

Palmiro Togliatti

Writings



Parliament and the Struggle for Socialism
Diversity and Unity in the International
Proletarian-Communist Movement
The 'Togliatti Memorandum'

WRITINGS

of

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Diversity and Unity in the International Proletarian-Communist Movement

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BIOGRAPHY

“for Marxism, the development of the forms of production and of society does not proceed along peaceful lines but is a dialectic and revolutionary development. Contradictions develop and break out within capitalist society. Our task is to work on the basis of these contradictions, to gather together and guide the forces of the working class which are all developing within capitalist society as its unavoidable opponent and enemy, and not to support or consolidate the capitalist regime, but to prepare for and accelerate its overthrow through revolutionary class activity.”

– Palmiro Togliatti, 1928

"Parliament, in the past the instrument for the organisation and consolidation of the capitalist regime, can today become an effective instrument in the hands of the parties which aim at a socialist transformation of society"

– Palmiro Togliatti, 1956

Palmiro Togliatti was born in Genoa. He joined the Italian Socialist Party before the First World War. He served as a volunteer officer during the war, and on his return, joined the group around Antonio Gramsci and L'Ordine Nuovo paper in Turin. He helped found the PCI following the split in the Italian Socialist Party at their 17th Congress at Livorno in 1921. Beginning in 1922 Togliatti edited *Il Comunista* and in April 1924 became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. While attending a Comintern

meeting in Moscow in 1926, the CPI was banned. He became PCI Secretary in 1927 and organized the PCI clandestinely for the next 18 years under his nom de guerre, Ercoli. In 1928 he was elected to the Executive Committee of the Communist International. On his return to Italy in 1944 he led the PCI in the svolta di Salerno, the "Salerno Turn", joining the government of national unity and disarming PCI members who had been active in the resistance. When a right-wing student attempted to assassinate him in July 1948, armed workers seized power in Genoa, and occupied factories throughout Italy in a near-insurrection. The PCI leadership called on workers to abandon the armed strike and Togliatti called for the need to observe bourgeois legality. Togliatti developed a political position, arguing the necessity to seek political change through parliament, the "Italian Road to Socialism", a position which received biting criticism of the Chinese Communist Party in its polemic with the CPSU in the 1960s. This position was highly influential in several European Communist Parties which were attracted to what became known as Eurocommunism. Togliatti died August 21, 1964 in Yalta. His posthumously published 'Memorandum' (included below) was highly influential in the Communist movement, giving encouragement to what bourgeois observers welcomed as 'liberalisation' of both socialist countries and the Communist movement.

PARLIAMENT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Reprinting the article *Rinascita* noted: "This text of Togliatti (was) extremely significant for the date and the place in which it was published, and for its clarity and the force with which he formulates the developments of a policy which 'came from afar and was going far' (words used to describe the policy of the Communist Party when Togliatti returned from Moscow in 1943 (*Translator's note*)). In re-reading it today, we find an immediacy that goes beyond the merely formal; and because of this we are again submitting it to our readers."

The proposition, formulated by comrade Khrushchev in his report to the 20th Congress of the CPSU, according to which it is possible to make use of the parliamentary road for a transition to socialism, is provoking enormous public interest, amongst the masses of the people and particularly among workers, who are, more than ever, setting their sights on a socialist society.

This proposition is an example and proof of how Marxist-Leninist doctrines, if understood in a creative sense, closely tied to the development of actual reality and the practice of class struggle, are capable of opening up new fields and perspectives of work for the socialist transformation of society.

Marxism-Leninism is for a variety of forms of passage to socialism, and, in given conditions, allows the possibility of the peaceful development of revolution.

New Relation of Forces

The essential thing is to succeed in grasping and understanding what is basically new in objective relations and in the position of class and political forces, and to draw from these factors the necessary consequences for the general orientation and practical activity of those who are fighting for socialism. In the course of historical development, important transformations have already taken place as regards Parliament, its tasks and its function. We must take account of these, with the aim of understanding what could happen in the future.

Also as regards Parliament, what was once true, at a time when the socialist movement was hardly yet developed, and the bourgeoisie ruled unchallenged both throughout the world and in every single country, can no longer be true now, when a socialist camp, embracing a third of humanity, exists, when capitalism, shaken by a general crisis, has lost the authority which it once enjoyed, and, instead, the idea of socialism and the necessity for it, is penetrating ever more deeply into the working masses.

Two Aspects of Parliament

Let us examine, in general outline, what changes have taken place in the field of interest to us, and try to understand what one can foresee in the future.

If we give careful attention to Parliament, we may see that it has two aspects. On the one hand, it is a representative organ of the people, constituted by the free expression of the will of the electors. On the other, it is (or ought to be) the directive organ of the state, in so far as it is up to Parliament to issue laws, decide on the budget, and oversee the operation of the executive power, that is of the government.

But how in fact do things stand in reality in these two fields? An attentive examination of the existing situation today, in almost all the

capitalist countries, or at least in those European ones where the workers' movement is highly developed, and the political situation is unstable, shows us that, for one aspect just as much as for the other, the increasingly dominant tendency among the ruling groups of the bourgeoisie is that of taking importance away from the institution of Parliament, of changing its nature, and even, little by little, of putting it aside.

Fight for the Franchise

As is well known, the concession of the vote has come about differently in various countries in different historic periods. There is no general line of development, identical for almost all the capitalist countries.

During the nineteenth century, when Parliaments arose in the climate of the bourgeois revolutions, those who had the franchise were very limited in number. For example, in Italy, not only those who could not read or write (the majority of the population at the time), but also those who did not own property or have a fixed income, were excluded from the franchise. Thus, it was that only a few hundred, or at most a few thousand, were able to vote in each constituency. Votes could therefore be obtained by the use of illegal pressure on individuals, corruption and other intrigues. One cannot say that Parliaments elected in this way were really representative of the people. They were, rather, the representative organ of a capitalist oligarchy.

The extension of the right to vote to the masses of the people was the consequence of the development of a democratic movement, radical in tendency, and of the appearance on the political scene of a mass socialist and workers' movement. Only after hard-fought struggles, which in some countries took the character almost of an insurrection of the people against conservative governments, was equal, direct and universal suffrage won. Then,

numerous groups, composed of advanced democrats, socialists and, finally, after the First World War, communists too began to appear. Parliamentary struggles acquired a new liveliness, and attracted the attention of the working masses more and more.

Proportional Representation

But winning universal suffrage has not yet, in many countries, given the masses of the people the chance of having a number of representatives that effectively correspond to the number of votes obtained. For this to happen, it is necessary to win the introduction of the proportional representation system. If a simple majority system is in force, the minority cannot have a representation corresponding to its effective force; its representatives crumble away into little parliamentary groups to the point of sometimes even disappearing.

