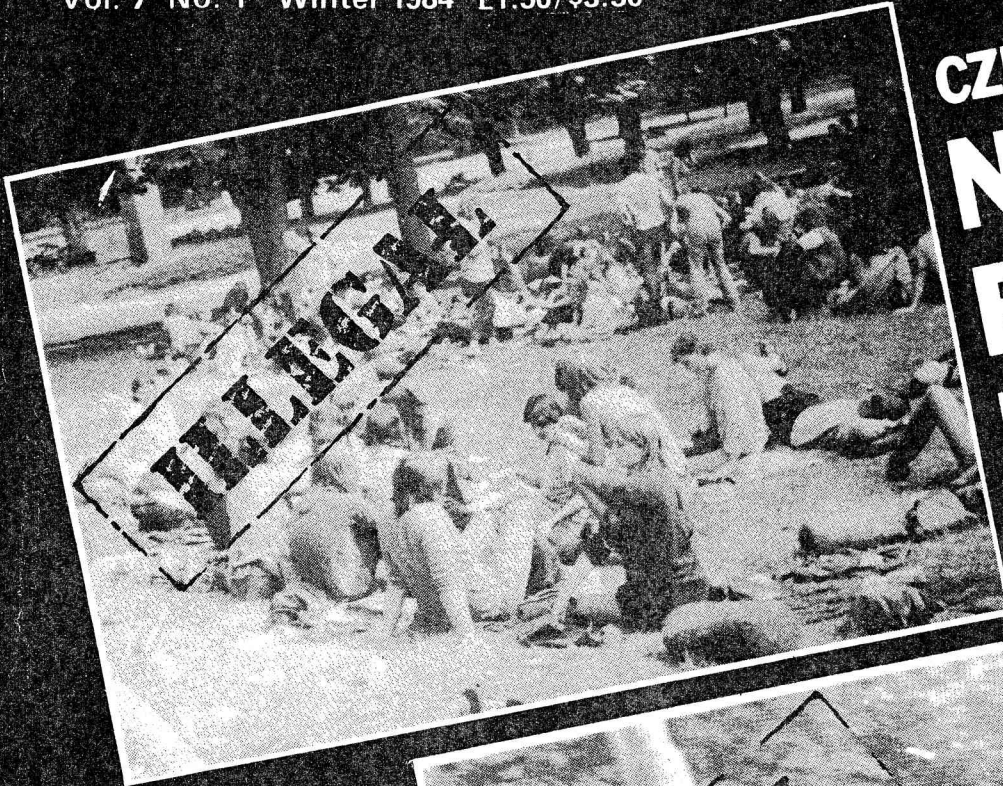


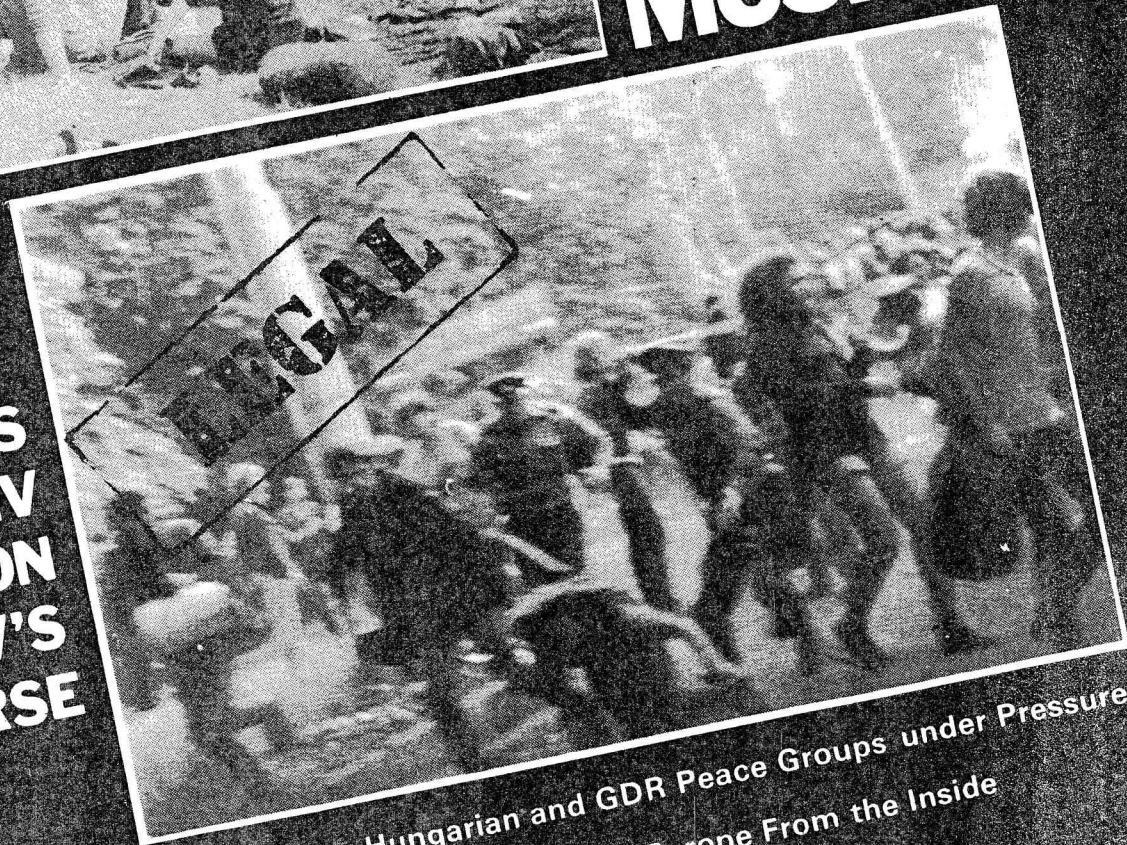
LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

Vol. 7 No. 1 Winter 1984 £1.50/\$3.50



**CZECHOSLOVAKIA:
NO ROOM
FOR
ROCK
MUSIC**

**ZHORES
MEDVEDEV
ON
ANDROPOV'S
COURSE**



- Rise of Czech Peace Protests
- Hungarian and GDR Peace Groups under Pressure
- The Fate of Polish Self-Management
- Radio Free Europe From the Inside
- IMF Brings Crisis to Yugoslav CP
- Albania and the American Right

LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

Statement of Aims

A growing number of socialists and communists are taking a stand against the suppression of democratic rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The labour movement has international responsibilities in this field as well as in the field of solidarity action with those struggling against oppression in Chile or Southern Africa or Northern Ireland.

But up to now socialists have lacked a source of frequent and reliable information about events in Eastern Europe. Coverage in the papers of the Left remains scanty, while reports in the bourgeois press are selective and slanted. The first aim of **Labour Focus on Eastern Europe** is to help fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive and regular source of information about events in that part of the world.

The mass media gave ample space to Tory politicians and to some from the Labour Party who seek to use protests against repression in Eastern Europe as a cover for their own support for social inequality in Britain and for witch-hunts against those who oppose it. At the same time campaigns run by socialists in the labour and trade union movement for many years concerning victims of repression in Eastern Europe are largely ignored by the media. The second aim of this bulletin therefore is to provide comprehensive information about the activities of socialists and labour movement organisations that are taking up this issue.

Labour Focus is a completely independent bulletin whose editorial collective includes various trends of socialist and Marxist opinion. It is not a bulletin for debate on the nature of the East European states, nor is its purpose to recommend a strategy for socialists in Eastern Europe: there are other journals on the left that take up these questions. Our purpose is to provide a comprehensive coverage of these societies with a special emphasis on significant currents campaigning for working class, democratic and national rights.

Whenever possible we will quote the sources of our information. Unless otherwise stated, all material in **Labour Focus** may be reproduced, with acknowledgement. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editorial collective.

In these ways we hope to strengthen campaigns to mobilise the considerable influence that the British labour movement can have in the struggles to end repression in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

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Thanks to Colin Smith for the design.

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Caption: The scene before and after in a park near Brno, Czechoslovakia, when the police attacked a crowd of young people who had arrived for a rock concert.

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The Right, The Left and Eastern Europe

As in the Cold War of the late 1940s, so today East European conditions figure prominently in the efforts of Western Governments to justify their military build-up against the Soviet Union. In that earlier confrontation, the event used to spur NATO's formation was the Czechoslovak Communist Party's seizure of power in February 1948. In this second Cold War, the main event used to create suitable psychological conditions for rearmament was the crackdown on Solidarity in Poland.

The context today is very different from that of the late 1940s. The Prague take-over was presented as the possible harbinger of putsches by the larger West European Communist Parties such as those in Italy or France, or even as a sign that the Soviet Union might attack the West.

Today such notions lack any credibility: the Italian Communist Party appears to support NATO, while a greatly weakened French Communist Party has no immediate ambition but to participate in one of Europe's most anti-Soviet governments. And no lesser an authority on such matters than NATO's Supreme Commander, General Rogers, declares publicly that he does not believe the Soviet Union is preparing aggression against Western Europe.

Against this background, Cold War propaganda in the West has used events in Eastern Europe more as a *moral* justification than as a political or military argument, for confrontation with Moscow. We have been told that we must stand by the Poles and 'punish the Russians' for the destruction of Solidarity. And more vaguely, media images of the suppression of democratic liberties in the East have been used to buttress a general drive against the Soviet Union.

The Right's moral injunctions to support trade union or civil liberties are one thing. The policy that it seeks to base upon such moral appeals is another matter altogether.

As to the moral point, we, the labour movements of Western Europe, do have a duty to develop a policy that will aid the struggles of working people in Poland and throughout the region for greater political freedom. Those on the Left who repudiate such a responsibility do a disservice to the cause of socialism.

But the policy that flows from this responsibility must be one that genuinely assists the cause of working people in Eastern Europe, really helping to promote their political rights and not undermining the economic rights such as full employment and economic security that they already possess. And the crucial question that the supporters of Reagan and Thatcher must, but cannot, answer is this: how does present US policy in the slightest assist these peoples to improve their circumstances?

People blinded by anti-Communism doubtless gain some deranged satisfaction from the thought that Reagan's policy in the Third World is, at least, killing some Communists along with thousands upon thousands of others in, say, Central America. Or they may applaud the fact that the pursuit of economic warfare against the Soviet Union exacerbates economic difficulties there. Anti-Communists may also welcome the fact that US nuclear threats against the East seem to frighten the Soviet government, as well as the Soviet people.

But none of this has anything whatever to do with a policy that helps the people of Eastern Europe to gain the confidence to struggle for an extension of freedom. Neither cuts in living standards, nor dole queues here or shopping queues in Eastern Europe, do anything to persuade people they can stand up for their rights. And the deployment of a new generation of missiles targeted on Eastern Europe and buttressed with a doctrine of fighting and winning a 'limited nuclear war in Europe' — this is a promise of obliteration not liberation.

The basic starting point for any serious policy must be that democratic liberties will be won in the East only through the efforts of the people there, above all the working class. Next, the record of the last quarter of a century should demonstrate that it is when people in Eastern Europe see some hope of wresting concessions from their governments that they struggle for their rights. This was true of 1956, 1968 and Poland at the end of the 1970s. And such hopes have been raised precisely in conditions of lessened tension between East and West.

Quite understandably, many in Eastern Europe disliked the way that during the high point of detente, Western governments were interested in business deals and in pressing petro-dollar credits into the hands of eager bureaucrats. And today, as Thatcher makes noises about 'renewed dialogue' and sets off for Budapest, there could be few naive enough to imagine that concern to improve the lot of Hungarian workers figures remotely in her calculations. All this simply proves that, whether in detente moves or in pursuing confrontation, the Western powers are motivated by their own interests as capitalist states hostile to working class interests.

The one policy that has never been attempted by the West is that of qualitatively scaling down its military pressure on the USSR in Europe. It is paradoxical that many right-wing commentators frequently assert — in our view correctly — that the Soviet leadership uses security worries as a justification for its repressive internal policy within its own sphere of influence. Yet they never draw the obvious conclusion that a really massive reduction in Western military pressure would destroy this key ideological pillar of Stalinist repression in Eastern Europe.

It is not hard to see why such a policy has never been pursued. It would involve a great weakening of the main lever that the US has for exercising its power in Western Europe — its overwhelming military preponderance in NATO. And it would also remove one of the main levers used against the Left here — East-West tension and military confrontation.

The Left in the West has every reason for taking up the struggle with Thatcher and Reagan over what is too often seen as the Right's own ground: democratic liberties in Eastern Europe and the USSR. We should expose the damage that a policy of militarism and economic warfare does to this cause, and campaign for a reversal of the arms race as the only viable means of helping the aspirations of the people in Europe's Eastern half to express themselves in popular movements for democratic control.

ZHORES MEDVEDEV ASSESSES ANDROPOV'S POWER AND PRIORITIES

(When Yuri Andropov became General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party just over a year ago, we published an interview with Zhores Medvedev on what might be expected of Brezhnev's successor. Dr Medvedev, who has subsequently published the first and so far the most authoritative political biography of Andropov (published by Basil Blackwell last year, priced £7.50) now assesses Andropov's first year in an interview with Oliver MacDonald.)

The press here is tending to present Andropov as a lame-duck general secretary crippled by illness and Kremlin power-struggles. Is this accurate?

It is pure speculation. The December Central Committee plenum showed that he is in control of the apparatus and faces no significant challenge to his authority. In fact, he has consolidated his power within a year — far more quickly than either Khrushchev who took about four years or Brezhnev who took five or six.

His ill-health has restricted his range of activity, but we must remember that Soviet policy-making is not a matter of public appearances. And the days are long gone when Khrushchev would travel the country investigating the local state of affairs and making decisions on the spot. Now the general secretary's work is very much a matter of handling papers at a desk and presiding over small meetings of colleagues.

At the same time, the Party leadership remembers how damaging it was for Brezhnev in his last years when he was shown on television to be physically incapacitated — people started making jokes about him — so they prefer to keep Andropov out of public view until his physical strength is restored.

Is kidney disease the main problem?

No, it is his legs, his inability to walk unaided, as a result of a spasm that he suffered in the Spring. The kidney disease is controllable with the help of dialysis: a couple of hours a day on the machine enables a person to operate normally for the rest of the time. His diabetes is also controllable with modern medicine.

The political problem over his health derives from the possibility that he will be confined to a wheel-chair. Alterations are already being made in the Gregori Hall, where the Supreme Soviet meets, to install a special elevator for him, but his doctors are evidently still hoping that he can be restored to the point where he can walk unaided.

If he is confined, Roosevelt-like, to a wheel-chair, it should be said that this will greatly benefit disabled people in the USSR who do not as yet enjoy the aids and facilities for the disabled in the West, such

as national health wheel-chairs, special toilets and other such alterations in public buildings.

But Andropov's intellectual faculties are unimpaired and his physical ailments do not seriously hamper his capacity to manage the government machine.



Zhores Medvedev

PERSONNEL POLICY

The most notable feature of the Central Committee meeting seems to have been the four promotions: Vorotnikov and Solomentsev to full membership of the Politburo, KGB chief Chebrikov to candidate membership, and Cadre Department Chairman Ligachev to the post of Central Committee secretary. These promotions evidently strengthen Andropov's position but beyond that, what do they represent?

