

Speech delivered by the Chairman of the AKP(m-l) Pål Steigan
on the party's Tenth anniversary-celebration 18.february 1983 .

Comrades!

At first I'd like to thank you all for your attention on this day of our party's tenth anniversary, in particular our friends from abroad and our party-veterans.

My greetings to the Rød Ungdom and the Norges Kommunistiske Studentforbund (Youth and Studentorganizations of the party)¹ and finally thank you very much to those of you who have contributed in arranging this celebration.

Comrades: Let us make an experiment of thought. Imagine the Seventies, but leave out one element: The AKP. Remove the AKP from the decade we have left behind us. What would we get? Dovre² would be the same. So would this part of Oslo, Vestre Vika, with the Concert Hall. Quite a lot would look the same. Nevertheless; I think both friends and enemies would have to admit: The Seventies would not be the same.

The Dagbladet³ has during the years written countless obituaries over the AKP. A recent obituary considers us to have had influence upon hundreds of thousand people. Personally I don't think I will go that far.

Still. Who has been in the forefront in raising the class struggle in the Norwegian trade union movement? after it had been all but choked during the McCarthy-period? A lot of people have contributed to this, and not least thousands of trade-union militants from different work-places.

There would probably have been strikes and industrial strifes without the AKP too. But who has been the uniting force? Who has incessantly been fighting against class-collaboration, for class struggle and workers solidarity? Who has been summing up these experiences and who has taken up active support for these struggles? Nobody can take away AKPs part here.

¹ Rød ungdom - Red Youth

Norges kommunistiske studentforbund- The Communist Student League of Norway

² Dovre - A mountain in the very centre of Norway,

has for centuries been a national symbol of something firm, strong, neverchanging and safe..
Anything may change, but Dovre remains the same.

³ Dagbladet - Daily liberal in Oslo.

Who started the Solidarity campaign for the Palestinian People back in 1967 and literally had to run the gauntlet through hordes of raging friends of Israel? That was the young marxist-leninist movement.

Who pressed forward for building the Vietnam-solidarity upon support of the armed liberation struggle and the exposure of the US-imperialism? Today it is well known ~~by~~ that the US committed genocide in Vietnam, and the Norwegian people have been thoroughly shaken by the systematic Israeli extermination of the Palestinian people. Nowadays knowledge about these matters is common among most people. But what would it have looked like without this little party, which more than any other has been fighting for insight into these questions?

On the very same day Soviet tanks invaded Czechoslovakia the m-l-movement was in the streets demonstrating against the invasion. Together with other enthusiasts we have kept this protest-movement alive.

In Norway the public opinion against Soviet aggression in Afghanistan is very strong. So are the protests against the enslaving of the Polish trade-union movement Solidarity. We highly value the efforts made by militants outside of our party on ~~all~~ these questions. Still, I think they would agree when I say: It would mean a substantial setback to solidarity-work if the "mini-party" AKP hadn't existed.

Tonight we've met with a representative from the Afghan Liberation movement. The ^{brave} Afghan people are conducting a protracted peoples war, which most of us would have thought impossible. The experience they are gaining will be of importance to the whole world, not least our own people in their struggle to retain independence. Let us give our Afghan comrade another tribute to bring back to his heroic people!

In his latest book Dag Solstad⁴ has said that in spite of having committed a lot of peculiarities, our first ten years^{were} a sensible decade. He's completely right. A sensible decade, and behind it all a rational idea. In the main we have held tight to some of our strategic tasks.

We made it our aim to build^{up} the party on the work-places, and we have succeeded. Today our party can muster hundreds of shop-stewards, both male and female. Politically we are stronger than we were at any time during the "legendary" seventies.

We have also succeeded in ^{creating} the daily "Klassekampen"⁵. The paper is quite unique. It's known for being on the workers' side, a paper well known for its clever writings and thorough exposures. The paper has exposed^{the} shady activities of the big capital interests as well as those of the Intelligence Service, NATO's secret plans for Norway, the Soviet-base on the Spitzbergen Islands and a lot else that would have continued to be hidden secrets to ordinary people if Klassekampen hadn't existed. At the same time the paper has made itself thoroughly respected because of professionally journalistic craft and skill.

We have been fighting for this paper, and we intend to keep it alive and well.

This party is more than each individual^{political} area. I think it is important that we represent^a challenge to the socialdemocratic and self-satisfied Norwegian capitalism, a challenge^{to which} nobody could avoid taking a stand. I believe nobody would deny that sparks have struck around us.

Certainly we have made mistakes, and we've had problems. But problems needn't be only negative. Dealt with in the right way, they can help us grow stronger. I believe we have learnt quite a few things, and that our party has entered the eighties more ripe and more experienced.