The proportional representation system on the other hand makes Parliament a 'mirror reflection' of the country, in so far as each party receives, quite scrupulously, as many seats as are due to it on the basis of its real support. In France and Italy, where the socialist and communist parties enjoy great influence among the masses, when the elections took place on the proportional system, the political groups of socialist orientation had a third to a half of the Parliamentary seats. It is easy to understand that in this given situation, the parliamentary activity of these groups had to assume a quite different character than in the past, when Parliament was considered to be only a tribune for agitation.

New Possibilities

This made it possible to pose the question of carrying on positive work on the parliamentary terrain in favour of socialist transformations. This, partially at least, has been done. For example,

in Italy, we have, by means of using agreements with other political groupings, succeeded in inserting into the Italian constitution the principle of carrying through profound social reforms: the guarantee of the right to work, agrarian reform, the nationalisation of the most important capitalist monopolies, etc.

Naturally, the ruling groups of the bourgeoisie use all the means at their disposal to stop the electoral success of the advanced workers' parties. Lenin made a profound study of this question and made a masterly exposure of what these means are and how they act. Today, however, it is a fact that socialist ideas have penetrated so deeply into the minds of the people, and the bourgeois parties are so compromised and discredited, that it is much easier than in the past to tear the masses of the people away from the influence of reactionary groupings. One further has to recognise that when the working class succeeds in having at its head great parties, that have large memberships, are well organised and well led by combative cadres, these parties are able to neutralise a considerable part of those means of intimidation and corruption pointed out by Lenin.

Attempts to Falsify Electoral System

In this new situation, the conduct of the ruling bourgeois groups, and the parties and the governments that represent them, is totally characteristic. They cannot, today, eliminate Parliament from political life, as the fascists did, because, after the tragic catastrophe of the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, the great majority of public opinion would not allow it. To prevent the advanced popular forces having yet stronger representation in Parliament, they therefore, instead, have recourse to new methods, and in particular, to falsifying the electoral system. To this end, special laws are being introduced to prevent the minority having the seats that are due to them, and to reduce them to a negligible entity. In terms of these laws, Parliament would no longer have to be the political 'mirror reflection' of the

country. It would have to return to being the instrument of a conservative and reactionary bourgeois oligarchy.

Bourgeois Fear of Parliament

On this subject, the most striking example is the law approved in Italy, on the initiative of De Gasperi, called the "legge-truffa" (the 'trick law'). According to that law, it was sufficient for the governing parties to receive just half of all the votes plus one, for them to have two thirds of the parliamentary seats! In France, a year before, a similar law had been issued, in whose terms, the parties of the government, by 'unifying' their lists in the electoral constituencies, and obtaining (following on this unification) more than half the votes, could then divide up all the seats among themselves and exclude the opposition completely. These tendencies tie up to a certain extent everywhere, and in particular in West Germany.

But, considered basically, what does this tendency of the ruling bourgeois groups signify? It signifies that the bourgeoisie itself is realising that Parliament, in the past the instrument for the organisation and consolidation of the capitalist regime, can today become an effective instrument in the hands of the parties which aim at a socialist transformation of society. Should the right to the vote be extended to all citizens and be exercised according to an honest law, based on a proportional system, and should there exist a popular and workers' movement, led by strong, well-organised parties, one cannot - in any way - exclude the possibility of the formation in Parliament of a majority that conforms to the will of the people, that is to say favourable to profound social reforms and a policy of peace. One can understand what an enormous importance the struggle of the democratic parties against the attempts to falsify the electoral system acquires in this situation. In 1953, we conducted a mass struggle on a political basis against the trick law of De Gasperi of such vast dimensions and life that it roused the whole country.

Parliament and Executive Power

The attention of all Italy was concentrated for six months on this battle, which was crowned by a national general strike of all categories of workers. This struggle awoke the democratic sense of the people, and, in consequence, the communist and socialist parties made a new leap forward, while the government parties were not able to win a majority and the new Parliament was constituted according to the principle of proportionality.

If we look at the second aspect of the activity of Parliament, as the organ of political leadership and of control over the executive power, we see the same tendency of the ruling bourgeois groups and their governments; they again diminish the importance of parliamentary debates and decisions as much as possible.

The Bourgeoisie, Parliament and Democratic Liberties

As regards the formation of the government, or the solution of the most important economic and political problems, the government parties of the bourgeois states seek to decide them not in parliamentary sessions, but through the use of compromises and intrigues without bringing them out openly in debate. At the same time, there is a rise in the number of problems that are being resolved independently by the executive sometimes in spite of parliamentary decisions. Indeed it is the workers' parties, who form the socialist-oriented opposition, who put increasingly more value on Parliament, not only in using it as a tribune, but because they can already today succeed, if they have a strong parliamentary representation and are united, in modifying government proposals in a direction favourable to the interests of the workers.

From these propositions, which could be supported by numerous concrete examples, one can already draw some general conclusions. An analogous process is being carried out, as regards Parliament, to that carried out in its historical period, regarding, in general, democratic liberties, and their application and development. The bourgeoisie made use of these liberties to assert its power and become the ruling class. However, when democratic liberties began to be utilised by the workers to develop their organisation and give life to a socialist movement, and when this movement gradually became stronger, then the leading bourgeois groupings took to saying that democratic liberties had to be limited, controlled, reduced, and so in reality they did.

Something similar happens for Parliament too. The bourgeoisie exalts parliamentarism as long as it succeeds in keeping Parliament to the character of the representation of an oligarchy. It considers it with distrust and suspicion, when, through universal suffrage and the principle of proportional representation, important opposition forces, having a programme of profound transformations of the economic and social order, advance upon the parliamentary scene.

Parliament and Advance to Socialism

Can these forces believe in the possibility of utilising Parliament for the passage to socialism, that is to carry out these economic and social transformations? Everything depends on the relationship of forces and above all on the way how the parties of the working class can develop their action and lead the struggle of the great masses of the people. First and foremost, it is essential, by fighting in defence of democratic principles, to have Parliament elected in such a way as to be a true 'mirror reflection' of the country, and therefore a true democratic Parliament. In the second place, it is necessary for the parties that fight for socialism, and the communist parties in the front rank of them, to be strong, numerous, well organised and for them to

know how to work and fight in such a way as to win a decisive influence in the decisive strata of the working class and the people. In the third place, it is necessary for these parties to be united in their action, because this not only increases their numerical weight in Parliament, but can allow them to establish a reciprocal understanding and a collaboration with those political forces that are not hostile to social reforms of a socialist type and to a consequent policy of peace.

Should these conditions be realised, in the modern situation of the victorious affirmation and continual consolidation of socialism on the world scene, it is possible to use even the parliamentary way for the passage to socialism. As can be seen, we are concerned with understanding of the present conditions of the struggle for socialism well, and knowing how to go forward, at the head of an ever broader mass movement, along the roads that at the present historical moment are opening out in front of us, by making use of all the new possibilities that the situation offers us.