They show that we are on the eve of a major shake-up of the top administration. Vorotnikov is being groomed to replace the 79-year-old Tikhonov as Prime Minister and to lead a new ministerial team. And the other three people who were promoted will all play a key part in Andropov's wider overhaul of the political elite. What the Central Committee meeting did was to give Andropov the green light to go ahead with this upheaval in personnel.

This is revealed if we examine the posts occupied by the three others who have been elevated. Solomentsev, as head of the Control Commission, controls the records of all complaints and charges against Party members; Chebrikov, as head of the KGB, possesses the files on their personal life and loyalty, while Ligachev commands the files on their public careers. These three, along with Vorotnikov and the increasingly in-

fluent young Politburo member, Gorbachev, now have a clear road for moving ahead with the changeover of personnel within the elite.

Before the December Plenum, Andropov had been able to make only limited, ad hoc changes in personnel, motivated either by clear proof of incompetence or by evidence of flagrant corruption. On this basis he had removed a number of ministers such as the Minister for Construction, Ignati Novikov. He has also achieved the expulsion from the Party of two Central Committee members, Shchekolov and Medunov, for corruption. (No other such expulsion of CC members from the Party has taken place since the case of Molotov and the 'Anti-Party Group' in 1958 when it was a question of Khrushchev vanquishing political rivals.) But now Andropov can move ahead on a broader front, replacing people for less dramatic reasons.

How is this reshuffle likely to take place?

During this month and February, the regular biennial elections of regional party secretaries will be held. Normally these obkom elections attract little attention abroad, but they are especially important this year. The secretaries of the main obkoms make up a large proportion of the membership of the party Central Committee and, according to the rules, if they are not re-elected by their regional party conference, they can no longer attend the plenums of the Central Committee. The regional elections are in fact arranged from above — Ligachev and Gorbachev are in charge of them this year — so they will enable Andropov to change the balance of power on the Central Committee.

The government changes will take place after the regular, four-yearly elections to the Supreme Soviet take place in March. This is, of course, a rubber-stamp Parliament but its composition is a clear marker of who is falling from grace and who is becoming more influential. More importantly, after the Supreme Soviet elections the government formally resigns and by tradition is then re-appointed by the newly elected body. But this year it is inconceivable that Tikhonov will be asked to stay on. We can expect that Vorotnikov will then head a new ministerial team and there are already indications that he is preparing this team. In the USSR this is a complex task since it involves more than a hundred central Ministries and state committees as well as changes in the republican administrations.

Vorotnikov is totally unknown in the West. What is his background?

He is a 57-year-old technocrat who started work after the war in a Kuibyshev aircraft

factory. He gained his higher degree in aviation engineering and was appointed second secretary in the Kuibyshev city party committee at the young age of 35. In 1971 he became first secretary of Voronezh obkom and a member of the Central Committee, and four years later he rose to be first deputy premier of the Russian Federation — the Russian lands within the USSR — under Solomentsev, the premier. But in 1979 he fell foul of Brezhnev for reasons that have not yet been revealed. He was sent into honourable political exile as ambassador to Cuba, but was very unhappy there and continually pressed the politburo for a new job in the party apparatus.



V.I. Vorotnikov

In the months between Andropov's assumption of Suslov's post in May 1982 and Brezhnev's death the following October, Vorotnikov was able to make his comeback. He wrote to the Politburo offering to take even a job as raikom secretary (the raikom or district is one tier below the obkom or region). While Brezhnev was in the Crimea, Andropov arranged the sacking of the Krasnodar obkom secretary, Medunov, a very corrupt official protected by Brezhnev, and Vorotnikov was recalled to take his place.

He evidently cleared up the corruption in Krasnodar in a satisfactory way and in June of 1983 was made Premier of the Russian Federation and a candidate member of the Politburo. And this December, at the very next plenum of the CC he leapfrogged over more senior candidate members to become a full member of the Politburo.

Until recently it had seemed that Dolgikh, another younger technocrat, was in line for Tikhonov's job, but Vorotnikov has clearly outpaced him.

Is it possible to make any general comment about the character of the people Andropov is bringing into the Soviet leadership?

Andropov's personnel policy differs from Brezhnev's not only in his readiness to crack down on the corrupt and obviously incompetent, but in his drive to promote a

younger generation and his rejection of the clientelism so characteristic of his predecessor. Brezhnev assiduously promoted people with whom he had been associated in his earlier career, such as Chernenko or Tikhonov, people guaranteed to give top priority to personal loyalty to Brezhnev himself. None of Andropov's promotions seem to have this character — even Chebrikov, the new KGB head, was previously known as someone very close to Brezhnev and his circle. By using competence as his ostensible yardstick Andropov has undoubtedly strengthened his own authority as general secretary.

His readiness to bring forward younger men is also shown in the steadily rising influence of Gorbachev, at 52 the youngest member of the Politburo, who must now be considered the most likely successor to Andropov himself in the event of a short-term change of leader. His chances now seem better than those of the other two most likely candidates, Grishin, the Moscow party leader, and Romanov from Leningrad. Grishin has been seriously compromised by the smell of corruption in the Moscow party organisation in the Gastronom affair. The head of the organisation in Moscow has been sentenced to death for economic crime and the Moscow city committee and therefore Grishin himself are also implicated. Romanov, now in charge of industry, is an unpopular figure within the Party. Although Gorbachev's formal responsibility is for agriculture, he is increasingly being given assignments far beyond this field, meeting foreign leaders, recently attending the Portuguese Communist Party Congress and now supervising the regional party conferences.



M.S. Gorbachev

FOREIGN POLICY

One of the leadership's main preoccupations has obviously been the US missile programme and the arms negotiations. Now that the Geneva talks have been suspended, how will the Soviet government proceed from here?

They have said that they will match the US deployment of Pershing and Cruise in two ways: by installing new Soviet missiles in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, and by patrolling the American coast with new submarine-based missiles. But both these steps involve problems.

First, the Soviet leadership will be very reluctant to bring the new missiles into Eastern

Europe because it would produce and strengthen anti-war and anti-nuclear sentiment there. Secondly, it will take time to develop the new, submarine-based missile system close to American waters. The Soviet Union has submarines with long-range missiles but such missiles are unsuitable for this role. So the Americans believe the Soviets will develop submarine-based cruise missiles or medium-range missiles but such systems must still be at the design stage — it will be some time before they could be operational.

Thus the Soviet government's response to Cruise and Pershing will not be put into practice immediately. Furthermore, the NATO deployments are taking place by stages and the next group of Pershings is not due in West Germany until the end of 1984. Andropov had made it clear that the Soviet Union will match the US build-up step by step, not all at one go, so after a few Soviet missiles are placed in Eastern Europe there might be some chance of a new Soviet negotiating initiative if the US administration were prepared to freeze its deployments at their present levels.

But the Soviet leadership doesn't expect any serious negotiations from the Reagan administration and will be hoping that Reagan fails to win the elections next November.

How has the missile issue been presented to the Soviet public?

There has been a very strong discussion in the press and pamphlets have been produced explaining what kind of weapons Cruise and Pershing are: that what is at stake is not at all numbers of missiles, but a new generation of military technology. They explain that in the past NATO had justified its nuclear weapons in Europe by saying they would be used against the advancing Soviet army on the battlefield, after the Soviet Army had overcome NATO's conventional forces. But Cruise and Pershing are designed not for that but for hitting targets inside the USSR. They are thus not retaliatory or defensive weapons but first strike missiles aimed at Soviet command systems, with very short delivery times. These points have certainly been taken by Soviet public opinion and people now really fear a new war against the Soviet Union.

What do you think are the fundamental reasons for the breakdown of the Geneva arms negotiations?

The Reagan administration calculated that the Soviet leadership would have to make basic concessions once they saw that NATO would definitely deploy Cruise and Pershing. This calculation was based on the judgement that the Soviet economy could not stand the crippling cost of a major arms race. In the spring when Andropov did make significant concessions on the numbers of SS 20s, the Western leaders thought their calculation might be accurate. Andropov was eventually ready to reduce SS 20s to 120 in return for no Cruise and Pershing. But he was not prepared to go lower without cuts in British and French missiles, which are obviously targeted on the Soviet Union.

SOVIET UNION

So the basic calculation behind Reagan's posture proved false, based as it was on erroneous reports, by the CIA and others, on the state of the Soviet economy. The CIA has now come round to the view that the Soviets will be able to respond to the arms race without unacceptable disruption of economic development.

We must also remember, in this context, that the Soviet military is not a purely professional institution, so to speak outside the political system. It is part of the political establishment, with about twenty marshals and generals on the Communist Party Central Committee, and with the Minister of Defence inside the Politburo. So decisions about defence cannot be made without the military making their voice heard. And if the military tell the Politburo that the French and British systems cannot be ignored and require such and such a military response, then the leadership will agree — they cannot simply overrule the military's logic.

Could we turn to other aspects of Soviet foreign policy, in the first place Soviet aims in Afghanistan — the one country where the Soviet Union is engaged in military action?

The Soviet propaganda machine is insisting that the social and political changes in Afghanistan are irreversible and is hailing the achievements of the Afghan government, so I don't think they will reverse this side of their policy. They are not likely to accept some sort of arrangements whereby the replacement of the Karmal government by a new regime would be combined with international guarantees of Soviet security interests in the area.

As to the civil war within Afghanistan, you must remember that within the Soviet Union it is not presented as a war at all but as a progressive government facing internal security problems produced by groups of bandits and saboteurs supplied by imperialist circles. And for Russians, the casualty figures do not alter that impression. American sources claim that over the last two years some 5,000 Russians have died in Afghanistan and perhaps as many as half of these died from various diseases and illnesses, outside combat.

When Russians think of war, they think of the last occasion when the Soviet Union was involved in a war — 1941-45 — so by Russian standards of deaths in war these are very minor numbers indeed.

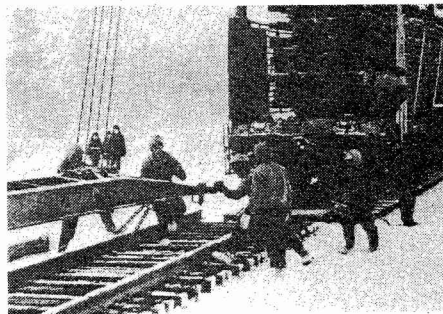
I think Afghanistan will become a satellite country, dependent on Soviet economic aid and on Soviet military training. The Russian presence will continue, with Soviet bases and so on, but they will aim for the Afghan government to take over all administrative and security activity. As for the guerrillas, their main support comes from the US — the West European governments are not interested in sending aid. And the US effort depends on close relations with the Zia government in Pakistan. The situation in Pakistan is not stable and the Soviet leadership must calculate that Zia, a military dictator, plagued by insecurity, will see the advantage of coming to terms with the Soviet Union over Afghanistan in order to shore up his own domestic position.

Brezhnev, in his last months, launched a new initiative towards negotiating a settlement with China. When he assumed office Andropov seemed keen to speed up these efforts towards normalising Sino-Soviet relations. Yet progress seems painfully slow. What are the prospects in this field?

There are three Chinese demands: that Vietnam must withdraw from Kampuchea, that Soviet forces must withdraw from Afghanistan and that Soviet troop concentrations along the Chinese border must be withdrawn. On the first, Vietnam's government is far from being a Soviet puppet and it is beyond Soviet capabilities to achieve this Chinese objective — withdrawal will occur only when the Vietnamese judge they are able to do so. On Afghanistan, the Soviet leadership will withdraw its troops only when it feels that the internal security situation there is under Afghan government control.

A further factor complicating relations is the fact that the Chinese leadership, like the Soviet leadership, is in transition and doesn't want to make any major moves quickly. It is still a very isolated government and it doesn't seem sure how it wants to handle long-term relations with the Americans, the Soviet Union and the Japanese.

But there are a number of factors favouring the normalisation of relations. In the first place, the Chinese appeared to have decided, so far, to remain neutral between the two super-powers. Secondly, by 1985 the Soviet Union should be ready to respond to the Chinese demand for the withdrawal of the 45 or 50 Soviet divisions along the Chinese border. Up to now the only railway linking Siberia with the Soviet Far East has run very close to the Chinese border, but in 1985 the new Baikal-Amur railway line will be completed, providing a rail link much further back. This should make a Soviet troop withdrawal much more likely.



Work on the Baikal-Amur railway goes on in all weathers.

Another factor that should improve relations is economic interests. China's basic industries were established in the 1950s and early 1960s, largely on the basis of Soviet designs and equipment. This industrial infrastructure is now in great need of modernisation and the Soviet Union has offered to help. The Chinese are likely to be interested in this. In 1983, Sino-Soviet trade more than doubled — it rose by 160% compared with 1982. Although this is still only one-fifth of the volume of Soviet-Indian trade and is well below what is possible, it is a positive sign.

Summing-up then on Andropov's record in foreign affairs, could it not be said that

apart from the missiles negotiations, where Andropov clearly made his mark, little has changed in Soviet policy since the Brezhnev period? And does this not suggest a lack of vigour and initiative in the present Soviet leadership?

The missile issue has undoubtedly absorbed a great deal of time because it is both extremely complex and contains implications for so many other areas of policy. Andropov's illnesses have also restricted his role in foreign affairs, since he could not be heavily involved in meeting foreign leaders or travelling. But we can expect that as in domestic, economic policy-making so in this field Andropov is waiting for the arrival of the new government team so that it can participate in working out new initiatives. We must remember that the Soviet leadership as a whole is still very much in transition.

Furthermore, the Soviet government probably considers that from the standpoint of Soviet state interests, world events have not been particularly unfavourable over the last year. They have seen Reagan increasingly trying to use military force to further US interests in the Third World, as in the Lebanon and Central America. Yet the result has been to embroil the United States in military conflicts that are extremely difficult either to win or to withdraw from. Meanwhile the USSR has been able to avoid any new entanglements during Andropov's period in office, and is probably not displeased to sit back and watch American difficulties develop.

THE ECONOMY

If Andropov's first priority has been to push through his policy on personnel, he has repeatedly indicated his great concern to restore some dynamism to the Soviet economy. What is the balance-sheet of his efforts so far in this field?

It has always been clear that Andropov's dominant concern has been the sluggish economic performance in recent years. His planned new government team will ultimately be judged by its capacity to restore economic dynamism and the speech Andropov sent to the CC plenum in December concentrated on economic problems, stressing his disappointment with the economy's performance over the last year.

Over the year the economy grew by 4% with productivity up by 3.5%. This may seem reasonable in comparison with the 2.8% growth during 1982. But we must remember that 1982 was the worst year for growth in Soviet history, and the economy is far behind schedule for the 1981-85 plan. This required 20% growth over the five-year period, and after 3% in 1981 and 2.8% the following year, 4% was not enough to catch up.

The pattern of growth during 1983 was also interesting. Normally in the early, winter months of the year the economy performs worst and growth picks up later in the year. Yet last year this pattern was reversed. In January growth was as high as 6.7% and it reached a similar figure in February, but tailed off later on.