⁴ Dag Solstad is a most successful author in Norway, and a member of the AKP(m-l). Last year he published a novel which in many aspects deals with the party's first ten years.

⁵ The Class Struggle

There have been problems in the international marxist-leninist movement. Still, these problems are nothing compared to those of the international capitalism. In the European Common Market they are closing down melting furnaces/smelteries at a speed so high that the following "Euro-joke" has emerged about Davignon, the man in charge of the EC-industrial policy: When Davignon died, he naturally came to hell. But when he had been there a week Satan approached St.Peter and asked him if Davignon could be transferred to heaven. St.Peter wanted to know why. "Well," Satan answered, "after having been ^{here for} only one week Davignon has already closed down one half of our smelting works."

Well, cracking jokes is OK, to quote Stalin, but there are certain limits.

This joke reflects some of the sentiment within the bourgeoisie. Leaving out a few top-waged professional popular deceivers, there is not one capitalist strategist who can see any way out of the current crisis. What we experience is not an overproduction-crisis of short duration, it is far more than that. It is the biggest crisis in capitalism for 50 years. It is a crisis within the system, created by the fundamental problems within the capitalist production. The crisis is spreading on a large scale and to all areas at the same time. Even the long time planners of capitalism have themselves to admit that the market-forces cannot solve the problems.

Firstly: The unemployment.

15 years ago we, the marxist-leninists, were the only ones to maintain that the social-democratic conception of a capitalism free from crisis was an illusion. We argued that capitalism was bound to enter another crisis with unemployment and all the other results. We were ridiculed.

Well, development has proved who was right. Today there are 32 million unemployed in the industrialized countries, and none believe the figures to stop at that. Certain bourgeois politicians have suggested that 60 million unemployed can be a reality quite soon.

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We think they are right. Somehow the political system has managed to survive 30 million unemployed. Will it be able to take another 30 million? There is no reason to believe so. Especially since along with the unemployment follows large-scale reductions in social welfare and attacks on the health insurance systems, which so far have functioned as a safety-net. It is Willoch (Prime Minister, Conservative) who is maximising the crisis, not us. He sows the wind and will reap the whirlwind.

Secondly: The starvation in the third world.

The small number of rich countries is decreasing. These few countries are forcing the majority of the worlds poor masses down into a bottomless pit of hunger and poverty. Tens of millions of people are dying of hunger, not because it is impossible to produce enough food, but because they do not represent a profitable market. The catastrophe of starvation is the price humanity has to pay for the pleasure of having a capitalist system. This situation will grow worse. To believe that four fifths of mankind will accept this system of exploitation in all future, one's imagination must be extraordinary strong.

Thirdly: The ecological catastrophe.

Due to the reckless exploitation of the worlds forests and due to the exploitation caused by the poverty created by capitalism, acres of forest the size of twice that of Southern Norway are eradicated every year. Each year the deserts of the world enlarge by an area twice the size of Denmark. This is only the top of the iceberg. In our century we might succeed in eradicating a fifth of the worlds total number of animal and plant species. Hardly anybody can conceive the longterm effects of all this.

6. Fourthly: We ^{were} among the first ones in this country to point ^{at} the fast accelerating danger of war. For this we had to endure a storm of invectives. We were suffering from persecution mania, we were warmongers etc. Today the majority of the population realize that the danger of war is actually alarming.

But most people still don't see the reasons for this. A lot of them are taken in by the idea that the arms race is by itself the source of war. Or that lack of mutual understanding between heads of states or insane military leaders can bring about wars.

But nothing of this caused the previous world wars. On the contrary the struggle for the markets the raw materials, the colonies, in short the struggle for maximum profit, is the driving force behind imperialist wars. War is the capitalist competition transferred to the battlefield.

These problems will only worsen as long as the capitalist market forces hold the field. To solve them, demands the following: plan, coordination ^{and} control. In short a socialist planned economy.

Capitalism has represented the fastest progress in the history of mankind. But the conflict between capitalism and the development of the very same mankind has since long reached a point of insolubility.

All the other political parties are engaged in patching up this system, in launching initiatives and proposals on god knows what. It reminds me of the quarreling within the orchestra on board the "Titanic" about what tune to play as the ship was sinking. The small AKP(m-l) breaks off short from such policy. Let be that we hold only one percent of the votes. Nevertheless we are struggling for the only possible solution in the long run. Seen in this perspective it is a great thing that we have stayed the course for ten years, still alive and kicking.

As most of you will know, the AKP is discussing the question of socialism. What can we say about a socialist Norway?