DIVERSITY AND UNITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN-COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

The Communist International (Comintern), the organisational expression and executive headquarters of the international proletarian movement, was dissolved in 1943 through a decision taken by the Presidium of the organisation's executive committee. At that time the Presidium included prominent party leaders from the Soviet Union (Zhdanov and Manuilski), Austria (Koplenig), Bulgaria (Dimitrov and Kolarov), Finland (Kuussinen), France (Marty and Thorez), Germany (Pieck and Florin) and Italy (Ercoli). The decision to dissolve the Comintern was supported by other representatives of national parties who were in the Soviet Union at the time (Bianco for Italy, Dolores Ibaruri for Spain, Lehtinen for Finland, Pauker for Rumania, Rakosi for Hungary). The U.S. Communist party had already decided to withdraw from the Comintern in November 1940, and its decision had been approved by the Comintern Executive. The dissolution of the organisation was not questioned by any party. All of them approved of this step; all recognised it as the beginning of a new period.

It is also well known that as early as the Seventh Comintern Congress In 1935, and particularly in the years immediately following it, attention had been drawn to the need to give the national sections greater autonomy in carrying out the policy decided on by the congress - the need for the international executive body to function in a different manner, limiting its direct intervention in the affairs of individual parties. After 1935, in fact, there were no more of those 'enlarged Comintern Executive meetings, with delegates from all countries, which had formerly been held almost annually, or even twice a year - meetings which had played a generally useful part in working out policies for the whole movement, taking detailed account of local conditions...

In sharp contrast with this line, there followed the dissolution of the Polish (Communist) party - a mistaken and catastrophic decision.

The circumstances of that decision would have to be examined in detail to discover how it was that in this case a method of control was used which was opposed to that necessary and correct method approved by the Seventh Comintern Congress and which, I believe, was directly linked with the tragic errors being committed at that time by the Stalinist regime.

As regard the general orientation of the organisation, it is true to say that the decision to dissolve the Comintern had been in the air for years before it was actually adopted ... I well remember a talk I had on this subject with Comrade Dimitrov when I returned to Moscow toward mid-1940, back from war in Spain and imprisonment in Paris. In concrete terms, he predicted the dissolution.

If it was put off until 1943, this, I believe, was primarily due to the way in which events developed. In the period between September 1939 and June 1941, the period of the Soviet - German non - aggression treaty, the dissolution of the Comintern could have appeared as a concession, made as a result of that treaty, to the authors of the "Anti - Comintern Pact." Our enemies -- and particularly the Social Democrats, who specialised in calumnies of this type - would have presented it in this light, in order to spread confusion among our ranks. Later, up to the victory of Stalingrad, the fortunes of war were not proving particularly favourable to the anti - Nazi coalition or to the Soviet forces, and the dissolution could, if mistakenly interpreted, have discouraged Communist militants and the proletarian masses. After the tide had turned at Stalingrad, this second risk no longer existed, and the decision was taken.

Having recalled these matters of fact, it is of interest to see what arguments were used to show that the decision was a correct one, dictated by the situation and the tasks which faced the proletarian movement at that time. In my opinion, no adequate analysis of this has ever been

offered; and yet it seems to me necessary to undertake it, if we are to understand properly the situation and the tasks which face us today.

The starting point is the precise affirmation of the differences between the problems to be tackled and the tasks to be undertaken in various countries. The statement issued by the Comintern Presidium put it in these words:

"The profound differences in paths of historical development in all countries of the world, the diversity of social orders, the differences in levels and paths of social and political development, and finally the varying degrees of awareness and organisation within the working class - all these factors bring about diversity in the problems faced by the working class in various countries."

This affirmation is not only correct, but manifestly so. But, then, was it not correct earlier? Is it not always correct? Did this diversity of problems and tasks, the result of diversity in conditions and paths of development, come about only at that moment of history when the decision to dissolve the Comintern was taken? Or is it not rather a permanent factor in the development of the movement? There can be no doubt about the answer: this is a permanent element in the international working-class movement at all stages of its evolution, even though at one time or another it may have greater or less importance.

Let us turn to Lenin. In his writings we can find clear confirmation of this assertion. From the year 1908, for example, we have his well-known work *Inflammable Elements in World Politics*, in which he examines the development of the revolutionary working-class movement in the light of international events. First, he defines the general situation which is taking shape; but even in doing so, he does not forget the importance of local variations:

"The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie is being intensified in all the advanced capitalist countries, but because of the diversity of historical conditions, of political systems and of the forms assumed by the working-class movement, this tendency shows itself in varying ways... The international revolutionary movement does not and cannot proceed at the same pace and in the same ways in all countries. The complete utilisation of all the possibilities in all fields

of action depends on the class struggle waged by the workers in individual countries, each country making its own original contribution to the movement as a whole." (...)

Similar statements, emphasising the variety of ways of revolutionary development at different times and in different countries, can be found in all of Lenin's writings... Let us see how he presents the problem of reconciling the differences within the movement with the tasks of an international directing centre - writing, not during the period of the Second International, but in 1920, when the Comintern had already been founded, with sections in almost all European countries, and was about to hold its second congress. In that chapter of Extremism in which he sums up his argument against left-wing sectarianism he writes:

"What matters most of all today is that the Communists of each country should take account not only of the fundamental doctrinal Questions involved in the struggle against opportunism and left-wing dogmatism but also of the particular character which that struggle must assume in each individual country ... Everywhere there is growing resentment against the (Social Democratic) Second International, either because of its opportunism or because of its inability to create an effectively centralised international headquarters which could coordinate international proletarian tactics in the struggle for a world Soviet Republic. It must be realised that such a centre cannot under any circumstances be set up according to a stereotyped model... As long as differences exist - and they will last a long time, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been achieved on a global scale - the unity of international Communist tactics does not demand the elimination of differences and the suppression of national peculiarities..."

(...) In the light of such an explicit affirmation, made in 1920, what are we to make of the decision to dissolve the Comintern, taken in 1943?

Did it mean that in the 24 years of the organisation's existence Lenin's precepts had not been followed, or that it was impossible to

apply them as long as an international ruling centre was in existence? Such an interpretation would be completely mistaken. It may be - in fact, it is certain - that a study of the history of the Communist International would reveal mistaken decisions, incorrect judgements, failures to act; sometimes the Comintern failed to take account of local conditions and imposed its decisions as mechanically generalised directives ... But this was not usual: on the contrary, the careful study of local conditions was a rule followed, more or less, by the Comintern's executive bodies. We must conclude, then, that the decision to dissolve the Comintern was not based on the need to take account of the diversity of situations.