Andropov is still able to blame poor performance on the Brezhnev years, and he did

so clearly in his speech. He also referred to well-known particular events that delayed economic development. Amongst these would be the damage to shipping in the Arctic during October and November, which certainly caused disruption in the Siberian industrial centres; the collapse of the dam at a very big fertiliser plant on the Dniester in the Lviv region in September, polluting the whole river and affecting water supplies to such important cities as Kishinev and Odessa; and also the Atomash catastrophe. Events like these also explain why he stressed the importance of taking environmental problems more seriously.

What happened at Atomash?

This is a huge plant for building nuclear power stations. Construction began as long ago as 1974, it took many years to complete, and a town was built around it, Volgodonsk, to house 100,000 workers. Then, during the summer there was a serious accident at the plant. It is not clear exactly what happened. One wall seems to have collapsed but it is not sure whether there were large numbers of casualties. In any case, the politburo sent Dolgikh down to head a commission of enquiry and this discovered that the foundations of the plant were being undermined because of a hydro-electric dam that had been built nearby. The effect of the dam was to raise the underground water levels beneath the Atomash plant at various points and inadequate checks had been carried out to monitor what was happening. Parts of the foundations began to subside and the entire plant became unsafe. There was some discussion about trying to stabilise the foundations by artificially producing permafrost underground, but it was decided that the costs would be too great and the results uncertain. So since the summer the plant has been closed, the nuclear power programme has been set back for at least a year and the government has decided that the entire plant will have to be moved somewhere else, at enormous cost. The Construction Minister in charge of the dam, Ignati Novikov, an old crony of Brezhnev from Dnepropetrovsk and a Deputy Prime Minister, was sacked because of the disaster.



V. Dolgikh

What measures have so far been taken to improve the economy?

There has been a wide-ranging debate over possible economic reforms in the specialist journals, but the government has not taken any major steps in economic policy. The moves so far have been largely administrative in character. There was first of all the discipline campaign and the continuing drive against corruption. The impact of this was felt in the higher growth rates at the beginning of the year.

Then in the summer there was a change in the work-brigade system that altered the method of payment. Previously an individual worker in a brigade would get bonuses for his/her own good performance, regardless of the work of other members of the team. Now bonuses depend upon the performance of the brigade as a whole. So if, for example, one member of the brigade is absent from work, the other members will suffer economically.

This may have had some impact on the economy but it is a fairly minor matter in terms of reform. At present there are too few incentives for workers, in terms both of pay increases and food supplies, although food improved towards the end of the year because of the better agricultural performance. Meat production this year was slightly above plan targets and numbers of animals in all groups of livestock increased for the first time for a number of years. Fodder production was also up 10% and although we don't know the figures for total grain production, it was almost certainly better than in 1982 (though still below the unrealistic plan target).

Is this delay over new economic policy connected to Andropov's illnesses?

I think the main reason is the fact that Andropov himself has no experience in economic policy and he will leave decisions about economic reform for the new team of younger technocrats he wants to take over the government. Various local and branch experiments in decentralisation have been launched and the new government team will probably draw more general conclusions from the results of these experiments. But what is clear from Andropov's Central Committee speech is that he does not see his own administrative measures as being an adequate response to the economy's problems.

DOMESTIC POLITICAL LIFE

In our interview just after Andropov was elected, you rejected suggestions current in some sections of the Western press at the time that Andropov was a closet liberal. Your judgement has since been borne out, has it not?

Well, yes, the approach to domestic political life has so far been very conservative, stressing discipline and embracing no new ideas. Restrictions on intellectuals have generally become harsher, especially since the June 1983 Central Committee plenum, which discussed ideology. Already under Brezhnev Andropov had effectively crushed the dissident movement, and repression continues against religious and national groups which are less well known in the West. Restrictions against the press are as tight as ever and



A thoughtful Tikhonov (left) next to laughing Andropov

there has been an even colder climate in the cinema and theatre.

Another sign of the trend was the choice of writers to be given the literary awards during the November celebrations marking the anniversary of the revolution. A few of those receiving the awards were not too poor, but most were very bad writers.

This atmosphere is reflected in the recent attack on Yevtushenko's new autobiographical novel, in the defection of Bitov, an editor on *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, and in the case of theatre director Lyubimov, who doesn't want to return to the Soviet Union. When Lyubimov, who had known Andropov in the past, asked him to intervene on a censorship issue, he was told that Andropov did not wish to interfere in a field outside his own sphere. At present Chernenko, as head of the Central Committee's ideological section, has taken charge of such matters and he is neither very bright nor a liberal. Minister of Culture Demichev is also no liberal and is not competent in this field. In conditions of reorganisation at the top they would be unlikely to make any friendly gestures towards the intellectuals and would anyway consider that such measures would not be very popular with Andropov.

The KGB now seems to want the Ministry of Internal Affairs to involve itself with dissent, for the Ministry has been given a political directorate to teach them a little bit of doctrine and thus make them able to handle political crimes. I consider this a bad development for the simple reason that the full-time professional staff of the ordinary police is far more numerous on the ground than that of the KGB. The latter does, of course, have a very extensive network of spare-time informers and has a fairly dense presence in all border districts and around special military or research installations. But otherwise, its professional staff goes no lower than the region and it does not maintain offices at district level: that is left up to the local, regular police.

So in general the internal situation remains very bleak. We can only hope that when a new generation of political leaders with a new cultural and political background establishes itself, it will be less dogmatic and dictatorial in its methods and will change the situation in many areas.

"In the Belly of the Beast"

By David Holland and Ralph Kinnear

Inside 'Radio Free Europe'

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty is an entirely American-funded operation run until 1971 directly, if covertly, by the CIA. Not surprisingly therefore it is widely viewed with suspicion, if not outright hostility, by those on the left interested in Eastern Europe.

To the immense East European audience, however, the breach in the state monopoly of information afforded by foreign radio broadcasting is of unquestionable importance. Around a third of the adult populations of Poland and Hungary, for example, listen regularly to RFE. By way of a more vivid illustration, it is said that Anna Walentynowicz, whose sacking for free trade union activities sparked off the August 1980 strike in Gdansk, first heard of the free trade union activists by listening to Radio Free Europe.

Given this importance, it is worth knowing something about the Radio Stations and adopting a coherent attitude towards them.

This is especially so because with the onset of the new cold war, the Reagan administration has not only updated its nuclear arsenal, but refurbished its ideological armoury too. Very substantial new funds have been allocated to RFE/RL; new Reagan appointments have been made to the Board of International Broadcasting (which oversees RFE/RL) and to the Presidency of the Radios with talk of imparting new thrust and direction, and there is talk of establishing a new station (Radio Marti) to broadcast to the Caribbean region.

The two authors of this article spent the summer months of this year as 'Summer Interns' at RFE/RL headquarters in Munich, and so are in a position to pass on a limited amount of information about the radio stations. We both went in the hope, well founded as it turned out, that we would be able to further our research interests, in Poland and Hungary respectively, by using RFE's archives. So it is mainly about the Polish and Hungarian services that we can speak from personal experience.

The RFE/RL building is set in one corner of Munich's largest and most attractive park, the Englischer Garten. It is surrounded by a wall and a double perimeter wire fence, with a layer of security guards and reception doors. Entry is by pass only. As the building was quite badly bombed a few years ago, with some injuries, these precautions are understandable. The source of the bomb, interestingly enough, is still unknown.

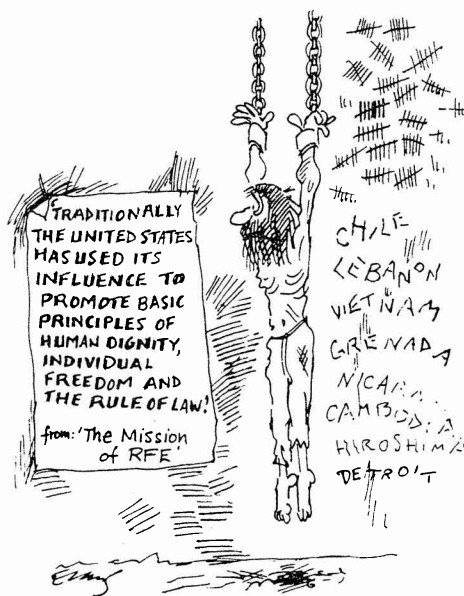
On entering the building one is immediately confronted by a large plaque bearing the text of article 19 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights, which affirms the right: 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'.

On a back staircase there is another plaque, cracked across, perhaps by the bomb explosion, which announces that behind it

are stored the signatures of 13 million Americans pledging their support for the 'crusade for freedom and democracy' embodied in the Mission of Radio Free Europe.

The building itself resembles nothing so much as a rather elderly English hospital. This is, as they say, no accident. It was built as such, but in the expectation that the imminent collapse of the East European regimes would before long necessitate the transfer of the building to other purposes.

The dowdily painted corridors, shabby office furniture and antiquated equipment are a source of acute grievance to the staff, as is overcrowding. These grievances are soon to be remedied. A redecoration programme is under way, millions of dollars worth of new equipment is coming, and more property is being acquired in the neighbourhood — although the problem of space is not so easily solved for a broadcasting organisation where access between departments is often vital.



The building houses more than a thousand employees, more than a hundred of whom are Poles. Pay rates are very good, but often vary inexplicably. An analyst, for example, might expect to earn around DM 4000 a month, plus housing, but might be working beside another earning 1000 more each month, for roughly the same work. Those Eastern Europeans starting in the broadcasting departments begin with significantly less, often without the benefit of rent-free accommodation. Senior staff, paid on American salary scales, can earn around 130,000 dollars in a year. These discrepancies account for some of the labour difficulties in past years — the policy of using wages to divide and rule often makes a mockery of the good pay rates and leaves everyone discontented. It's not hard to imagine difficulties in an organisation staffed by Soviet and East European nationalities, run by Americans, but subject to German labour law.

The generous pay rates are one possible explanation of the low staff turn-over. The need for an injection of new blood is recognised by the management of the stations. It is something of a handicap for a journalist specialising in coverage of a particular country if he has been unable to visit it for twenty or so years. Many of the people employed by RFE in the 1950s are in this position, since their contracts expressly forbid travel to any Soviet bloc countries. The Radios are keen to avoid even the whiff of a spying scandal.

This renewal of blood is beginning to take place, thanks mainly to a bulge of older staff, employed from the beginning of operations, retiring from the fray. As they are replaced by a younger generation of emigres an interesting contrast to changes at the top emerges. Younger people who have grown up in communist states since the fifties, in a period when those regimes have been largely pragmatic in their policy, have a markedly more complicated attitude to communism. This attitude is at odds with the theological 'communism is the work of the devil' variety, and is comparatively untouched by the contrast between pre-war societies and the absurdities of Stalinism. It will be interesting in the coming years to see how this will adapt to the new ideological thrust of the Reaganites.

The corridors of the station echo with a babel of tongues. German, Russian, English and Polish are perhaps the most common, but Romanian or Hungarian, or one of the thirteen non-Russian Soviet languages in which the station broadcasts, can also often be heard.

More than most large organisations, RFE is alive with factional intrigue and back-biting gossip. This is partly a function of the presence of such a variety of inward looking emigré communities, each with its own sectional interests to promote vis-à-vis each other, with a layer of overall management, which also has its own competing interests, stemming ultimately from Washington.

Each East European nationality has a separately organised Broadcasting and Research section. The present head of the Polish Broadcasting section is Zdzislaw Najder, who took over the job after finding himself abroad as a visiting scholar at Oxford University when martial law was declared. Najder was sentenced to death *in absentia* this spring by a Polish court on charges of espionage, in an unprecedented display of disapproval for the activities of RFE. Najder has his own political stance within the context of Polish political life as a former prominent figure in the clandestine Polish League for Independence (PPN).

The Polish Socialist Party is also strongly represented. Several of the officers named in the party's publications are full time employees of the Polish Research section. One such employee explained how he had

first been drawn into American financed anti-communist activity, when as an active socialist and trade unionist living in modest circumstances in Stoke Newington in the '50s he was approached and invited to an all-expenses-paid conference in North America on 'combatting communist infiltration in the trade unions'.

The Polish Broadcasting service is regarded, even within the station, as tantamount to a 'Radio Solidarity'. This has often taken the form of broadcasting the times and places of meetings for local solidarity groups. The Hungarian service, by contrast, is more often than not attacked by emigré groups in the States for being 'too soft' on the Kadar regime. A recent flurry of letters attacked the Hungarian research section in particular for relying too heavily on official Hungarian press sources, and accused them all of being Communist agents paid by the Kadar regime. They were also attacked for not using enough foreign sources, such as the *Financial Times*. This is doubly ironic since the *FT* often uses RFE research reports for its own articles.

In fact this highlights the problem of treating RFE too evenly. The different broadcasting sections reflect the large differences between the regimes they broadcast to. In Poland and Czechoslovakia it is now a serious crime to be found passing information to RFE. Hungarian intellectuals on the other hand, on trips outside Hungary, will sometimes arrange meetings with station staff — not of course inside the radio building itself — and seem to fear no reprisals.

The character of the Hungarian service merely takes into account that the western press is circulated amongst offices and enterprises in Hungary, and may often be bought for little more than its indigenous price in the large Budapest hotels. Half of Hungary watches Austrian TV regularly, the southern part watches Yugoslav TV and Radio Vienna can be heard blaring across most weekend house gardens on rest days. With this competition — not forgetting an official press that is a good deal more competent than most in Eastern Europe — it is hardly surprising that RFE's Hungarian service must concentrate on fairly detailed and informative programmes about Hungary, and fairly low-key magazine-type programmes about the rest of the world.

All RFE programming attempts to establish the stations as 'real' radio stations with a breadth of coverage — music and cultural programmes, as well as the real 'meat' of the station's output — challenging the officially endorsed history and 'reality' of the East European states. In the late sixties and early seventies RFE captured a large audience among East European youth through its regular broadcasts of western rock music. It has since lost this function through the growth of FM pop stations in the East European states themselves (short wave being an unsatisfactory vehicle for music), but it undeniably helped force this development on regimes not noted for their keenness to serve the young.

The ability of the different services to provide a platform for prominent intellec-

tuals in emigration (for example the Poles Czeslaw Milosz, Slawomir Mrozek, Stefan Kisielewski or the Hungarians György Konrád and István Kemény) clearly enhances the stations' influence. The editors of the flourishing Polish underground press are well aware that they will reach a maximum audience if they are able to smuggle out their publications for broadcasting back in Poland by RFE. The emerging dissident press of Hungary too has been helped by RFE's coverage.



Separately organised inside the Radio station is the Research and Analysis Department (RAD), which is responsible for the 'Background Reports'. These will be familiar to many students of East European affairs, as they are kept by most academic institutions having anything to do with the area. It is this department which is probably most immediately threatened by the intervention of the new management interested in making RFE more 'ideologically forceful'. At the moment there are a wide variety of political viewpoints within this department. The tendency, already underway in Radio Liberty, is to reduce the 'independent academic' style of this section, and subject it more closely to the demands of the programmers.