1. A socialist Norway means having a planned economy. Without a plan for the economy in its entirety socialism will be broken up from the inside by spontaneous capitalist forces. On this matter we sharply divide from the SV (Left Socialist Party) with their "Socialism in Norwegian"-idyll, which is nothing but capitalism without the ugly sides of it.
2. The capitalist class must be deprived of the political power, and the working class must capture it. This means a genuine break with capitalism, not just a change of government. The new apparatus of state must suppress any attempt of reintroducing capitalism.
3. Revolution in Norway will most probably be carried out by a broad socialist coalition, or ^a united front, where the AKP will be one, but far from the only force. In a situation like that we will of course be prepared to unite with all forces that wish a socialist society.
4. It is our sincere conviction that there will be no such revolution, nor will there be any socialist society that can develop into a classless society unless the communist party plays the leading part as well in the united front as in social life in general.
5. We realize that serious mistakes have been made by several parties styling themselves communist. I will sketch some of the errors we'd like to avoid.
 - We are against making marxism a state-religion. That is: we wish ~~a~~ to have a critical and struggling marxism in the socialist society too. It is contrary to the very nature of marxism to ^u suppress the critical debate.

- Accordingly we are against the form of unification of press and ^{mass} media, of censorship of information, knowledge and statistics that has occurred in all socialist countries.
- We are against personality-cult. It's non-marxist and a hindrance to a real democratic-centralist life within the party.
- We don't believe in the idea that the marxist-leninist party can decide one line in matters of art and science. It is of great harm to art and science, and brings marxism-leninism into discredit.
- Even though socialism must suppress every attempt on counterrevolution, we, as revolutionary humanists, must guarantee legal security to the opponents of revolution.
- We presume as a matter of course that a socialist Norway will have several parties besides the communist party, and that these parties will take part in the political life of society.
- Contrary to countries that have tried to make trade unions a combination of governmental bodies and social security offices, we want real, independent trade unions.
If a planned economy is to become more than a piece of deskwork. open lines to the workers are necessary, so that they can make clear their actual demands and have a real influence upon decisions on what to produce. Consequently: independent trade-unions and legal right to strike.
- We are in favour of publicly elected bodies, public assemblies that are real bodies of power for the working people, unlike the present Norwegian parliament and local councils.
This of course means free and secret ballots., and that the elected bodies must be responsible for putting decisions into practice.

To secure a conscious favorizing of the working class a corresponding discrimination of the bourgeoisie must be built into the system. This will obstruct the spontaneous tendency of the bourgeoisie gradually regaining its power from within the system due to its long experiences of ruling.

It is necessary to establish the fact that when struggling for a socialist Norway we can't copy anyone. It is necessary to point out that there is no Communist centre in the world that can present to us the correct line. We don't even want such a centre to exist. The communist revolution is international. We will always be a part of this army of workers and oppressed from all countries. However, the working class and the people in each country must themselves make their revolution based upon the conditions they are facing there.

Consequently, we must plan a revolutionary strategy for this highly industrialized country, a country with a state capitalist economy, a country on the threshold of technical revolution due to the computer-age, a country where small-scale production is dominant in the countryside, a country which has seen a long and calm period of classcollaboration. A revolutionary strategy for such a country has not yet been worked out. To succeed in doing it we must bring marxism ^{back to} Europe, apply marxist-leninist theory on conditions in our own continent and country, while developing this theory further.

We think that we're on the eve of renewal on communist grounds, where new storms will blow around the analyses of the marxist-leninists, and the sparks will strike again around our view-points.

Maybe we shall be a little more low-voiced and hopefully better listeners. But don't let this mislead anyone to believe that we will take a more lenient stand against the establishment.

Let our enemies write and think that the marxist-leninist movement is laying on its sickbed. Actually, this is quite suitable to our current tactics. We are in a period of organisational consolidation and are carrying through thorough studies into both theory and reality. Quite unnoticed of

a lot of exciting things are going on within our party, of which our enemies definitely haven't grasped the importance. The women in our movement are coming along by leaps and bounds. Inside the party they have always been a cornerstone. But from now on they will play a continuously growing part both as theorists as well as political leaders.

The young people are coming too. I have good hopes that we will get a generation of the eighties that in many ways will surpass that of the sixties. I think we're heading for an exciting decade, and I believe there's a lot to be done.

In this struggle we will need each and every one of you who are prepared to give your contribution. I know there are many outside our party who are feeling the same eagerness as we are on a lot of questions. The challenges are so enormous that the necessity of all these forces coming together and staying together is urgent, if we are to succeed.

And we have to, comrades. Let's keep up the good work!
Long live the AKP!