Dig deeper, and we shall find in the Comintern's own 1943 resolution a hint of the answer. That resolution speaks not only of "profound diversity" but also of "insuperable obstacles" which "long before the war" were already blocking the way to a solution of the movement's problems "by means of an international centre." It adds that the form of organisation and cooperation chosen by the First Comintern Congress had become "even a hindrance to the further strengthening of the national workers' parties."

"Obstacle" ... "hindrance" - here is a new idea which goes beyond the mere acceptance of diversity and national peculiarities. And we can rule out the possibility that the problem thus raised might have been of a technical or organisational nature; in that case, it could have been solved. No: this was a political problem, and the Comintern resolution says so, openly if succinctly.

First, it emphasises that the differences between conditions in various countries had become particularly acute because of international developments, and especially as a result of the war which had divided the world into two hostile camps ... One part of the Communist movement (in Fascist or Fascist-allied countries) had to follow the old defeatist line. Another part had to fight for victory over Fascism, and this was to be in the first place a military victory, to be obtained through a "national mobilisation of the masses." This mobilisation, however, "can better and more profitably be brought

about by the vanguard of the workers' movement in each country within the framework of the individual state." (*Rinascita's emphasis*).

Without doubt, this last formulation was the most important one, giving as it did concise indications of the tactics and strategy to be followed in tackling the completely new tasks arising out of the war ... It was no longer merely a question of the Communists' role in the war against Fascism and Nazism, but of their participation in the governments of the liberated countries - and that not just as a subsidiary force but as a motive force and sometimes even a commanding force ... The study of paths of transition and approaches to the revolution had to be translated in terms of the struggle for a new type of democracy, and this struggle itself had to be adapted to conditions undergoing profound transformations. It became impossible to direct or control from a single centre such a complicated process at a time when some Communist parties were forming governments in People's Democracies, when the collapse of colonialism was finding its most grandiose expression not so much in the independence of India as in the victory of the Chinese revolution, when the forces of capitalism and imperialism were gathering themselves for that global reaction which became the Cold War.

In this new situation no one thought it possible to turn the clock back and set up again a single centre of organisation and direction. The formula of the autonomy of individual parties imposed itself; and this we adopted, gradually affirming it in a more and more explicit way, while at the same time rejecting - at first merely in practice, and then also in written resolutions - the concept of the "guiding state" and of the "guiding party," in so far as it raised the question of centralised direction in other ways.

The new international centre set up in 1947, the Cominform, was merely a clearing-house of information, designed to prevent parties drifting apart and help them to exchange experiences. However, even this was abandoned, because its very existence seemed to set limits on the affirmation of party autonomy^[1]...

In the People's Democracies there was often a mechanical imitation and application of the Soviet example; in the capitalist countries (the Communists) did not always in maintaining and extending the progress made in the immediate post-war years through policies and mass actions adapted to the new situation. The recognition of the autonomy of individual parties was therefore linked with the affirmation of correct political principles, as they emerged from the decisions of the Twentieth Congress - it was not just the convenient solution of a difficult problem of organisation.

It would be a mistake not to recognise that the system of party autonomy has also had its negative aspects and has at times presented dangers, even serious ones. There is, first, the danger of isolationism, with each party turning in on itself in blind provincialism. Such provincialism can show itself in many ways, in the weakening of the internationalist spirit ... or in that particular form of presumption which can lead one to make oneself the centre of the universe, seeing oneself as entrusted with the task of subjecting the other sections of the movement to superficial criticism - without having any profound knowledge of the conditions of their development. We can fight this danger, and eliminate it, by emphasising the internationalist education of each single party, while at the same time multiplying its contacts with other parties ... And we can fight it also by appealing to that sense of responsibility which, during the best years of the Communist International, always inspired the criticisms directed against individual parties^[2].

We help the whole international movement to make progress insofar as we ourselves make progress and prove by example the correctness and effectiveness of the positions we have taken up in doctrine and practice. This does not exclude mutual criticism, when necessary. Above all, it does not exclude - it even demands - the holding of meetings and conferences, at which various opinions can confront one another, and at which common policies can be worked out for whatever subjects and to whatever extent may be necessary. The Rome conference of 1959 offers a very positive example of this...

When the Cominform was set up, we were at a turning-point in international affairs. The war-time alliances were breaking up, and the Cold War was beginning. During the years of the Cominform's existence errors were committed which had unfortunate consequences in one country or another. At the international conference of Communist parties which took place in 1947, and which set up the Cominform, the emphasis was placed, with the necessary vigour and authority, on the decisive change which was then taking place in the international situation. This was necessary if we were to meet the imperialist attack with a struggle on a vast front, throughout the movement and throughout the world. It has been said, however - and it is true - that a certain dogmatism showed itself at that conference, as a result of which, for example, criticism was directed against the search for various ways of transition to socialism. Comrade Thorez recalled this in a recent speech, and we ourselves have often told how, within our own party, these criticisms led to hesitation and duplicity with regard to the development of our own advance toward socialism - a path which we continued to pursue vigorously. But these negative elements - the expression of a lack of understanding and of mistaken viewpoints connected with the cult of personality - had much less effect than the impulse given to the movement for action against the Cold War, against the attempts to change it into a fighting war and against the whole imperialist policy...

Another decisive moment in the development of the Communist movement came with the Twentieth Congress. On the one hand, the congress emphasised the need to adapt our positions to new conditions, thus joining battle with the dogmatists; on the other hand, by affirming that war can be avoided it placed at the centre of our action the problem of how to avoid it ... Since then, this has been the central and decisive theme which the proletarian movement has faced and debated...

The thesis of the avoidability of war and of peaceful coexistence can, indeed, be interpreted in different ways. There can be a static conception which reduces the task to the maintenance of the status quo and does not seriously face the problem of the future, because

of a fundamental reluctance to accept the thesis that war can be avoided because imperialism, without having changed its nature, is yet no longer capable of doing what it would like to do, since the global pattern of forces has been and is being profoundly changed to its disadvantage. This is a mistaken conception, but one can understand how it can arise in those sections of the proletarian movement which find themselves directly subjected to continual pressure and provocation from an aggressive and insolent imperialism - as the great Chinese People's Republic is confronted with U.S. imperialism, for example...

The only correct conception is that which makes the programme for peaceful coexistence a programme of action, of struggle against imperialism and of the progress of socialism throughout the world - in Communist-ruled countries through a continual increase in economic, political and social strength; in capitalist countries through an advance of the working-class in order to undermine and destroy the power of the bourgeoisie; in colonial or ex-colonial countries through the total destruction of colonialism in all its forms. This is, in substance, what is laid down in the resolution of the 81-party meeting in 1960, which formed the basis of the 22nd-Congress decisions. That resolution was worked out by a conference at which a widely-ranging debate took place, and the conference itself had been preceded by the confronting of various opinions in two important international meetings, in Bucharest and Moscow.