Shortly after David's arrival, Jim Brown, the Director of RFE and long-standing patron of the attempts by RAD to maintain reputable intellectual standards of commentary and analysis, submitted his resignation. It is not hard to believe that there must have been many conflicts of approach with the new management. Jim Brown has an extremely English persona, so much so that he seemed to have stepped straight out of 'Smiley's People'. By contrast the new overall president of RFE/RL, James Buckley, is a bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, assertive propagandist of American values ... A former US senator, whose brother, the republican ideologist William Buckley, is perhaps better known, Buckley is determined to promote the radio stations with a new tone of self-confidence and assertiveness.

Despite this, the radio stations do apply journalistic standards and a strongly word-

ed code of 'restraints' is aimed to prevent descent to the cruder forms of propaganda.

For example, although some of the station staff could scarcely conceal their delight at the propaganda gift when news of the shooting down of the Korean air-liner arrived, broadcasts continued to describe the shooting down as 'alleged' longer than the serious British and German newspapers.

As the BBC has long been aware, a restrained tone enhances rather than diminishes the impact of such reporting. Jim Buckley will himself eagerly point out that this is essential to maintaining credibility amongst audiences chronically allergic to propaganda.

Openly inflammatory broadcasting is completely proscribed, as RFE burnt its fingers badly in 1956 by transmitting material which, it is alleged, aroused expectations amongst the Hungarians of receiving military assistance from the West.

Certainly listeners in Poland and Hungary often express a preference for RFE over Voice of America, the station that explicitly acts as the exponent of American foreign policy. RFE is required only to: 'operate in a manner not inconsistent with the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States' (The Mission of RFE).

This is said not to conflict with the interests of East Europeans since: 'Traditionally the United States has used its influence to promote basic principles of human dignity, individual freedom and the rule of law.' (ibid.)

Sceptics who consider that US policy from Central America to South East Asia has not always been inspired and implemented according to such noble principles, will regard this as a hypocritical defence of self-interested propaganda. However, whilst US policy and attitudes in Central America are a vital matter of life and death for the local population, for East Europeans the presence of an alternative source of influence and information to the hegemonic power in *their* area has a rather different significance. Polish and Hungarian people who rely on foreign radio stations for information are not necessarily unaware of their bias. One strong opponent of the regime in Warsaw remarked that he considered RFE to be '*Trybuna Ludu* in reverse'. This did not prevent him valuing the breach in the official monopoly of information that the station represents.

It is important in this respect to know that there is very little pre-broadcast editorial control at RFE. The content, timing and substance of broadcasts are left mainly in the hands of the different broadcasting sections, staffed of course by emigré nationals. The American management keeps up with the programming by means of a system of post-broadcast analysis, selective translations of programmes from each service. What prior editorial control there is only really affects the classification of news stories, and is a rudimentary classification according to their reliability. This does not prevent each nationality tailoring its output to whatever it thinks it should be saying, in the familiar pattern of East European self-censorship, but the point is that there is little

direct interference. Paradoxically, the new tendency, as has happened in Radio Liberty already, is to abolish even this rudimentary control and allow the different sections completely free rein.

RFE itself checks its credibility and success rate by using market research consultants to conduct concealed surveys of listening habits among East Europeans travelling outside the area. The main centre of this research is Vienna, and the Radio's own analysts claim to be able to weight the samples to correct the inevitable bias in talking only to those people allowed to travel outside the bloc. The factors they use to increase the blue collar element in the samples, however, must be particularly hard to judge.

It is true that RFE is not the pluralist institution enjoying 'freedom from national or sectarian bias' (Mission of RFE again) that it claims to be. Briefings of CIA and State Department staff by station personnel continue (off the premises since 1971 and the station's paranoia about connections with the CIA). It would be odd, of course, if they didn't, given RFE's prominence as an information centre. Jan Nowak, the former head of the Polish broadcasting, who resigned in 1975 — reportedly in protest

against the 'appeasement policies' towards the USSR and Eastern Europe then pursued by the US administration — now exercises a powerful influence on the formation of American policy in the region. Doubtless there are many other such links.

The fifties and sixties are nostalgically recalled by some employees as a period of lavish funding and, under CIA sponsorship, freedom from political scrutiny and interference. This 'Golden Age' may, of course, be returning as the new Cold War gathers momentum. That is why it is important for Europeans, on whose territory and behalf the radio station ostensibly operates, to make their views felt on how these operations should be conducted.

The response of progressively minded opinion in Western Europe to the contradiction between the Reaganite political management of the radio stations and their objective value is not best resolved by ignoring them, or demanding that they be closed down. The host countries and their European partners should insist that the claims of RFE should be lived up to in reality. It should become a genuinely pluralist institution representing a variety of viewpoints. There is no reason why American-centred interests should dominate an agency design-

ed to facilitate communication in a divided Europe. Indeed, there is no reason why the United States itself should relish having to shoulder the financial burden for the place on its own.

Of course, this would mean a new agency taking over the financing and running of RFE/RL. Why should not the political parties represented in the European Parliament be proportionately represented on a governing body with power of appointment over managerial staff in the Radio stations? This would more accurately reflect the diverse and particular interests of Europeans, East and West, than a team selected by the Republican administration in the US.

The West European peace movements (and for that matter the independent East European peace groupings), for example, are not held in high esteem by the American-sponsored staff of RFE/RL. Why should they not have the chance to broadcast direct to the East Europeans, show them that they are not Soviet stooges, and further the dialogue between independent opinion in Eastern and Western Europe that is necessary if we are to begin to lift the partition of Europe imposed by the super-powers?

October 1983

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Sudden Growth of Nuclear Pacifism

By Oliver MacDonald

The Soviet announcement of its plans to station nuclear missiles in Czechoslovakia has created the largest protest movement seen in that country since the beginning of the 1970s, with petitions gaining larger numbers of signatories than the civil rights campaign Charter 77 gained when it was formed in 1977.

Last October, Moscow announced its intention to respond to Cruise and Pershing deployments by placing its own missiles in Czechoslovakia and the GDR. Hitherto, the USSR had never stationed any nuclear missiles on the territory of East European states.

At the time of the announcement, there was no sign of an autonomous peace movement within Czechoslovakia. An unofficial demonstration by some two hundred young people at the end of an official peace march in Prague last summer had appeared to be an entirely spontaneous affair without any firm basis. A very lively debate on nuclear weapons had been taking place within and around the Charter 77 movement (see the last issue of *Labour Focus* and *Voices from Prague* published by END and Palach Press, as well as the letter by Jiri Dienstbier in this issue). But the discussion was confined to small circles comprised mainly of people already in political opposition to the government.

The first indication of serious discontent

in response to the Soviet announcement came, surprisingly enough, from the official Communist Party daily, *Rude Pravo*. In the first week of November it declared that readers had written expressing their doubts as to whether the Soviet deployment was necessary, whether it should have been announced before the arrival of Cruise and Pershing missiles and whether it would enhance Czechoslovakia's security.

The article, of course, went on to insist that the missiles were necessary to protect Czechoslovakia, which had, it claimed, long been a target for NATO's nuclear arsenal. But the fact that such admissions of disquiet could occur indicated some opposition to the deployment within official Czechoslovak circles.

It is now clear that this article was a response to widespread open protests that started occurring at the end of October. Some information about these stirrings has now reached *Palach Press*. On 1 November, for example, a petition began circulating in the Geofyzika firm in Prague. A great number of employees signed it. The following day, the Director, a man by the name of Linhart, threatened to sack the signatories and report them to the Czechoslovak Secret Service. But the signing continued. On 11 November, Secret Service personnel arrived at the plant and pulled at least seven people in for interrogations. They were asked if pressure had been put on them to sign;

whether they were aware that they were undermining the defence capabilities of the state; and above all, who had approached them with the petition. All denied that they had been pressurised to add their names, but following the interrogations three people withdrew their signatures.

The scale of the protests is indicated by news reaching *Palach* that in the town of Brno alone, almost 1,500 people signed a long protest letter against the new missiles. The text of this letter has not yet reached the West, but it seems that its signatories were mainly very young people — secondary school students and apprentices.

Another petition circulating in Prague is said to have attracted almost one thousand signatures. These include such well-known Charter 77 supporters as the world famous playwright Vaclav Havel, Dr Jaroslav Sabata, Anna Sabatova and Vaclav Maly, as well as several priests from both the Czech Evangelical and Catholic Churches. The petition's text reads:

'Following the decision to deploy nuclear weapons in Czechoslovakia, we perceive the urgent threat that the arms race poses to our country, to the whole world and to all humanity. If we speak really sincerely about peace, then we cannot be indifferent to any new procurement of arms. We therefore protest against nuclear weapons anywhere in the world. We also protest against their deployment in Czechoslovakia.'

Not the least ominous aspect of this petition, from the authorities' point of view, was the fact that large numbers of people without any previous association with the Charter 77 supporters had been ready to make common cause with them. The Chartists include former leaders of the Communist Party and experienced activists well able to give advice and guidance to a broad, unofficial movement, and very familiar with the peace movement in the West. Thus, at

the beginning of November the STB (secret service) warned the Chartists that any statement from them on Soviet deployment plans would be treated as a grave, criminal attempt to 'undermine national defence'. (We publish below the Chartists' Open Letter to the Western peace movements informing them about this threat.)

One source of embarrassment for the Czech government at precisely this moment

of tension in early November, came from Bulgaria, where Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov gave an assurance to Greek Premier Papandreu that Bulgaria would not allow the stationing of Soviet missiles on its territory. However painless this declaration may have been — there is no indication that the Soviet leadership had been planning to deploy missiles in the Balkans — it marked a sharp contrast with official Czechoslovak public statements.

Chartists Harrassed For Peace Activities

OPEN LETTER TO THE WEST EUROPEAN PEACE MOVEMENTS

Dear Friends,

Less than half a year has gone by since we were able to meet some of you during the World Congress for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War in Prague. In that time we have had several opportunities to follow your resolute protests, above all against the stationing of missiles in Europe. With this letter we would like to inform you briefly about Charter 77's present situation.

Not long ago the Czechoslovak government agreed to the stationing of missiles on our territory. In connection with this the STB (Czech secret police) took in for interrogation almost twenty signatories of Charter 77, including their spokespersons. During these interrogations we were informed that should Charter state its position on the stationing of missiles on Czechoslovak territory, then it would result in criminal proceedings for threatening the defence capability of the country.

The pressure group Charter 77 is aware that the threat of force, the sharp confrontation which we have recently witnessed in international relations, destroys any hope aroused by the CSCE follow-up conference in Madrid. If the genuine desire of people to live together in harmony irrespective of national borders is not developed, then this dangerous situation of division and malice, which exists between states, will be strengthened. Charter 77 hopes to contribute to the overcoming of this worrying situation by continuing resolutely to fulfil the role which it took upon itself at its inception almost seven years ago — the defence of human rights. We agreed in our joint communique, which we released with you in June this year in Prague, that it is impossible to support the struggle for peace anywhere in the civilised world, unless it is accompanied by attempts to ensure that human rights are respected as they are interpreted in a number of binding international pacts and treaties which the Czechoslovak government has signed.

We wish you much success in your efforts, and we support your demands urging the world superpowers to speed up negotiations so there may be some progress in the halting of the arms race.

Signed by Charter Spokespersons: Rudolf Batték (in jail), Jan Kozlík, Anna Marvanová, Ladislav Lis (in jail), Marie Rut Krizkova. Prague November 1983

(Document made available by Palach Press. Translation by Andrew Csepel.)

STATEMENT NO. 345: CHARTISTS DETAINED FOLLOWING DECISION TO DEPLOY SOVIET MISSILES

Between 3 and 7 November 1983, 17 persons, mainly Charter 77 signatories, including their three spokespersons, were interrogated in Prague. Almost all of those questioned were rounded up without receiving a prior written summons. The interrogations were extremely protracted — sometimes up to 13 hours — and three of those questioned — Dr Vaclav Benda, Prof. Jiri Hajek and Charter 77 spokesperson Jan Kozlik — were detained for more than 24 hours allegedly on suspicion of incitement (Article 100 of the Penal Code).

A leaflet allegedly distributed in Prague calling for a demonstration on 4 November 1983 served as a pretext but even the secret police did not treat this excuse particularly seriously. The interrogators were mainly concerned to find out 'how Charter 77 and VONS* intend to act in view of the present increased tension in international relations'. The secret police were also interested in any financial help sent from the West, in the activities of some Czech emigrés in their new countries, in documents which Charter 77 plans to publish and so on.

Some of those interrogated were given an official warning concerning any potential Charter 77 statement 'disparaging the decision of the Czechoslovak government and the Federal Assembly to deploy on our territory tactical operative missile systems'. Others had to listen to various threats. Olga Havlova who was driving to Hradecek to see her husband Vaclav Havel, was stopped on the way, her car was searched and she and Jan Kaspar, who was driving her, were subjected to a personal search. The police confiscated several private letters addressed to Vaclav Havel and also various publications.

10 November 1983

(Document and translation made available by Palach Press.)

*VONS: Committee to Defend the Unjustly Prosecuted

LETTER FROM JIRI DIENSTBIER TO THE 2nd CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT HELD IN BERLIN IN MAY 1983

1 May 1983

(In our last issue, we published a long text by Jaroslav Sabata on nuclear weapons and East-West relations, part of an extremely lively and far-ranging debate on peace issues that has been taking place within Charter 77. Much of this debate is translated in Voices from Prague published by Palach Press and END. Here we print another contribution, not included in that pamphlet.)

Jiri Dienstbier was a Communist Party member and one of Czechoslovakia's most prominent radio journalists in the 1960s, working for a time as Prague Radio's Washington correspondent. Under Husak's normalisation at the start of the 1970s he was expelled from the Communist Party and sacked from his job. A founder of Charter 77, he became a spokesperson in 1979 and was arrested and jailed for 'subversion' in May of that year.)

Dear Friends,

I am pleased and honoured by your invitation to the Congress.

The invitation was extended despite the fact that I have hitherto neither participated nor expressed my views on the aims and methods of the peace movement. The movement came into being and developed while I was in prison and could only follow its activities through the distorting medium of reports on the Czechoslovak TV and in the press. In the months since my release I have not had the opportunity to adequately study the movement's material. It is not easy to get hold of such material in my country. However I do know a certain amount.

I welcomed the Helsinki Accords; I signed, along with others, Charter 77 and took on the responsibility of being its spokesperson for the same reasons, and I have not been deflected from my ef-

forts to further the cause of peace both at home and internationally by three years in prison. I did not enjoy prison. I was helped to endure it, however, by the knowledge of the solidarity with us which was expressed by many of you and for which I cannot thank you enough.

You too understand, from your own experiences gained under different conditions, that truth and justice, which are the only basis of mutual understanding and thus of peace, are not easily won and demand sacrifices of every individual.

The immediate aim of your movement is a nuclear-free Europe. This means today an attempt to prevent the siting of new medium-range nuclear weapons in Western Europe and to avoid the almost unimaginable consequences of their installation.

I am not sure whether we are entering upon the most dangerous decades of human history. It is a possibility. What is clear is that if the arms race does proceed to a new stage, it will consume yet more non-renewable natural and human resources. Our hopes for a rational world will suffer a blow and the cultivation of civic responsibility and an atmosphere of freedom will be replaced by an increase in feelings of stress, powerlessness and lack of hope which can only strengthen the primitive and paranoid outlook of bureaucratic, military and police apparatuses.

