poundnote could buy and compared it to a smaller one containing foodstuffs that could be purchased for this money in 1974. In 1984 a poundnote could only buy a loaf of bread and 250 grammes of butter—a glaring proof of the actual consequences of Tory rule, declare the authors. They also note that a rise in prices for primary necessities and growing gas and electricity bills are in the years of Thatcher's rule paralleled by a steady cut in the allocations for social security and unemployment benefits.

The section on the situation of British women points out that their unemployment has trebled since 1979. Three-fourths of the lower paid workers are women. In 1983 they got 61.2 per cent of the men's pay. Two in every five representatives of the "weaker sex" work only part time (the ratio for men is one in ten). Half of all working women are employed in the servicing sphere and only 22 per cent in medicine.

In appraising the Tory economic policy the authors stress that it has resulted in the sharpest decline in output since the 1920s. Under Tory rule industrial output has shrunk by 20 per cent. In 1983—for the first time since the industrial revolution—Britain's import exceeded its export.

Margaret Thatcher has repeatedly emphasized that one's own house built with personal savings or with the assistance of the municipal authorities is the fundamental principle, an earnest of "genuine freedom", the underlying provision in the Conservative

Party programme. According to official statistics, however, the country is short of 800 thousand houses. In 1983 housing construction carried out by the municipal authorities was the lowest ever in the whole of the country's history. According to official statistics, 80 thousand families are homeless. The Tory *Manifesto* of 1983 claimed: "Our goal is to make Britain the best housed nation in Europe". In actual fact over a million buildings are unfit for human habitation; a million lack basic amenities; 4 million are in need of repairs (at the cost of more than 2,500 pounds sterling per house). In 1980-1984 state spending on housing was cut by more than a third. At the same time, municipal housing rents went up by 130 per cent.

In 1984, the authors say, nearly half of the schools in Central London were in premises built before 1900. Schools are short of textbooks, classes are overcrowded, the premises have long needed repairs.

And here are the Tories' "achievements" in public health. In 1979, 532 thousand people were on the waiting list to state-funded hospitals; the figure for 1983 was 640 thousand. In 1979, 20 pence was charged for a prescription; in 1980, 70 pence; in 1982, 1 pound 30 pence; in 1983, 1 pound 60 pence. For the state-run public health system to be kept at the current level, the authors write, the annual budget for it needs to go up by 1.5 per cent. In actual fact it grows by 0.5 per cent, which plainly means a slash in allocations. Between 1979 and 1983, reported the *Guardian*, 109 hospitals were closed. The number of hospital beds during this time was cut by 10,865. The number of out-of-work doctors in 1984 totalled 2-3 thousand and keeps growing. Unemployment affects nurses too. In 1984 they numbered 10,971. The Conservative government, the book points out, does all it can to sap the state-run public health system and, at the same time, promotes private medical practice. All restrictions on building private hospitals in the country have been lifted.

The pamphlet carries a noteworthy comparison. Spending on Britain's war-related research amounted in 1980 to 1,497 million pounds, but on medical research only 40 million. The authors provide rather characteristic figures: in 1980 it cost 85 million pounds to build a destroyer armed with guided missiles. The sum of 76 million pounds was sufficient to build three hospitals each for 1,000 patients.

Margaret Thatcher lists trade unions among her worst foes, the authors say. The trade unions, she feels, should know where they belong to and it does not become them to meddle in politics. During the years of Tory rule one strike followed another involving metallurgists, firemen, state employees, medical workers, railwaymen, postal workers and, lastly, miners. The government started closing mines. In March 1984 alone 20,000 jobs were liquidated. Referring to miners,

Margaret Thatcher said: "In the Falklands we had to fight the enemy without. Here the enemy is within and it is much more difficult to fight, but just as dangerous to liberty" (p. 64). The government has banned nearly all forms of picketing; for losses incurred through a strike the trade unions are now to pay enormous fines; solidarity actions (strikes to support a different trade union) have been declared illegal.

The authors point out that the Conservative government pays much attention to strengthening punitive organs. Between 1979 and 1983 the police corps of England and Wales was reinforced with 11,850 men. Another significant method of ensuring "order" is arming the police not only with tear gas but also water cannons, rifles firing rubber bullets, etc. Of no less interest is the following data cited in the book: by 1990 another 14 prisons will have been built in Britain at the cost of 256 million pounds. At present the government has 113 million computer-compiled files on British subjects. The number of crimes registered in the country rose from 2.5 million in 1979 to 3 million in 1982. Many of them remain unsolved.

The authors also discuss the Tories' racist policy. They denounce their attitude to immigrants from Asia whom the official press blames for Britain's all economic ills. In January 1983 the Nationality Act was passed. It revoked the right of the British commonwealth countries' citizens to register as British. Children born in the United Kingdom acquire British citizenship only if one of the parents is British by nationality. Strict control has been imposed on immigration. Up to 2 thousand immigrants are forcibly expelled from the country each year. To quote Margaret Thatcher, "the only way to succeed in maintaining and securing tolerance for all minority groups in this country is by holding out the clear prospect of an end to immigration" (p. 91).

Much space in the book is given to Tory defence policies. After becoming Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher managed to put through a programme for arming Britain with cruise missiles and Trident submarines. Since 1979 defence spending has increased 23 per cent. At present Britain has its biggest military budget for the last twenty years. In effect it is bigger than that of any West European NATO member state both in absolute figures and per capita of the population. In the 1990s the existing four Polaris submarines with 192 warheads on board will be replaced by four Trident submarines carrying 892 warheads. The cost of building a Trident, initially estimated at 5 billion pounds, will run, according to the latest official data, into 8.7 billion pounds, while independent researchers put it at 11.5 billion pounds. "A great many jobs in connection with Trident will come to Britain, particularly at the peak of the programme when there will be about 20,000 jobs", said Thatcher (p. 93). However, top military officials doubt that there will be more jobs available in

connection with the construction of Trident submarines. Furthermore, Britain will not have the right to select the launching sites. Ninety-six US cruise missiles are deployed at the Greenham Common airbase, each equivalent to 16 A-bombs dropped on Hiroshima. Their launching is under US control.

In the light of the facts assembled by the authors noteworthy indeed is the cover of the book: it carries a picture of Margaret Thatcher with words emerging from her lips like in comics: "Rejoice! Rejoice!" This call is placed next to the subtitle, "A Bad Case of the Blues," which in itself creates a sarcastic effect. But to a reader familiar with Britain's political history this subtitle carries an additional sense of a pun. The point is that the blues not only means a depressed, unhappy feeling but also is an ancient name for the Tory party. Thus, what we have here is not only the case of "heavy depression" but also a "deplorable Tory record".

However sharply the authors criticize the Tory government's course both inside the country and internationally, one cannot but spot a major, inherent flaw in the pamphlet. It is due to the authors' very approach to Thatcherism as a phenomenon, by their limited ideological-political glances at the roots of this phenomenon and hence the possible ways of ridding the British working people of the burdens they are shouldering in the "era of Thatcher's rule". Also, not a hint is made to the effect that no more or less appreciable improvement is possible in the life of the British people without a drastic change of their country's social system.

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