How was this debate popularised and used to give all parties and all militants the possibility of taking up correct attitudes on the questions at issue and thus of acting on them? It must be admitted that this was not done in the best way if in our own ranks, for example, there were comrades who were shocked by the dissensions which came to light during the 22nd Congress. However, all should realise that the present state of the movement, its present structure, and the very respect for party autonomy which we have affirmed, all demand that, when such tremendous political forces are involved, the discussion cannot be conducted as it could be in the past, or as it can be within a single party ... We must preserve an acute sense of our responsibilities ...

Take the case of the leading group of the Albanian party. We have already referred in passing to the unworthy way of conducting a polemic which the main spokesman of this group has adopted. But anyone who has been in Albania recently knows that it is not only a matter of a polemic of inadmissible insolence and vulgarity but of actions aimed at damaging the prestige of the Soviet Union and its leaders in the eyes of the people. What has an ideological debate in common with the grotesque ceremony in which the foundations of a great building, to be constructed: with Soviet aid, were solemnly destroyed in the presence of a large crowd. This was done because the foundation stone had been laid by Comrade Khrushchev, who, as is the custom, had sealed in the foundations a commemorative parchment; that parchment was taken out, torn to pieces, and the pieces thrown to the winds. We need not speak of other actions, even more serious and extreme ... in them all sense of responsibility is lost; they seem instead to show the clear intention of making an agreement impossible and of bringing about a split.

The present organisational structure of the Communist movement is, then, the result of a long process which, starting from the Seventh Congress and the dissolution of the Communist International, has led to the autonomy of all parties -whether this be in order to take account of the particular problems in each country, as Lenin prescribed; or in order to emphasise the possibility of various paths to socialism; or, finally, in order not to confuse the separate tasks of party and government in Communist-ruled countries. It is a form of organisation which certainly calls for the debates necessary to make progress in doctrine and practice. It is a form of organisation which also demands the working out of a common position on the movement's fundamental problems, its general objectives, in order thereby to attain unity. If this unity did not exist, or ceased to exist, the struggle against imperialism, for peaceful coexistence and socialism, would come to nothing, petering out in sterile particularism. Each party must make its contribution to maintain and strengthen that unity.

If we are to make that contribution effectively and correctly, it is important to realise that the movement is now stronger than ever

before ... We possess an almost incalculable strength, expressed first of all in the historic achievements of the Soviet Union and its ruling party - the axis of an ever-spreading movement. That movement includes entire states and nations, from the Chinese Republic to the People's Democracies, each of which acts in full independence and autonomy, but each of which are united in the struggle for peace and social progress. There are shortcomings; there are, especially in countries still capitalist, weaknesses, deficiencies and errors to be overcome. Let us together pledge ourselves to the earnest task of finding them and overcoming them... a task from which we shall emerge with strengthened unity.

Footnotes

[1] To describe this autonomy, the term "polycentrism", understood as the absence of a single centre, has been used in our party. This has given rise to a polemic based on a misunderstanding - i.e., on the interpretation of polycentrism as meaning the existence of regional centres of direction for large zones. This has never been our intention. However, it must be honestly admitted that an attempt in this direction was made, in 1956, just after the 20th Soviet C.P. Congress. The proposal did not come from the Italian Communists: but they, together with the French Communists, did try to see if it could be implemented - always, let it be understood, remaining within the framework of the necessary reciprocal exchange of information and experience - and desisted, in agreement with the French comrades, in face of the difficulties involved. (*Togliatti's footnote*)

[2] The address delivered by Enver Hoxha on the occasion of a recent anniversary cannot be considered an example of criticism or debate worthy of Communists. Vulgarity and insults prevailed, and there was no attempt at argument. The leaders of the Soviet C.P. have become a clique of traitors to Marxism; the leaders of the League of Yugoslav Communists are a bunch of criminals; the friendly observations made by us after the Albanian party's congress are "Rome's sentence of excommunication", and so on. This is not the way one carries on a discussion. This is the way one talks when

addressing an open enemy - or when one is trying to break up the movement. (*Togliatti's footnote*)

THE 'TOGLIATTI MEMORANDUM'

ROME, Sept. 4 - Following is the text of a memorandum on world Communist problems prepared in Yalta before his death last month by Palmiro Togliatti, secretary general of the Italian Communist party, as translated from the Italian, with an introduction by Luigi Longo, his successor:

Introduction

The memorandum that we publish on the problems of the international workers and Communist movement and its unity was concluded by Comrade Togliatti a few hours before he was struck down by the fatal illness that ended his life.

The text was to be typed while Comrade Togliatti went to Artek to visit the International Pioneers Camp. On his return he had intended to revise the typewritten manuscript.

It is known that Comrade Togliatti composed his writings with great security of expression and in a clear and precise language, without, or with very few corrections, at the most additions made in the margin. Also, in his last document one is struck by this quality.

It is a testimony that, up to the very last moment, Comrade Togliatti was working in a vigorous and lucid manner. Nothing presages the coming of the atrocious illness that prevented Comrade Togliatti from looking through once again, as he had intended, his memorandum.

But we believe, also without this final revision, that we can regard the text left to us as the precise expression of his thoughts on the problems it deals with. The direction Political Committee of our party took cognizance with deep emotion of the document prepared by Comrade Togliatti.

It recognised that "in it are repeated with great clarity the views of our party regarding the present situation of the international Communist movement" and adopted it as its own.

We are therefore publishing the memorandum of Comrade Togliatti as a precise expression of the position of the party on the problems of the international workers and Communist movement and its unity.

Memorandum

The letter from the Soviet Communist party, with the invitation to the [December] preparatory meeting for the international [Communist] conference, reached Rome a few days before my departure. We have therefore not had the possibility of examining it at a joint meeting of the Direction (Political Committee), also because of the absence of many comrades.

We could only have a rapid exchange of ideas between some comrades of the Secretariat. The letter will be submitted to the Central Committee of the party, which is to meet in mid-September. Nevertheless, it remains clear we shall take part, and take part actively, in the preparatory meeting.

However, we retain our doubts and reservations on the opportuneness of the international conference, above all because it is now clear that a not to be ignored number of parties will not be present, apart from the Chinese party.

In this preparatory meeting, there will undoubtedly be offered the possibility for us to expound and motivate our views, also because they affect a whole series of problems of the international workers and Communist movement.

I shall make a short reference to these problems in this memorandum, also with the aim of facilitating further exchanges of ideas with you whenever this will be possible.

On the Best Way to Combat the Chinese Positions

The plan we had proposed for an effective struggle against the erroneous political lines and against the splitting activity of the Chinese Communists was different from that effectively followed. In substance, our plan was based on these points:

Never to interrupt the polemic against the positions of principle and the political views of the Chinese.

To conduct the polemic, contrary to what the Chinese do, without verbal exacerbations and without generic condemnations, on concrete themes, in an objective and persuasive manner and always with a certain respect for the adversary.