I cannot see the sense in the development of new weapons technology. Disputes over balance or superiority in nuclear arms, about the numbers of this or that missile, the allure of new systems which will be able to breach the enemy's defences or destroy the enemy's military capacity on its own territory, arguments over whether a certain military doctrine is aggressive or defensive, mutual accusations over who is instigating the production of further weapons, the habit of governments to direct moralistic reproaches at the opponent while they compliment themselves on their own attitude, and all other such phenomena alike have their malignant effect on the international climate and cause a deterioration in the real relations on the world scene.

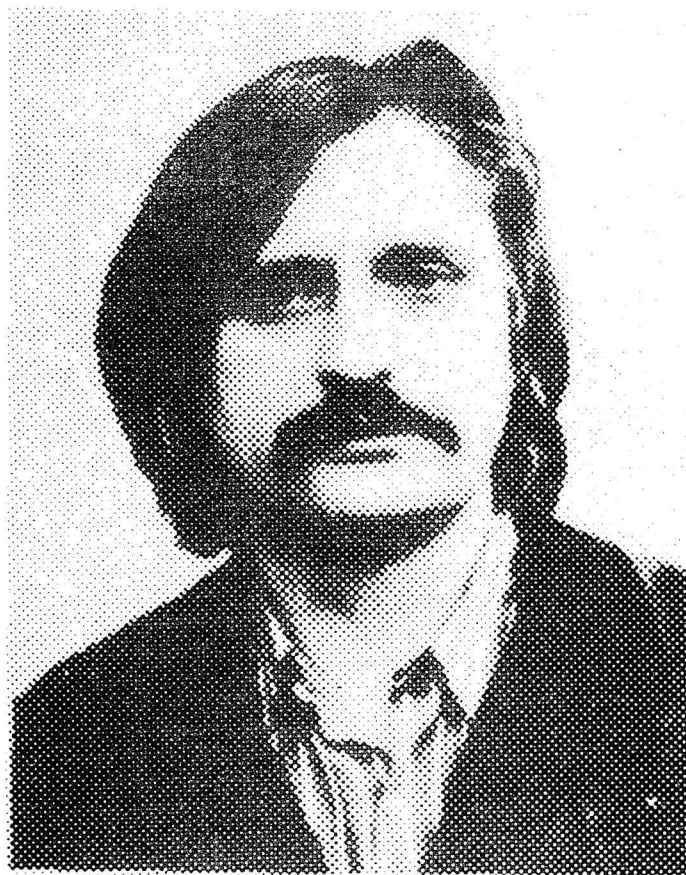
The real reasons for the tension lie in the inability of many governments to live in peace with their own citizens, in the endeavours which some governments make to get a bigger part in the international order than they deserve, and a stubborn refusal to surrender unreasonable demands, along with attempts to get the advantage over others through means which may be legal but are morally and politically unacceptable — all offered up on the basis of various ideologies and anti-ideologies and with the pretexes of aid or self-defence. I do not believe that the great powers want a war in which they themselves would be destroyed. On the other hand, they cannot give up militarism, because the fear of the use of modern weapons stifles the desire of the peoples for greater independence and a dignified life in freedom. It is obvious that when the very existence of life on earth is at stake, human values which are the product of a thousand years of cultural development seem something of a luxury even in an increasingly truncated form.

It is possible to have an interminable discussion as to where to start to untangle this mess. Some of your own governments and fellow citizens, as well as some of my friends in central and eastern Europe criticise you for the fact that you direct your attention to disarmament in your own countries. It is alleged that you weaken western society in the face of the menace from the East in circumstances when movements similar to yours cannot develop freely there. Furthermore, it is said, if you were to succeed, a disarmed Europe would be the plaything of the superpowers or simply of the Soviet Union. You are misusing, so they say, the democratic conditions in your countries and fail to face up to the one-sidedness which flows from this.

I consider such criticisms to be exaggerated for a number of reasons, of which I will outline three.

1) However one-sided it might seem, it is always necessary to start by putting one's own house in order. You are fighting against the siting of new missiles and I support you in that. Our starting points, however, are not the same. In our case the most urgent question is to establish our right to express our opinions; without this right we cannot express our attitude to the military policy of our own country. You should not therefore be surprised if we are hesitant about criticising your governments, even when we would very much like to.

Again, disarmament and detente must not take a form which allows the superpowers to exert increased pressure in other parts of



Jiri Dienstbier

the world. Countries such as Japan and China have already expressed their disquiet about this. The resources are needed for other purposes such as aid to the developing countries, the development of new energy sources and protection of the environment. These and other problems of the contemporary world are interrelated, and everybody can't do everything. Each of us should act where we feel a pressing need. This should not, however, lead us to forget others whose immediate tasks are different, but nonetheless parallel to ours. The slogan 'peace is indivisible' means that we will go forward either together or not at all.

2) We should not allow ourselves to be confused by the assertion that democracy is threatened by the fact that you make use of it to express your point of view. To surrender such a right means to undermine democracy, which is constantly reproduced through the process of its utilisation. We know from our own experiences that as soon as the right to decide and pronounce as to what is or is not right or even legal is surrendered to the state power, for whatever reason, it is incredibly difficult to nurture this tender shoot of European civilisation back to life again.

3) I consider fears as to the consequences of the weakening of this or that side of the balance of power to express a naivety comparable to the opposite belief that any of us will achieve progress through putting forward one demand taken in isolation. If both the superpowers are not compelled to retreat, or they do not consider it in their own interests to make concessions, then the missiles will be installed however much noise we make. Governments draw strength from the silent majority to achieve their aims. It will be a defeat for all of us.

Another outcome is possible, however, even if it is less apparent and will only be achieved gradually and over a long period of time, in the course of various detours and backward steps. Many things speak for us, even in comparison with the disappointed hopes of the mid-'50s or after the signing of the Helsinki Accords. The cost of armaments has multiplied many times over and the rationality of a strategy of nuclear terror has been called into question. Even ex-President Nixon was moved to write in the summer of last year that 'the threat of mutual suicide is not a credible one'. The illusion of uninterrupted growth based on an abundance of resources has been replaced by an awareness of limits to growth. The influence of ideology has been further weakened by the consciousness of the priority of the needs of daily life, of having enough to eat, somewhere to sleep and the problems of how to

realise one's personal, professional, cultural and social needs, interests and aspirations.

A Europe free from confrontation, rid not only of nuclear but also of conventional weapons, and no longer divided into two blocs is a mighty aim, which seems to many to be an unrealisable dream. Let us dedicate ourselves to this aim in the consciousness that we are only at the beginning, that we will experience many setbacks, as is witnessed by the recent development of the situation in Poland. It is a complicated task, requiring many social changes inside the European states, in the relations between them, between power blocs and between the superpowers, between East and West, but also between North and South, and involving a new self-consciousness in Europe and its integration into a just world system.

I agree with you when you say that it is necessary to behave as if a free Europe, united in a creative plurality, already existed. As signatories of Charter 77, we in Czechoslovakia have already tried to act as if the international pacts on human rights which have

been ratified by our parliament really apply. The only way to reveal the real outlook of the rulers is to confront their promises and statements with the freely expressed opinions of the people both in each particular country and at the international level.

If it true that the authorities represent the particular interests of national and power elites, let us then endeavour to create a European movement of citizens, fighting for common and universal human values. This is what the tradition of European civilisation and culture demands of us, and it is the source of our current optimism.

I regret that I am unable to take part in your deliberations and look forward to collaboration with you in the numerous tasks which await us.

Yours,

Jiri Dienstbier, Podskala 8, 128 00 Prague 2.

(The above document was published in Listy. Translation by Mark Jackson.)

Official Bunk about Punk

By Andrew Csepel

The radio stations and record shops of Czechoslovakia are overflowing with second-rate middle-of-the-road pap, which is designed to encourage consumerist values, which, like the music, the regime has imported from the West. The money which is made available to rock bands is shared among a narrow elite of performers. The three most popular bands — Olympus, Abraxus and Katapult — put one in mind of rather moderate American hard rock of the early seventies, with the British bands Deep Purple and Uriah Heep clearly influencing them as well. Even these bands which have official blessing can have difficulties. Katapult, which has a substantial following among 15-18 year-olds, have not been permitted to perform in Prague for a long time and have just been banned from appearing in the province of Central Bohemia.

One of the most disturbing aspects of official policy towards rock music is the tendency to discriminate against certain performers not just because of their political but their musical suitability as well. Vladimir Merta and Vladimir Mishik are two very talented rock musicians. They have a strong and loyal following, who always ensure that their records and concerts are sell-outs. They have not involved themselves in oppositional politics of any kind, yet over the past five years they have found it increasingly difficult to obtain official permission to give concerts or make records. It is generally agreed that these opportunities have been denied them simply because their music is too inventive and interesting.

The stifling control exerted over the production and distribution of rock music in the late seventies gave young people little cause for cheer. Towards the end of the decade a movement did emerge in Prague which was able to register a protest against the rock wasteland so lovingly cultivated by the bureaucracy. A number of rather bizarre avant garde bands organised semi-official concerts which soon attracted the attention

of Prague's disillusioned youth. These bands, with names like Elektrobuz, Extempore, Stehlik (Goldfinch), and Zaba (The Frog), rejected most conventional patterns of rhythm and melody. Their music was a collection of disparate and desperate noises, drawn from a wide range of rock and folk cultures. On occasions the concerts would be punctuated by a long period of silence (1/2 an hour in one case), so it was hardly the most popular form of music in the history of Czechoslovak rock; however both the form and content of the sound was a concrete expression of the frustration felt by musicians and audience in the face of acute musical and social oppression. Although it was not long before the police also took an active interest in this phenomenon, their anarchic tendencies and their limited appeal were also responsible for the demise of this influential but short-lived movement. These performers did provide an important link between bands like The Plastics and DG 307, and the punks of the early eighties. The interest which they aroused also indicated that a tremendous potential for an alternative rock scene did exist.

It is a measure of how successful the regime has been at sealing off young Czechoslovaks from Western influences that punk rock did not begin seriously to influence music in the CSSR until 1981, five years after it had revitalised rock in the UK. Despite the time lapse Czech punk has had a similarly refreshing effect on what was one of the most stagnant European cultures. Although the styles of dress and music were clearly borrowed from the British movement, it was not long before indigenous punk bands had stamped specific Czech characteristics on the movement. By the middle of 1982 concerts given in Prague by bands like Jasna Paka (Patent), Letadlo (Aeroplane) and above all Prazsky Vyber (Prague Selection) had become important cultural events for many young Czechs. They experienced a similar sense of gritty elation which was a hallmark of British punks. Gone were the distant narcissistic stars performing on a stage many metres

from their audience. They had been replaced by young working-class Czechs, whose musical sophistication may have been found wanting but whose enthusiasm and energy were more than an adequate substitute. Lyrics about love and a bright socialist future were replaced by songs on sexual problems and the misery of life in Prague towerblocks. Performers and audience identified with each other very closely, but they were forced to remain aware of many social restrictions which Western punks never had to contend with. It is more difficult to avoid the attention of the police in Prague than in London, Berlin, New York or Paris if you sport a mohican hairstyle or have safety pins dangling from your nose.

Despite the social and political ostracism faced by Czech punks, bands grew in numbers and popularity. Perhaps more surprisingly the number of youth and student clubs prepared to host punk concerts increased. Any concert would have had to be sanctioned by people connected with the Party or working as functionaries for the SSM (the Union of Socialist Youth). One can only assume that by 1982 such people who acted on behalf of the cultural watchdogs had let their vigilance slip, or they could no longer see the harm in letting young people enjoy themselves by expressing their experiences as they wished.

Not without reason was the Party less accommodating in its attitude. In both its form and content punk gives expression to the frustrations of alienated urban youth. The popularity of Czech punk meant that questions such as vandalism, boredom and a rejection of the consumerist if not bourgeois attitudes and values on offer, were being discussed with more frequency and openness than the Party liked. The philosophy accompanying punk was proving to be increasingly more attractive to young Czechs in place of the unquestioning subservience offered by the regime. Earlier this year the Party decided to act ...

In March the Party's cultural weekly, *Tribuna*, published a long article by Jan

Kryzl on rock music and the Czech 'new wave'. Its content and some of the language used is astonishing. Following its publication the new punk culture in Czechoslovakia was decimated.

Kryzl begins his article with a potted history of rock music and its social significance in the West. This part is riddled with inaccuracies and over-simplifications, but it is when he begins to pontificate about punk in the West that the real calumny starts:

'Rock music became big business and a means of propagating ideological and cultural deviations, aimed not only at the youth of the West but also at young people in the socialist states. The people who controlled and organised this business were well aware that the economic crisis of the '70s and the younger generation's growing discontent in the face of increasing social pressures within the capitalist system would undoubtedly inspire new and old songs of struggle.'

It was precisely at this moment that 'new wave' appeared on the rock scene. New Wave was intended to confer upon that 'damned' generation of the capitalist world a philosophy of life encapsulated in the slogan — No Future. The youth were thus to identify with a life as prepared for them by capitalism. Don't bother about anything going on around you! Don't join together with anyone against anything! There is no point to anything! That was to become the creed of the young generation. To encourage this they were and are to be served by punk rock, heavy metal and trash (sic) rock ...

Primitive texts and primitive music, hideous clothes, provocative behaviour, obscene gestures ... this was hardly aesthetically pleasing and even the citizens of the capitalist world found it shocking, but it was nonetheless better than having young people fighting against the system.'

The suggestion that punk was a creation of capitalist ideologues designed to divert social unrest caused by the economic crisis is beneath contempt. Punk was a grass roots movement usually associated with explicitly left-wing causes or politics. Unlike earlier rock protest movements, it dared venture into the economic infrastructure of the rock business. By setting up non-profit making, independent recording and distribution companies, it actually damaged the interests of those capitalists who Kryzl claims were responsible for the whole thing. To suggest that bands like The Clash, X-Ray Specs and the Tom Robinson Band were merely tools of capital aiming to implant a philosophy of 'pessimism' and 'nihilism' in young people is a gross insult. That punk and reggae were the moving forces behind Rock Against Racism, Rock Against Sexism, and the musical element of the Anti-Nazi League is unimportant it seems according to Kryzl.

But Kryzl had no real interest in the finer details of Western punk. That particular distortion was but a spring board to facilitate his attack on Czech new wave. Before launching into that, he explained how punk and new wave first arrived in CSSR:

'It is no coincidence that so-called punk

and new wave has been disseminated in our republic by Western radio stations and other means ... The aim being pursued by foreign intelligence agencies is twofold: firstly to introduce our young people to this musical trash, and secondly to then form bands here, suggesting that this is merely a part of a new "wave" sweeping the world. These bands are meant to produce music which is antithetical to all aesthetic and moral norms.'

Having explained the role of the CIA, MI5 and BND in the affair (although I must confess, I have never heard any punk on Voice of America, Radio Free Europe or the BBC Czech service), Kryzl continues by swiping at all those officials who have been responsible for organising and promoting punk concerts. He mentions three particular venues in Prague — the poor bureaucrats working there must have felt shivers down their spine on reading the article. This part of the onslaught was to have far-reaching consequences, as we shall see.

Kryzl rounds off his article by fulminating at the vulgarity of punk lyrics which are 'ambiguous'. To substantiate his claims he quotes from Jasna Paka: 'Baby, Baby, Give me a Cadillac' and Letadlo: 'Hippy, Hippy, Shake'. These phrases are virtually meaningless in English, in Czech they are entirely so. His greatest wrath is reserved for the group Bronz: 'Our Master is King, His name is Heroin'. This could have had some validity were it not for the fact that Bronz is not a punk band and the quote comes from a rock opera which was played with full official approval in Prague as it was considered to be a serious piece of social comment.

After describing punk songs as the product of 'a demented mind' demonstrating 'profound unculture' and being 'obscene', he finishes by referring to the music as 'scum' and 'trash', leaving the reader the impression of having read the work of a manic paranoid. Unfortunately manic paranoids who write long articles in *Tribuna* wield considerable influence, and since the article appeared most of the important punk bands have suffered a complete ban on all activity. Those inexperienced or lax apparatchiki responsible for organising punk concerts have been given severe warnings and their prospects for climbing the greasy pole to career success in the Party hierarchy have suffered a setback. Punks have swelled the bulging ranks of Public Enemy No. 1 in CSSR.

Unlike on other similar occasions, however, the punks have not had to rely exclusively on benevolent members of Charter 77 (who do not always have their finger on the street-level pulse) to spring to their defence. Two sections of the official Union of Musicians (the Jazz and Youth Sections) have somehow been able to provide in recent years a spirited independent voice, squeaking within the very machine of the Establishment itself. In May of this year the Jazz Section produced a reply to Kryzl's article in *Tribuna*. This remarkable essay, *Rock on the Left Wing*, is quite simply the most daring and outspoken piece to have been published officially in several years. True,

its circulation was restricted to members of the Jazz section, but strikes at the very heart of press distortion in CSSR. It is a long essay which exposes Kryzl's lies and inaccuracies in detail. He broadens his critique in the last section of the essay:

It is no secret that for a long number of years violence and civil disturbance have been on the increase in our society. In the seventies we experienced an unprecedented wave of vandalism. This was associated with a broad range of cultural and above all sporting activities. Such occurrences always perform the same function, be it during a football match or a rock concert — individuals with destructive streaks get together in groups which gives them an increased sense of strength. That is how it has been for 20 years, whether Sparta wins or loses, or whether it is a concert of rock 'n' roll, hard rock or punk.

If these tendencies are more numerous than ever before, we can hardly just put it down to rock concerts ... instead we must ask, who has been responsible for working with young people in recent years, above all those involved in unskilled or semi-skilled labour. Who is it who has prepared them for such a life? Whoever it is we are now harvesting the fruits they planted — smashed grave stones, busted telephone receivers and people mugged at night.

To shift the responsibility away from those who have carried out their work with young people neglectfully, and of course a whole ministerial apparatus takes part in that, onto a few rock groups, whose aesthetic ideas you do not begin to understand, leads quite understandably to further "witch-hunts" in popular music. The punks are suffering the same fate as Merta, Misik and Katapult (1) ... It is a shame that on this occasion the music under attack is one in which a tendency towards natural social and political commitment dominates. A rock music which sits very firmly on the left wing.

*But alright, there won't be any more dangerous types popping up at new wave rock concerts. But they will meet up somewhere else and vandalised telephone boxes will not become a thing of the past ... This will not only interrupt the continuity of musical development, above all it will engender a hatred towards those who have deprived the youth of their music; it will engender mistrust towards the cultural policies of the Party; it will contribute to a further distortion of the moral profile of our society. By choosing *Tribuna* as a platform for your bileous assault, the public will associate your ideas with the ideology of the KSC.*

And now we approach the final point of our polemic. Who does all this help? Who is likely to gain most from your articles, cdes Kryzl and Bakesova?

Every young citizen has had a number of opportunities to leave this country in recent years. Those who were unable to live here because of their Weltanschauung or because of their desire for a greater choice of cheese or gramophone records have gone. All well and good. Those who have remained (and there are tens of thousands of us) have done so because they are concerned about the fate

of our country. Are we supposed to spend the remaining forty or fifty years of our lives in institutionalised fear that tomorrow or the day after tomorrow some other Jan Kryzl is going to come along with another preposterous and uninformed article with which he exploits the respect of one of the Party's main ideological organs, in order to liquidate the work of many people and many years. Can we afford such a luxury in this country of fifteen million people? And will we cowards accept for much longer such damage to the interests of our culture, or will we at last say enough is enough?

We are well aware what influence popular music has on young people. But the young fan is not just interested in the songs. S/he is equally as interested in what is written and talked about on the music scene. How can s/he then reconcile her/himself with the fact that the most weighty journals in Czechoslovakia print such a collection of obvious lies as was to be found in your articles?

Your claim which you substantiated with such difficulty that this is all the responsibility of foreign intelligence agencies — do not fool yourselves, that was your responsibility. With your articles in *Tribuna* and *Rude Pravo* you have nurtured a hatred and mistrust among thousands of young people. At the same time this mistrust is not directed towards you alone, but towards the mass media which prints your untruths, and also towards the KSC, whose reputation you have seriously damaged by publishing your pieces in their main journals.

You have ruined a part of many years' work afforded by the Party. And for this reason, cdes Bakesova and Kryzl, we accuse you of having damaged the interests of the Party in one of the most sensitive areas of its work — among young people.

Who stands to gain?

You can answer that one yourselves.

Josef Vlcek

Prague, 18/04/83

This article was by no means the sole expression of protest in the wake of the Kryzl and Bakesova articles, but it was certainly the most thorough, audacious and articulate. That the Jazz Section decided to print it is a measure of how widespread disgust at the treatment of the punks is, as the piece was prompted by many letters which poured into the office of the Jazz Section after the publication of the Kryzl article.

After this biting riposte to the Kryzl article and the decision to ban punk musicians, young people in the CSSR were wondering how the cultural bureaucracy would develop its policy towards rock culture. When the answer to this came, it was brutal.

A festival of rock had been planned for 11 June 1983 to take place in a village called Zabcice a few miles from the Moravian capital of Brno. Over a thousand young Czechoslovaks from all over the country gathered there that morning only to be curtly informed by the local police that the concert had been cancelled and that they were all to return home. The majority had to make their way via Brno and many of those had to wait for train and bus connections.

Photos: Palach Press



About four to five hundred spent the afternoon in the park next to a restaurant named with cruel irony *Na strelnici* (The Shooting Range). The atmosphere was relaxed and pleasant, people played football, sang songs, or just chatted in groups. Beer was consumed but no incidents of drunkenness were reported. None of the locals or restaurant staff had any complaints to make about the behaviour of the young people.

At about six o'clock five police cars drew up and the officers began checking ID cards and ordering everyone to leave the park. One person who asked why they should was immediately arrested. Aroused, the young people began chanting, 'We want peace, we want freedom!'. Upon this police reinforcements (which had been lying in waiting) arrived in Black Marias and buses. With truncheons drawn and with the aid of unmuzzled dogs and tear gas, they began to disperse the crowd. Injuries were sustained (dog bites and truncheon blows) by several of the defenceless and peaceful crowd. Chaos ensued with people being dragged by their hair into the police buses despite having done nothing provocative. Those who

were taken off and held in police custody were separated from their friends and personal belongings and denied all legal rights.

Eventually twenty-six people, almost all between the ages of 18 and 22, were charged with one or more of the following: rioting in a public place, preventing a police officer from carrying out his duty; and assaulting a police officer, either physically or verbally. They were all held in custody for just under three months, and one was transferred into a penal mental hospital. On 28 September the sentences were handed down. Three were acquitted; eighteen were given suspended sentences; whilst Stanislav Benes and Jiri Zboril received 10 and 6 months respectively in 1st Penal Category Prisons; and Petr Geffert and Jiri Panacek received 20 and 9 months in 2nd Penal Cat. Prisons. The evidence offered by police lacked consistency at all times, and by no normal standards of justice could it have been said that the cases against these people had been proved. They had been sentenced effectively for exercising their right of being in a public place on an early summer's evening.

This event has been greeted with horror

throughout the country. A number of samizdat publications detailing it have been produced, emanating clearly from individuals who have never been part of any organised opposition in the CSSR.

The incident in Brno is one of several that have occurred this year involving young people. There was a spontaneous demonstration in Prague during the World Peace Congress made up chiefly of young working-class Czechs. There are unconfirmed reports that a demonstration of four to five hundred people took place in Pisek on the anniversary of the Soviet invasion. These are the first spontaneous demonstrations to have taken place in the CSSR since 1969 and it seems that young people make up the bulk of the participants.

The CSSR is facing its most serious economic and political crisis since the advent of normalisation. Unlike in the past it appears that people are now less prepared to simply accept the brutal remedies offered by the regime to the social tensions which Party and Government have created. Unless they begin to take into account the interests and desires of the most volatile and idealistic social stratum, they may find themselves having to deal with more than they bargained for.

It has been obvious for a long time that the cultural bureaucracy does not understand rock music or even how significant a role it plays in the life of young Czechoslovaks. Events so far this year have proved that the regime is still set on a collision course with its young citizens. Margaret Thatcher was equally unresponsive to the needs of urban youth in the UK. After Toxteth and Brixton — what next? Let cdes Kryzl and Bakesova answer that one.

POLAND

Government in Quandary Over Trials of Solidarity Leaders and Advisers

By Oliver MacDonald

Despite repeated official announcements of their imminence, the trials of 7 top leaders of Solidarity and of 4 prominent advisers to the independent trade union have still not been scheduled.

All eleven people are charged with subversion and face sentences of up to ten years. All but one of the accused have been in detention since the declaration of martial law over two years ago in December 1981.

A trial of the seven Solidarity leaders would amount to a judicial prosecution of the union's entire record. Apart from Lech Walesa himself, they include the union's most prominent leaders, and are drawn from the regions where the movement was strongest: Andrzej Gwiazda was one of the main leaders of the August 1980 Gdansk strike and became Vice-President of Solidarity; Marian Jurczyk was the leader of the Szczecin strike in August 1980 and then President of Solidarity in the region; Andrzej Rozplochowski led the August strike in the huge Huta Katowice steel mill and became President of Solidarity in the Katowice region; Andrzej Palka was Vice-President in Lodz, Poland's second largest city;



Charter 77's annual change of spokespersons in Prague on New Year's Day. From the Right: last year's representatives Jan Kozlik, Marie Ruth Krizkova and Anna Marvanova hand over to: former journalist Jiri Ruml, former dancer Jana Sternova, and Catholic philosopher Vaclav Benda (with beard).

6 Years' Jail for supporting 'Solidarity'

On 22 December 1983, a young worker who had been accused of subverting the republic by distributing leaflets opposing the imposition of martial law in Poland, was jailed for 6 years in a strict regime labour camp. Because he has no relatives, he is likely to be denied any visits during his prison term and has been forbidden to maintain correspondence with a woman who was a close friend before his arrest.

The young Solidarity supporter, Jiri Wolf, has appealed against his sentence and his appeal should be heard in the next few weeks. He had been arrested early in 1982 after leaflets appeared in the industrial town of Kladno as well as in Prague condemning the suppression of Solidarity.

Wolf was also charged with 'endangering a State Secret' but it is not yet clear whether his 6-year sentence includes this alleged offence or whether he is still to be tried for it. The 'state secret' in question was a report he is supposed to have written about conditions in the Minkovice Labour Camp where he served an earlier three-year sentence. Since all prisons are semi-military establishments their internal affairs are classified as state secrets. Wolf is accused of having passed his report to the Austrian Embassy in Prague.

The text of the pro-Solidarity leaflets was issued in the name of the 'Revolutionary Action Group'. (A full translation was published in *Labour Focus* Vol.5 Nos. 5-6.)

Jan Rulewski was President in Bydgoszcz; Karol Modzelewski was President in Wroclaw and a major influence on Solidarity's national policy; and Seweryn Jaworski was Vice-President of Warsaw Solidarity — its President, Zbigniew Bujak is a leader of the Solidarity Underground. Three of the seven — Gwiazda, Jurczyk and Rulewski stood against Walesa at the Solidarity Congress in October 1981 and together gained 45% of the total vote. If they are put on trial and sentenced, the only result will be to rouse further bitterness from the working class.

The other four accused were very prominent intellectual leaders of the campaign for workers' rights and democratic freedoms before 1980 and went on to play important advisory roles within the union. They are Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Henryk Wujec and Zbigniew Romaszewski. They were leading figures in KOR (The Workers' Defence Committee), formed after the strikes in June 1976, and while advocating the unity of the democratic opposition and the Church, their own ideology was secular and, in Western terms, might be described as social-democratic. Despite their reputation for radicalism, Kuron and Michnik repeatedly sought to exert a restraining influence during the recurrent crises of the 16 months when Solidarity

was legal and popularised the idea of the movement being involved in a 'self-limiting revolution'.

When the four advisers were issued with an indictment in late October, official government sources indicated that their trial would be held soon unless they, and the Solidarity leaders, agreed to take up the government's offer of voluntary exile. But despite their unanimous rejection of exile, the trials have been indefinitely postponed.

Some observers now believe the authorities prefer indefinite detention to either the sentencing or the release of the eleven. The four former KOR leaders have been made into a symbol of 'counter-revolution' by the Soviet press and any dropping of the charges would not be popular in such quarters. The government is also hinting to Western diplomats that the release of the eleven would be used as a justification for its hard-line economic policy by the Reagan administration. (The implication of this would be, of course, that the ending of sanctions would make leniency towards the eleven easier for the government.) On the other hand, if the trials were to go ahead, there would be loud and widespread protests from the West and, very likely, within Poland itself. So it appears that the eleven may be held in detention without trial for some time to come.

Walesa Issues Programme Statement

(We publish below the text of a speech Lech Walesa had planned to deliver on 16 December 1983 at the Gdansk monument for the workers killed by security forces in 1970. It is the most comprehensive political statement Walesa has issued since Solidarity's suppression. It is notable both for his acceptance of the 'leading role of the Party', and for his affirmation of the need for 'Christian ideals', parliamentarism and 'competition between enterprises'. Apart from some introductory remarks we publish the full text, as supplied by the Information Centre for Polish Affairs.)

At this difficult time for our country, the following aspects must be taken into account so that we do not experience one crisis after another. It is surprising that those who govern our country have learned nothing and that after periods of relative liberalisation, they have now reverted back to the old methods of governing.

After 1980, the labour movement, as well as the intellectuals, the farmers, the artistic and the scientific communities became consolidated within the framework of the Solidarity movement. The authorities responded with the use of force and violence.

The past two years have demonstrated the authorities' capacity to destroy all independent associations and, in contrast, their inability for constructive action. Not a single socio-political problem has been resolved. There have been no improvements in the economy. In politics, only the names have changed. And all of this is taking place in the name of the reconstruction of socialism. The fundamental question is the following: can socialism be built without the workers and against them?