At the same time to proceed by groups of parties to a series of meetings for a profound examination and a better definition of the tasks presenting themselves today in the different sectors of our movement (western Europe, the countries of Latin America, the countries of the third world and their contacts with the Communist movement of the capitalist countries, the countries of popular democracy, etc.).

This work should have taken place taking into account that, since 1957 and since 1960, the situation in all these sectors has seriously altered and that, without a careful collective elaboration, it is not possible to arrive at a correct definition of the common tasks of our movement.

Only after this preparation, which could take a year or more of work, could one have examined the question of an international conference that could truly be a new stage for our movement, its effective strengthening on new and correct lines. In this way we would also have been able better to isolate the Chinese Communists, to face them with a more compact front, united not only through the use of common general definitions of the Chinese line, but also because of a more profound knowledge of the common tasks of the entire movement and those concretely facing each one of its sectors.

Furthermore, once the tasks and our political line had been well-defined, sector by sector, one could also have renounced the international conference, if this were to appear necessary, in order to avoid a formal split.

Policy Questioned

A different line was pursued, and I do not consider the results as altogether beneficial. Some (possibly also many) parties were expecting a conference to be convened within a short period in order to pronounce an explicit and solemn condemnation, valid for the entire movement. Their expectation may also have disorientated them.

In the meantime, the Chinese attack has been widely developed and thus their action to establish small splinter groups and to win some parties for their viewpoint. One has replied to their general attack through an ideological and propagandist polemic, not through a development of our policy linked to the struggle against the Chinese views.

Some actions have been taken in this latter direction by the Soviet Union (the signing of the Moscow agreement on nuclear tests, the visit of Comrade Khrushchev in Egypt, etc.) and they have been real and important victories obtained over the Chinese.

The Communist movement in other countries has not succeeded, however, in doing anything of this nature. To explain myself better, I am thinking, for instance, of how important would have been an international meeting, convened by some Western Communist parties, with widespread representation from the democratic countries of the "third world" and their progressive movements, in order to elaborate a concrete line of cooperation and of help to these movements. It was a way to combat the Chinese with deeds, not just with words.

In this connection, I consider to be of interest our experience as a party. In the party and on its periphery, we have some small groups of comrades and sympathizers tending toward and defending the

Chinese views. Some party members have had to be thrown out of our ranks because they were responsible for activity of building factions and of indiscipline.

Concrete Discussions

However, in general we conduct a broad discussion on all theses of the polemic with the Chinese within cell and section meetings and in town groups. One has the most success when one passes from examining general themes (the nature of imperialism and the state, the driving force of the revolution, etc.) to concrete questions of our current policy (struggle against the Government, criticism of the Socialist party, trade-union unity, strikes, etc.). On these themes, the Chinese polemic is completely disarmed and impotent.

From these observations, I draw the conclusion that (even if today one is already working for the international conferences) one must not abandon political initiatives helping to defeat the Chinese positions, that the terrain on which it is most easy to defeat them is that of the judgment of the concrete situation facing us today and the action to solve the problems arising in the individual sectors of our movement, in the individual parties and in the movement in general.

On the Perspectives of the Present Situation

We regard with a certain pessimism the perspectives of the present situation internationally and within our country. The situation is worse than that facing us two or three years ago.

Today there comes a more serious danger from the United States. That country is passing through a profound social crisis. The racial conflict between white and coloured people is only one aspect of this crisis. The assassination of Kennedy disclosed what point the attack of the groups could reach.

One cannot under any circumstances exclude the possibility that the Presidential elections may be won by the Republican candidate (Goldwater), who includes war in his program and speaks like a Fascist. The worst is that the offensive he conducts moves increasingly to the right the entire American political front,

strengthens the tendency to seek in greater international aggressivity a way out of internal contradictions and to seek the basis for an agreement with the reactionary groups of Western Europe. This makes the general situation somewhat dangerous.

In Western Europe the situation is very differentiated. What prevails, however, as a common factor, is the process of further monopolist concentration with the Common Market as the place and the means.

American economic competition, which is becoming more intense and aggressive, helps to accelerate the process of concentration. Thus are strengthened the objective conditions for a reactionary policy tending to liquidate or limit democratic liberties, to keep alive Fascist regimes, to create authoritarian regimes, to prevent any advance of the working class and sizably to reduce its living standard.

Rivalry and contradictions about international policy are deep. The old organization of NATO is going through an obvious and grave crisis, due especially to [President] de Gaulle's policy. However, one must not have any illusions. There are certain contradictions we can exploit to the full.

Up to now, however, there does not appear within the leading groups of the Continental countries any tendency to develop in an autonomous and coherent fashion an action to lessen tension in international relations.

All these groups then move in one way or another, and to a less or greater degree, on the terrain of neo-colonialism in order to prevent the economic and political progress of the newly liberated African states.

'Acute Crises' Possible

Events in Vietnam, events in Cyprus, show how, above all, if the move to the right of the entire situation were to continue, we could suddenly be faced with very acute crises and dangers in which the

entire Communist movement and all the working class and Socialist forces of Europe and the entire world would have to be involved.

It is this situation, we believe, that one must take into account in all our conduct toward the Chinese Communists. The unity of all Socialist forces in a common action, going also beyond ideological differences, against the most reactionary imperialist groups, is an indispensable necessity.

One cannot imagine that China or the Chinese Communists could be excluded from this unity. Therefore, from now onward we must behave in such a manner as not to create obstacles to attaining this objective, indeed, to facilitating it.

We must not interrupt in any way the polemic, but always have as its point of departure the demonstration, on the basis of the facts of today, that the unity of the entire Socialist world and all the workers and Communist parties is necessary and can be achieved.

As regards the meeting of the preparatory committee on Dec. 15, one could already be thinking about some special initiatives. For example, the sending of a delegation composed of representatives from several parties, to expound to the Chinese comrades our intention of being united and of collaborating in the struggle against the common enemy, to present to them the problem of finding a way and concrete form for this collaboration.

In addition, one should be considering that if, as we think is necessary, our entire struggle against the Chinese positions must be conducted as a struggle for unity, the resolutions one might adopt must take account of this fact leaving aside the general negative qualifications and having, on the contrary, a strong and prevailing positive and united political content.

On the Development of Our Movement

We have always considered it to be incorrect to give a prevalently optimistic judgement of the workers and Communist movement of the Western countries.

In this part of the world, even if here and there some progress has been achieved, our development and our forces are still today inadequate for the tasks facing them, with the exception of some parties (in France, Italy, Spain, etc.) we have not yet emerged from the situation where the Communists do not succeed in pursuing a real and efficacious political action linking them with the large mass of the workers.

They confine themselves to propaganda work and do not have an effective influence on the political life in their countries. One must try with every means to overcome this phase urging the Communists to overcome their relative isolation, to play an active and continuous role in political and social reality and to take political initiatives, to become an effective mass movement.