Today, the free trade union movement and all independent movements are being strangled. This is not to say that Solidarity has abandoned its ideals. They must be recalled:

- We cannot relinquish the notion of solidarity between all persons, between all those who struggle for freedom and human rights.

- We were proud of the fact that there were no victims during our mass demonstrations.

- We were inspired by christian ideals; we remain faithful to the labour movement's traditions which call for social justice, equality and the abolition of group privileges.

- The highest good is that of the nation and faithfulness to national ideals is our duty. We believe the State to be an organisation which serves the good of the nation and not an instrument in the hands of privileged groups, serving their own interests.

First, I would like to speak of the problems of public life. The point of departure for our country's rebirth must be the social accords of August 1980, a great constitution of the workers. These accords embody the essential elements of renewal. Monopolies in the social and economic spheres are blocking our existence, they are causing the poor functioning of the state administration.

The accords of August 1980 were based on realistic principles. They respected the leading role of the Party and of the State, linked to a broader international political system which cannot be modified given the State's interests. However, the social agreements brought respect for the principle of pluralism in workers' representations. This gave an important weapon to the workers. But the Party refused to accept this — it defended its interests. It was decided that its monopoly over the labour movement would be re-established by force. The results are visible to the naked eye, and everyone knows that the re-establishment of trade union pluralism is the most important problem facing our socio-political system.

We cannot agree to the political monopoly of each governing group. Too often have we had to deal with mistakes and deviations. A system of controls must be established. Under normal conditions, the control mechanism would be assured by the parliamentary system. It is not my role to draw up legislation although a national agreement should lead to a resolution of this problem.

The socio-economic monopoly precludes the implementation of an economic reform. I cannot imagine the economy functioning efficiently without three conditions: separating the administration of the economy from the State and political administration; the establishment of strong, independent social organisations and trade unions to counterbalance the administration; and finally, competition between enterprises. With respect to trade unions, we cannot relinquish the August Agreements. Indeed, it is a political

manoeuvre to claim that they have been implemented. It was not the government but the striking workers who won the right to form their free and independent trade unions and they will therefore formulate their programmes of action.

However, the authorities prevented us from doing this, in violation of the August 1980 Agreements and of the international conventions, just like the 19th century capitalists did. Trade unions are a social force in all developed countries. Solidarity represents an opportunity for the rebirth of our country. Without it, we face many years of political stagnation. We are not guilt-free. However, Solidarity never sought to monopolise trade union activities. We need the branch and autonomous unions (previously official — now banned) as competition, as a means of control. Agreement with them is still possible. Concrete evidence of this is our joint appeal for trade union pluralism, addressed to the Sejm on 6 May.

Those who join the new trade union today, must answer the following questions: do they have the right to belong to monopolistic unions without giving other unions the right to speak out? Do they have the right to benefit from privileges at the expense of their colleagues? Do they have the right to break the front of workers' solidarity? On this occasion, I would like to express my thanks and my admiration to all of those who remained faithful to the ideals of Solidarity, in liberty and in prison.

Workers' self-government is a complex problem. There are enterprises where self-government functions well and fights for workers' rights; but there are those where workers allow themselves to be manipulated. There are also many enterprises where workers, devoid of hope, do not want to have self-government at all. However, self-government must have a place in every reformed political system. The workers themselves must decide whether conditions in their enterprises permit the creation of self-government bodies. We all realise that the fate of our families and of all Poland depends on our work. Our movement always favoured good work. We interrupted work only to ensure that it would be honest and good, and so that its effects would not be destroyed.

Resolution of social conflict and an independent judiciary. Experience shows that it is not possible to avert difficult conflicts when the system of power protects its monopoly. If the independence of certain groups is not respected by the authorities, no one can play the role of mediator or arbitrator, a role which must be played by the judges. Experience shows that judges are rarely allowed to take on this role, and those who have shown courage have been the victims of repression. We must demand an independent judiciary as well as honest judges, with authority and with legislative guarantees.

When there was insufficient convincing proof to convict our eleven colleagues, whose trials were announced with great fanfare, the government proposed a 'humanitarian' gesture — voluntary banishment — by-passing the courts and the law. We, whom the authorities are trying to place outside the law, must demand respect for the law — even though its hand of iron is aimed at us. The law must mean justice. And for this reason we will demand all possible forms of control over the judiciary and the police.

For an honest dialogue to take place all sides must have the right of equal access to the media. The sovereignty of citizens is the State's guarantee. The monument commemorating December 1970 is neither a symbol of vengeance nor of hatred, but rather an agreement between the rulers and the ruled. The whole of the Solidarity movement always struggled peacefully in favour of human rights in Poland. We remain faithful to dialogue and to agreement and that is the reason why the Nobel Prize, which was awarded to me, was, I believe, awarded to Solidarity. And I am therefore entitled to say: fellow Poles, friends, colleagues, I congratulate you for the Nobel Peace Prize.

These are difficult times. Nobody has ready-made solutions for the future. We must live honestly, link courage with balance and remain faithful to our ideals. In other words, we must maintain our solidarity.

In 1984, the fate of Solidarity will depend on the elaboration of four chapters: State and Party administration; self-government; trade unions; and the judiciary system. For the time being, we can only work on small programmes, each one suited to the moment. At the appropriate time, I will speak out in greater detail. I would like the other topics to be better prepared, for myself and for all of us, for a peaceful victory of Solidarity, based not on a takeover of power, nor on a battle with the authorities, but rather on the choice of the best programme. For, better preparation and better training will mean an easier victory.

Self-Management without Solidarity

By David Holland

'Self-management' has remained important since December 1981 as a component both of the government's ideology and pacification strategy and also as a programmatic idea of the opposition.

The authorities have continued to proclaim the need for economic reform based on the 'three S's' — enterprise autonomy, self-financing and self-management. At the same time, the official press regularly ridicules Solidarity's 1981 reform and self-management proposals — still maintained by the Underground — as a farrago of utopianism, a 'people's capitalism' screening ambitions to overthrow socialism via 'group ownership'.¹

By contrast, the authorities claim that the 1981 Ninth Congress learnt from the August 1980 strikes and put forward an authentic reform programme. Only Solidarity's wrecking activities delayed implementation of this plan by requiring the temporary introduction of martial law.

Suspension of the full prerogatives of workers' self-management, as defined in the law hammered out in cliff-hanging negotiations with Solidarity in September 1981, has always been described as a strictly temporary measure. In May 1982 for example the Politburo report to the Central Committee plenum stressed the:

'fundamental significance of renewing the activities of workers' self-management, even in the period of the state of war'.²

This position was maintained in the regulations governing the period of 'suspended' martial law issued on 18 December 1982. These envisaged the reactivation of self-management organs by April 1983.

This official enthusiasm was, however, hedged around with significant legal restrictions and was translated into practise with great caution. The right of workers to appoint and dismiss enterprise directors was suspended, even in those plants not included in the farcically long list of 1400 enterprises deemed to be of 'prime importance to the national economy', and so excepted from this provision of the 1981 legislation. The immunity of self-management activists from being sacked whilst in office was likewise suspended. Moreover the government reserved the right to suspend entire self-management bodies in the event of them acting contrary to the law, or to 'fundamental social interests'. In July 1983, with the formal ending of martial law, these reservations were extended until 1985.

The discrepancy between official rhetoric on self-management and reality should not be seen solely as a phenomenon of mendacious propaganda. There is, of course, a propagandistic aspect to official claims, which aim to satisfy foreign observers of the constructive intentions of the regime and to fudge and confuse the lines dividing it from the domestic opposition, by appropriating its aspirations and

implementing them in a highly controlled form calculated to bolster the existing political order, rather than threaten it.

More fundamentally, however, the contradictions of official policy are a reflection of the continuing acute political weakness of the Polish authorities and their need to widen the base of social co-operation on which the regime rests. Control of the army and the Zomo may be enough to smash a rival for power, but it is not enough to govern a society on a long-term basis. The postponement of the price rises scheduled for January 1984 is testament to the caution with which the regime continues to tread.

Nor are the promises of economic reform to be dismissed as mere hypocrisy. Few deny the need for reform. Moreover the improvement in economic performance claimed for the first months of 1983, has slowed as the artificially low base figures for comparison in the first months of the state of war in 1982 give way to more 'normal' conditions. It is hard for anyone to believe that the Polish economy will find a route out of the crisis without fundamental systemic reform.

The regime is caught in a trap of its own making. Such support as it retains in Polish society stems mainly from precisely that narrow stratum of economic managers and ministry bureaucrats whose interests would be most directly affected by a genuinely decentralising reform. Whilst the regime needs co-operation in the enterprises to get the economy moving, especially if it is to be on decentralised lines, it is constrained by the need to keep a tight political rein on developments and by the vested interests of its supporters. The oft-repeated criticisms of the followers of 'absolute monarchy' in the enterprises and the puffing of very limited gains in establishing self-management structures are therefore as much an expression of the agonising contradictions confronting the regime as cynical propaganda.

The re-activation of self-management structures poses the opposition with problems as well as opportunities. Whilst the Underground continues to uphold the conception of a thorough-going democratisation of social and economic life, embodied in the goal of a 'Self-Managing Republic', a lively debate has opened as to the best response to the initiatives of the authorities in this area. This has been accompanied by a sardonic running commentary on the antics of the authorities in scrambling for fig leaves of credibility and legitimacy.

An early and persistent response to the self-management initiatives of the regime has been suspicion and outright rejection, coupled with calls for a boycott. This is most clearly expressed in the Underground Solidarity leadership's statement on the reactivation of self-management structures issued in August 1982:

'Self-management under the state of war only creates an illusory possibility of

authentic collective activity. In reality what is happening here is a repeat of the KSR manoeuvre in 1958.'³

The statement goes on to argue that self-management structures assist the authorities in implementing unpopular measures, create the illusion of social consultation; facilitate the shifting of responsibility for the disastrous economic situation; widen the circle of people collaborating with the authorities, so bolstering the nomenklatura and engaging society in a wholly imaginary reform. It concludes that:

'Workers Councils, elected before December 1981, should undertake new activity only if endorsed by a referendum of the workforce.'

This sceptical attitude was reflected in a multitude of articles in the Underground press in mid-1982. It was widely and correctly observed that talk of enterprise autonomy was nonsense in conditions of chronically scarce raw materials. The Bialystok region group of 'The Network' (the organisation originally responsible for the Solidarity self-management model) pointed out in its publication 'Our Self-Management' in August 1982 that under the 'reform' the administrative centre had in fact strengthened its position with unprecedented rapidity. The inevitable centralisation of resource allocation decisions in the prevailing crisis conditions had produced an 'Eldorado of the centre'. The new industrial 'associations' (zrzeszenie) were almost invariably the old 'unions' (zjednoczenie) under a new name, with the old Director or his Deputy in charge.

'Only the names recall what we struggled for,' concluded the Network group.

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

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

This move produced significant support. *Kronika Malopolska* argued in February 1983 that the self-management structures provided a front of struggle, especially for

the majority of workers unable to take part in clandestine activity. A firm decision was needed on a plant-wide basis to exchange a policy of boycott for one of combative participation. Boycott abandoned the field without a struggle. A range of positive measures were suggested. Activists could attempt to set up legal self-management papers and use the plant public address system; publicly question decisions of management and government; refuse to participate in matters decided without consultation, or in propaganda offensives such as the 'battle with the spectators'; organise referenda on important questions and torpedo attempts by the authorities to manipulate self-management structures to legitimise their own decisions. All possibilities for strengthening the links between the workers in an enterprise and between different enterprises should be utilised.

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

This positive and combative approach was reflected elsewhere in the Underground press. *Robotnik* argued in February that the tendency of Solidarity militants to view entry into the self-management structures as tantamount to collaboration should be resisted. Self-management should not be equated with the Junta's tame trade unions, or the 'Front for National Reconciliation', since it was a democratic conception properly belonging to the rank and file. Whilst economic reform was reducing itself to a matter of pricing policy and enterprise autonomy remained a fiction, self-management could not have any real impact on enterprise performance. It might, however, be possible to use it as an instrument for defending workers' interests, in pressing for improvements in wages and bonus levels. This possibility was of particular importance to Solidarity, since if it was to retain any influence it would have to be seen to be active in defending the daily material and social interests of the population.

Other papers produced in Warsaw and Lublin printed forceful arguments for 'going into' the self-management structures. These reflected both discussions amongst factory activists and the opinion of an anonymous former member of the Solidarity National Co-ordinating Committee.⁴ Essentially these arguments flowed from the limitations of clandestine activity. A boycott is a policy that is invisible and also conducive to apathy. Any space for legal public activity should be exploited as a school for activists to gain experience, as well as trust and authority in their environ-

ment. It was further argued that any chance that did exist of the economic reform having any impact and so benefiting the population would be nullified if the workers' councils were allowed to become a hollow facade.

There are indications that other sections of Polish society, apart from the government and the Underground, also continue to regard the question of self-management as an important issue. However pervasive realistic pessimism may be as to the prospects of a constructive outcome, the workers' councils are one of the very few remaining areas of possible movement in the stalemated social and political situation.

The Polish Episcopate, for example, issued a formal protest at the restrictions imposed on the reactivation of self-management bodies in the 18 December regulations. The restrictions were strongly criticised as tending to reduce self-management to 'a purely decorative role'.⁵

Also, on the 26th of April 1983 a group of thirty-six intellectuals, including 21 twenty-one economists, issued a letter to the Sejm, strongly critical of government backtracking on self-management and repression against workplace activists, flying in the face of the regime's stated policy. The appeal called for the removal of restrictions and repression and a return to the spirit and letter of the 1981 legislation as the only way of securing the co-operation needed from productive workers to restore the economy.⁶

Underground bulletins, some of which display a noticeable flavour of the factory floor, indicate however that the debate amongst Solidarity supporters about the desirability of participation in self-managements is far from resolved. Bulletins from the early months of 1983 continue to voice calls for boycott and reflect an intense scepticism amongst worker activists about the value of the positive approach advocated by some leading Underground circles.

'From the Life of the Pseudo Self-Management', a broadsheet from the Warsaw shipyards, pours scorn upon the efforts of those canvassing for the reactivation of self-management. It describes ill-attended departmental meetings, with half those present drawn from managerial layers and the reluctance of all but a handful of workers to have anything to do with such activity.

The Underground paper *Hutnik*, based in the Lenin steel works at Krakow, reported in March the procedures of intimidation and manipulation attending the organisation of the preliminary Electoral Commission to supervise the election of a new workers' council. Those drawn into these activities were characterised as layabouts and management narks.

In June a letter from the Metallurgical combine of the Lenin Steel Works describes the following stage of electing a new workers' council: 'These elections were of a type not encountered even in the countries of "real socialism"! They took place practically without electors. But the "miracle of the urn" familiar in Poland, took place, so that the press could triumphantly announce

that the steel workers had elected a self-management.'

Sektor from Wroclaw reiterated calls for a boycott in February. *Tygodnik Wojenny* in May reported the manoeuvres of management in one plant to set up a tame self-management body via its collaborators, prefaced by the establishment of a nominated 'advisory council'.