Also, for this reason, though having always regarded the Chinese views as erroneous and ruinous, we have always had (and retain them) strong reservations on the utility of an international conference dedicated solely, or mainly, to denunciations and to the struggle against these views.

This because we feared (and we fear) that in this manner the Communist parties of the capitalist countries would be pushed into the opposite direction to that necessary, that is, to enclose themselves in internal polemics of a purely ideological nature, far removed from reality.

The danger would become particularly serious if one were to arrive at a declared break within the movement, with the formation of an international Chinese Center which would create its "sections" in all countries. All the parties, and especially the weakest, would be placed in the

position of devoting a large part of their activity to the polemic and to the battle against these so-called "sections" of a new "International."

This would create discouragement among the masses and the development of our movement would be gravely impaired. It is true

that already today the factional efforts of the Chinese are in full swing and in almost all countries. One must prevent the quantity of these efforts becoming quality, that is, a real, general and consolidated split.

Objectively, there exist very favourable conditions for our advance in the working class, among the working masses and in social life in general. But it is necessary to know how to take advantage of, and exploit, these conditions. For this the Communists must have much political courage; they must overcome every form of dogmatism, face and resolve new problems in a new manner. They must use working methods suitable for a political and social ambient continually and rapidly changing.

New Policies Advocated

Very briefly I shall give some examples.

The crisis in the economic bourgeois world is very profound. Within the system of state monopoly capitalism quite new problems are emerging that the dominant classes no longer succeed in resolving with traditional methods.

In particular, there arises today in the largest countries the question of a centralization of economic direction, which one tries to bring about through planning from above in the interests of the large monopolies and through state intervention. This problem is on the order of the day in the entire West, and already there is talk of international planning on which the leading Common Market bodies are working.

It is clear that the workers and Democratic movement cannot be indifferent to this question. One must also fight on this terrain. This demands a development and coordination of the workers' immediate demands and of the proposals for economic structural reforms (nationalization, land reform, etc.) within a general plan of economic development to counterpose to capitalist planning. Certainly, this will not yet be a Socialist plan because conditions for this are lacking,

but it is a new form and a new means of struggle for advancing towards Socialism.

The possibility of a peaceful way of this advance is today closely linked to the way this problem is presented and solved. A political initiative in this direction can help us to acquire a new, large degree of influence over all strata of the population not yet won over for Socialism, but who are seeking a new path.

Realities Emphasized

Within this framework the struggle for democracy must assume a different content from that it has hitherto had. It must be more concrete, more linked to the reality of economic and social life. In fact, capitalist planning is always linked with antidemocratic and authoritarian tendencies, which it is necessary to counter through the adoption of a democratic method, also in the direction of economic life.

As the attempts at capitalist planning mature, so the trade unions' position becomes more difficult. An essential part of planning, in fact, is the so-called income policy, consisting of a series of measures designed to prevent the free development of the wage struggle with a system of control from above of the wage levels and the ban on their increase beyond a certain limit.

It is a policy designed to fail (of interest is the example of Holland), but it can fail only if the unions know how to comport themselves with decision and intelligence, linking also their immediate demands with the demands for economic reforms and with a plan of economic development corresponding to the interests of the workers and the middle class.

Isolation Deplored

In present-day conditions in the West the unions' struggle, however, can no longer be conducted in an isolated fashion, country by country. It must also be developed at the international level, with

common demands and actions. And here is one of the most serious Lacunae of our movement.

Our international trade-union movement (WFTU) only conducts general propaganda. Up to now it has not taken any effective initiative for united action against the policy of the large monopolies. What has hitherto been lacking is our initiative toward the other international trade-union organizations, and this is a serious error because in these organizations there are already those who criticize and try to oppose the proposals and policies of the large monopolies.

But there are, beyond these, many other areas where we can and must act with greater courage, eradicating outmoded formulas no longer corresponding to present-day reality.

In the organized Catholic world and among the mass of the Catholics there was a clear move to the left during the time of Pope John. At the base, however, there persist the conditions and the pressure for a move to the left which we must understand and assist. For this purpose, the old atheist propaganda is of no use.

"Hypocrisy" on Religion

The very problem of religious conscience, its content and its roots among the masses, how to overcome it, must be presented in a different manner from the past if we wish to reach the Catholic masses and to be understood by them. Otherwise our "stretched-out hand" to the Catholics would be regarded as pure expediency and almost as hypocrisy.

Also, today in the world of culture (literature, art, scientific research, etc.) the doors are wide open for Communist penetration. In the capitalist world, in fact, such conditions are being created as to tend to destroy the liberty of intellectual life. We must become the champions of liberty of intellectual life, of free artistic creation and of scientific progress.

This requires that we do not counterpose in an abstract manner our conceptions to trends and currents of a different nature. But let

us initiate a discussion with these currents and thus make effort to deepen the discussion on the cultural themes as they exist today.

Not all those who, in the various sections of culture, in philosophy, in historical and social science, are today far from us, are our enemies or agents of our enemy, It is reciprocal understanding, attained through a continual discussion, that gives us Authority and prestige and, at the same time, enables us to reveal the true enemies, the false thinkers, the charlatans of artistic expression and so on.

Communist Inaction Noted

In this area, much assistance could come to us, but it has not always arrived from the countries where we already direct the entire social life.

For reasons of brevity I shall not touch on many other subjects that could be mentioned.

On the whole we take as a starting point - and we are still convinced that one must depart from this - for the elaboration of our policy the lines of the 20th [Soviet party] congress. However, these lines must today be more elaborated and developed.

For instance, there must be deeper reflection on the theme of the possibility of a peaceful road of access to Socialism. This leads us to make clear what we understand by democracy in a bourgeois state, how one can extend the limits of liberty and of democratic institutions, and what are the most effective forms of participation for the working masses and the workers in economic and political life.

Thus arises the question of the possibility of the conquest of positions of power by the working class within a state that has not changed its character as a bourgeois state, and, therefore, whether the struggle for a progressive transformation of this nature, from within, is possible.

Sharpening of Struggle

In countries where the Communist movement is becoming strong, such as in our country (and in France), this is the basic question that today arises in the political struggle. This leads, naturally, to a sharpening of this struggle and on it depends the further perspectives.

Undoubtedly, an international conference can help toward a better solution of these problems, but essentially the task of going deeper into them and resolving them is up to the individual parties. One might even be apprehensive that the adoption of rigid, general formulas could be a hindrance.

It is my opinion that, on the line of the present historical development and its general perspectives (the advance and victory of Socialism in the whole world), the concrete forms and conditions for the advance and victory of Socialism will today and in the immediate future be very different from those of the past.

At the same time, the diversities between one country and the other are rather great. That is why every party must know how to act in an autonomous manner. The autonomy of parties, of which we are decisive champions, is not just an internal necessity for our movement but an essential condition for our development under present conditions.

Therefore, we would be against any proposal to create once again a centralized international organization. We are firm supporters of the unity of our movement and of the international workers movement, but this unity must be achieved in the diversity of our concrete political positions, conforming to the situation and degree of development in each country.

Danger of Isolation

There is naturally the danger of the isolation of the parties, one from another, and, therefore, of a certain confusion. One must fight against these dangers and, for this reason, we believe the following methods should be adopted: rather frequent contacts and exchange of experiences among the parties on a broad scale, convocation of

collective meetings dedicated to studying common problems by a certain group of parties, international study meetings on general problems of economy, philosophy, history, etc.

In addition to this, we are in favour of there being discussions, also of a public nature and on themes of common interest, between single parties in a way to interest entire public opinion. This naturally requires that the debate be conducted in a correct manner, with objective argumentation, and not with the vulgarity and violence adopted by the Albanians and the Chinese.

Relations with the Movements in Colonial and Former Colonial Nations

We attribute a decisive importance for the development of our movement to the establishment of broad relations of reciprocal knowledge and collaboration between the Communist parties of the capitalist countries and the liberation movements of colonial and ex-colonial countries. However, these relations must not be created only with the Communist parties of these countries, but with all the forces struggling for independence and against imperialism, and also, as far as is possible, with governmental circles of newly liberated countries having a progressive government.

The aim should be to arrive at the elaboration of a common, concrete program against imperialism and colonialism. Contemporaneously, we must deepen further our research into the problem of the paths of development of formerly colonial countries, what the objective of Socialism means for them, and so on.

It is a question of new subjects, hitherto not faced. For this, as I have already stated, we would have welcomed with pleasure an international meeting completely dedicated to these problems. And, in any case, one will have to dedicate ever-increasing attention to them in all our work.

Problems of the Socialist World

I believe one can declare, without fearing to err, that the unbridled and shameful campaign of the Chinese and Albanians against the

Soviet Union, against the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union], its leaders and, in particular, against Comrade Khrushchev, has not had among the masses results worthy of great note, despite its being exploited to the full by bourgeois and governmental propaganda, the authority and prestige of the Soviet Union, its leaders and, masses remain enormous. The crude Chinese calumnies (that the Soviet Union was becoming bourgeois, etc.) have not taken hold. On the other hand, there is some perplexity on the question of the recall of the Soviet technicians from China.

What preoccupies the masses and also (at least in our country) a by no means small proportion of Communists is the fact in itself of such an acute clash between two countries that have become Socialist through the victory of two great revolutions. That fact brings under discussion the very principles of Socialism, and we must make a great effort to explain what the historical and political conditions of the parties and personalities are that have contributed to creating the present-day difference and conflict.

To this one must add that in Italy there exist large areas inhabited by poor peasants among whom the Chinese revolution became rather popular as a peasants' revolution. This forces the party to discuss the Chinese views, to criticize and reject them, also in public meeting. On the contrary, nobody pays any attention to the Albanians, even if we have in the south some ethnic groups whose language is Albanian.

Problems of Socialism

Beyond the conflict with the Chinese there are, however, other problems of the Socialist world to which we ask that attention be paid.

It is not correct to refer to the Socialist countries (including the Soviet Union) as if everything were always going well in them. This is the mistake, for instance, in that section of the 1960 declaration dealing with these countries. In fact, there continually arise in all the Socialist countries difficulties, contradictions and new problems that must be presented in their effective reality.

The worst is to give the impression that everything is always going well, while suddenly we find ourselves faced with the necessity of referring to difficult situations and explaining them.

But it is not merely a matter of single events. It is the entire problem of the Socialist economic structure and policy which, in the West, is known in a far too summary manner and often also in an elementary fashion. There is a lack of knowledge about the differences in the situation between the different countries, the various methods of planning and their progressive transformation, of the methods adopted and the difficulties, arising about economic integration among the various countries, and so on.

Open Debates Suggested

Some situations appear hard to understand. In many cases one has the impression there are differences of opinion among the leading groups, but one does not understand if this is really so and what the differences are. Perhaps it could be useful in some cases for the Socialist countries also to conduct open debates on current problems, the leaders also taking part. Certainly, this would contribute to a growth in the authority and prestige of the Socialist regime itself.

The criticism of Stalin, there is no need to hide this, has left rather deep traces. The most serious thing is a certain degree of scepticism with which also some of those close to us greet reports of new economic and political successes.

Beyond this must be considered in general as unresolved the problem of the origin of the cult of Stalin and how this became possible. To explain this solely through Stalin's serious personal defects is not completely accepted.

There is an attempt to investigate what could have been the political errors that contributed to giving rise to the cult. This debate is taking place among historians and qualified cadres of the party.

We do not discourage it because it helps toward a more profound awareness of the history of the revolution and its difficulties. However, we advise prudence in coming to conclusions and the taking into account of publication and research in the Soviet Union.

Restraints Denounced

The problem that claims greater attention, one affecting as much the Soviet Union as the other Socialist countries, however, is today, especially that of overcoming the regime of restrictions and suppression of democratic and personal freedom introduced by Stalin.

Not all the Socialist countries present the same picture. The general impression is that of a slowness and resistance in returning to the Leninist norms that insured, within the party and outside it, a wide liberty of expression and debate on culture, art and also on politics.

This slowness and resistance is for us difficult to explain, above all in consideration of the present conditions when there is no longer capitalist encirclement and economic construction has had tremendous successes.

We always start from the idea that Socialism is the regime in which there is the widest freedom for the workers, that they in fact participate in an organized manner in the direction of the entire social life. Therefore, we greet all positions of principle and all facts showing us that this is the reality in all the Socialist countries and not only in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, events that sometimes disclose the contrary to us damage the entire movement.

Revival of Nationalism

A fact worrying us, and one we do not succeed in explaining fully, is the manifestation among the Socialist countries of a centrifical tendency. In this lies an evident and serious danger with which the Soviet comrades should concern themselves.

Without doubt there is a revival of nationalism. However, we know that the national sentiment remains a permanent factor in the working class and Socialist movement for a long period, also after the conquest of power.

Economic progress does not dispel this, it nurtures it. Also in the Socialist camp perhaps (I underline this perhaps because many concrete facts are unknown to us) one needs to be on one's guard against the forced exterior uniformity and one must consider that the unity one ought to establish and maintain lies in the diversity and full autonomy of the individual countries.

In conclusion, we consider that also as regards the Socialist countries one needs the courage to face with a critical spirit many situations and many problems if one wishes to create the basis for a better comprehension and a closer unity of our entire movement.

On the Italian Situation

I ought to add many things to give exact information on the situation in our country. But these notes are already too long, and I ask to be excused for this. It is better to deal with matters exclusively Italian through verbal explanations and information.