'All those people with a minimum of authority amongst the workforce and the greater part of the workers themselves had refused to take part in the work of appointing a facade of self-management.'⁷

Against this background it would obviously be quite wrong to be at all optimistic about the future prospects of any authentic self-management developing in Poland. Solidarity supporters of self-management in 1980-81 drew the lesson from the failure of workers' councils following the Polish October of 1956, that an indispensable condition of the success of such institutions was the existence of nationally organised independent representation for the workers, as embodied in Solidarity. The Underground will doubtless be right to exploit any and all opportunities for public activity and legal contact with its constituency, the mass of ordinary workers. It is unlikely though to score any spectacular successes — and in any case its activity is directed towards utilising self-managements as substitute trade unions, rather than fulfilling their proper functions (according to whatever conception).

If, as some maintain, the Polish workers' movement is now at the 1957 or 1971 point in the vicious cycle of crisis that appears to grip Polish political and economic life, then it will be some years before the mass movement gathers its strength for a fresh assault. The ideas of democratic control of economic life expressed in the chequered history of workers' self-management in Poland are, however, sufficiently firmly rooted to ensure that they will come to the fore in any future phase of upheaval and social experimentation in Poland.

December 1983

Notes

1. C.f. *Nowe Drogi* I/1983, 'Koncepcje opozycji antysocjalistycznej w Polsce', by Margorzata Dabrowa Szefer and Henryk Patadzewski. 'Gospodarka w Siecie' by Henryk Zawira, *Glos Robotniczy*, 15 March 1982. 'Zwiazki Zawodowe i Samorzadnosc', *Polityka* 25 June 1983.
2. *Zycie Warszawy* 5 June 1982.
3. TKK Statement on the Reaction of Self-Managements. *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, Paris, 25 August 1982. KSR = Conference of Workers Self Management. The 'reformed' system, incorporating nominees of Youth, Official Trade Union and Party organisations that replaced the workers councils of 1956 in most of their functions in 1988.
4. *Wiadomosci* no. 53, 26 January 1983, Solidarnosc Region Mazowsze. *Informator* no. 55, 4 March 1983, Region Srodkow-Wschodni, Lublin.
5. Text quoted from *Hutnik*, 9 February 1983, Krakow.
6. *Uncensored Polish News Bulletin*, 17 June 1983, London, No. 12/83.
7. *Sektor* No. 18, 25 February 1983, Wroclaw. *Tygodnik Wojenny* No. 59, 19 June 1983.

Hard Times Ahead for Peace Movement

By Günter Minnerup

1983 has been the year of the protestant church in the German Democratic Republic. The 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther provided the occasion for an unprecedented public celebration of the 'partnership' between state and church, culminating in the state-sponsored festivities of early November. But it was also the year in which the further spread of independent peace activities raised the possibility of a sharp deterioration in state-church relations for 1984.

The crucial turning point was reached at the height of the Luther commemorations. On 24 October the official East German news agency ADN announced that preparations had begun for the deployment of 'operative-tactical missile complexes' on the territory of the GDR in response to the imminent arrival of Cruise and Pershing II in Western Europe. The arrival of the first batch of new NATO missiles in Britain and, after a parliamentary vote on 20 November, in West Germany led to the walk-out of the Soviet delegation from the Geneva INF negotiations. With Martin Luther's birthday out of the way and the international spotlight off the East German protestant church, fears were immediately voiced in church circles that the downturn in East-West relations would precipitate a general crackdown on the independent peace movement and its allies in the protestant clergy. The brutal tactics of the police during the arrest of about forty young people holding a candle-light demonstration outside an international film festival in Leipzig on 18 November appeared to be a foretaste of worse to come.

1984 is certainly going to be a difficult year for East German peace campaigners. But in addition to the voices of gloom there are also those who optimistically predict that the appearance, for the first time, of Soviet nuclear missiles on East German soil will provide the peace movement with the kind of focus which the Western peace movements have in Cruise and Pershing, and see it reach new heights of activity and mass impact. Both the excessively pessimistic and the excessively optimistic view, however, are unlikely to prove correct.

The events of 1983 offer certain clues to the dynamic of the situation. First of all, the East German peace movement is by no means simply a church-organised movement. While it had its origins in the church-inspired protests against the introduction of compulsory military education in the GDR's schools in 1978 (and, further back, the granting of the right to serve in unarmed 'construction brigades' for religiously-motivated conscripts in 1964), and while the church still provides the moral and organisa-

tional backbone to most peace groups, other factors are of at least equal importance.

The 1970s have seen the emergence of a broad minority current among the youth of the GDR which is becoming increasingly disaffected with the boredom and regimentation of daily life under the bureaucratic regime, giving rise to an 'alternative youth scene' in many East German cities with its own informal network of contacts, meeting places and events. Much of this is influenced by the Western media (West German television and radio can be received in most of the GDR) and centres around rock music and non-conformist cultural pursuits, but within this milieu more political themes are also being raised. The fear of nuclear war, amplified by the climate of renewed Cold War and the growing militarisation of East German life (military preparation in schools and apprenticeships, frequent civil defence exercises), is one such theme. The pollution and destruction of the natural environment by industrial effluents and large-scale construction projects is another one. Motivated by such concerns, and inspired by the West German peace and ecology movements, many young East Germans have formed discussion and action groups whose attitude to the protestant church is largely pragmatic. Not religion as such, but the status of the church as the only independent institution, and the open informality of its structures, attract them towards it. Where, as in Jena, the church hierarchy is more conservative and has shown reluctance to harbour such activities out of concern for its relationship with the state authorities, these young activists have set up their own structures.

Even a total change of attitude by the protestant church away from its cautious endorsement of non-conformist youth groups in response to growing pressures from the state would therefore be unlikely to be able to turn back the clock. The cost of such a turn to the church itself would, in any case, be very high: it is precisely this openness of its structures to 'unofficial' interests and activities which provides it with some living roots in an otherwise not very religious generation. To close its doors would mean to risk an accelerating decline of its social role and influence. Knowing this, the younger generation of protestant clergymen is determined to resist such a self-restriction to a purely pastoral and charitable role.

It would be possible, of course, for the state to forcibly break the resistance of this current in the church and to drive the 'alternative youth scene' even further underground. But such a heavy-handed clampdown, involving a systematic purge of the clergy and hundreds, even thousands of arrests and trials, would be an enormously costly operation for the state in political

terms. It would ruin its image in the West and thus endanger future deals with the Federal Republic, and it would further alienate it from East German society. The signs are that neither Honecker nor Andropov are willing to pay this price — at least not yet.

Despite all the expulsions and arrests that periodically marked the rise of the East German peace movement since 1981, the level of official tolerance for non-conformist activities remains relatively high provided that these do not overstep a certain mark and threaten to develop into a public opposition — as the Jena Peace Community did (in the eyes of the SED). The much-publicised appearance of West German rock singer Udo Lindenberg at a peace rally of the official Free German Youth in the East Berlin 'Palace of the Republic', and the promise of a concert tour for him in 1984 — despite his impertinent, and hugely popular, 'Cognac for Honecker' song (see last issue of LFEE) — signal the readiness of the leadership to appease East German youth and project an image of benevolent tolerance, rather than an intention to launch a crusade for cultural orthodoxy. Honecker's meetings with leaders of the West German Green Party, and the general emphasis on limiting the damage to intra-German relations arising out of the breakdown of US-Soviet negotiations, point in the same direction.

It is unlikely that this general line will change very much in the immediate future. Both Moscow's foreign policy interests and the GDR's economic interests militate against such a turn. The maintenance of relatively good relations with West Germany remains a vital priority for the Soviet Union precisely because of the collapse of detente with Washington, and intra-German relations are the key to this. Honecker is therefore given licence to play the 'German card' for all it is worth, and this in turn limits his scope for unleashing a wave of domestic repression — especially if this were to be directed against the protestant church with its strong Western links. In addition, the GDR plays a crucial role economically: alone among the East European COMECON states, it has been able to maintain relatively high growth rates, and is the main source of high-technology production equipment within the 'socialist camp'.

A breakdown in intra-German relations would seriously affect an East German economy that relies to a large extent on its privileged relationship with the Federal Republic (and is therefore relatively immune to Reaganite boycotts of COMECON). Its estimated foreign debt of \$12 billion — higher, on a *per capita* basis, than that of Poland at the outbreak of the Polish crisis! — can only be serviced with the aid of deals such as the \$1 billion credit arranged

through Franz-Josef Strauss this summer, and a default by the GDR would not only throw it into deep domestic turmoil if the imports sustaining its high standard of living were to be drastically curtailed, but would reverberate throughout COMECON.

It is necessary to assess the prospects for the East German peace movement in this broad context because it defines the room for manoeuvre at the disposal of the SED regime. The clear implication is that a really comprehensive crackdown is unlikely unless forced by some generalised domestic rebellion or a very dramatic international crisis. Honecker will probably continue his 'carrot and stick' tactics of recent years, combining relative tolerance with the imposition of tight controls on the more dynamic outgrowths of the 'alternative' milieu and regular 'decapitation' exercises through arrests and expulsions of individuals.

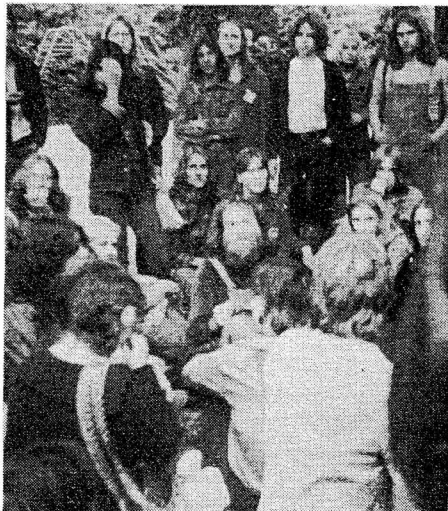
It is equally unlikely, however, that the East German peace movement will suddenly develop into the kind of political mass force represented by the Western movements. If the East German peace movement is today the most active and broad-based of such independent movements in Eastern Europe, it is nevertheless one whose character and in-built limitations must be clearly understood. It bears little resemblance, for instance, to the anti-missile coalitions of the West, lacking both their political structure and their clear focus on the reversal of the deployment decision. Even the arrival of Soviet missiles on East German soil will not fundamentally alter this, as these will be largely out of sight and provide little scope for direct confrontation with the nuclear issue (quite apart from the taboo that still hangs over any open discussion of the Soviet presence in the GDR, and the widespread feeling that the Soviets are simply responding to NATO's provocation).

The East German peace movement is not principally a political movement to challenge the strategic decisions taken by either NATO or the Warsaw Pact (although such a challenge is, of course, implicit in its activities), but more of an informal network of young pacifists, draft-resisters, Christians, cultural non-conformists, ecologists, feminists, and dissident socialists whose main common denominator is the rejection of bureaucratic regimentation and the search for ways and means of freely articulating and discussing their hopes and fears. They are still, however, very much a small minority, to be counted in thousands, at best tens of thousands; but not in hundreds of thousands or in millions.

The GDR is not in a state of acute economic or political crisis, and the vast majority of East Germans, including the younger generation, remains passive and conformist.

Large events such as the Dresden Peace Forum in 1981 with over 5,000 and the East Berlin 'Peace Workshop' in June of 1983 with over 3,000 participants are only possible under the protective umbrella of the church. The church, however, would clearly not authorise any action against the presence of Soviet weapons. The appeal of its September Synod to the government to

do everything in its power to prevent the necessity of Soviet missile deployment in the GDR, and its suggestion that Moscow could take unilateral steps by beginning to scrap SS-20s before any INF agreement marks about the limit of how far it can go (the Synod also restated its opinion that the banning of the 'Swords into Ploughshares' symbol by the state had been a 'serious mistake').



Unofficial Peace meeting in Halle, Lothar Rochau, bearded, centre (see p.23 on his case).

The church takes care not to get involved in direct action or public demonstrations, which remain small token affairs carried out by a tiny minority of committed activists, who are generally well-known to the police as 'social misfits' and are frequently picked up for questioning. An attempt to form a human link between the US and Soviet embassies to coincide with the 22 October demonstrations in the West was nipped in the bud by police action, and hundreds of known peace activists rounded up to prevent them from handing in a petition to the two embassies in November (the petition was eventually delivered by East Berlin bishop Gottfried Forck, one of the more energetic promoters of the peace movement in the protestant church). Fifty supporters of the women's peace movement did, however, manage to carry out their protest against the introduction of female conscription: they returned their call-up for medical examination, one after the other, at the Post Office in Alexanderplatz, East Berlin's central square and tourist attraction, dressed in conspicuously dark colours.

A very important phenomenon is the increasing development of ecological protest to a point where in April 1983 the first GDR-wide meeting of ecology groups in Wittenberg attracted representatives from dozens of towns and cities. Very often, as in the West, the same layer of activists is involved; but because the issues are less openly 'political' and capable of attracting a lot of instant support in local communities, repressive action by the state is often uncertain and hesitant.

All over the GDR local groups have organised unofficial tree-planting initiatives to protest against the soulless concrete wastes of new building developments, and informal bicycle demonstrations have confused many a local authority. In the coastal

town of Schwerin, such bicycle demos were directed against the construction of a new motorway cutting through a popular local recreation area, and in the industrial city of Halle against the pollution of the atmosphere by the local *Buna* chemical works. In Halle, the church youth worker Lothar Rochau and the librarian Kathrin Eigenfeld were arrested. Rochau was sentenced, on 18 September, to three years' imprisonment for 'anti-state agitation', and Eigenfeld eventually released after an intervention on her behalf by leaders of the Green Party when they met Honecker.

The issue of repression is obviously a crucial one, and it raises tricky tactical questions for the East German peace movement as well as the question of the responsibilities of Western socialists and peace campaigners. The most effective deterrent at the disposal of the state is the exclusion from normal career prospects. This effectively isolates the activists from most others who may sympathise with their aims but are afraid of losing their job or rank. It also helps explain why university students are virtually absent from the 'alternative youth scene' and peace and ecology groups: they have so much more to lose compared with ordinary young workers.

The hard core of the peace groups is, in many places, largely composed of conscientious objectors who have served in the 'construction brigades' and former soldiers who were radicalised by the experience. While the annual average number of people serving in the construction brigades since 1964 has been around four to six hundred, the figure is reported to have reached a new peak of over a thousand in 1980. These *Bausoldaten* are marked for life in the personnel files of the nomenklatura, as is everybody else who becomes involved too closely in non-conformist activities and church groups, and have little prospect of ever getting above very lowly employment positions. This deters others, but also strengthens the activists' resolve as they have little more to lose. They can lose their liberty, of course, and be sentenced to imprisonment on any of the catch-all clauses in the GDR's penal code designed to cover dissident activities. But such arrests and trials are used relatively sparingly by the authorities as they create bad publicity through the Western media, and are usually reserved for those regarded as 'incorrigible ring leaders'. Many of those imprisoned on a sentence are, of course, eventually 'sold' to the West — giving rise to such comments as that of a Jena worker: 'If you want to go to the West, all you have to do is stand in the road with a placard in your hand' — a policy which effectively removes such undesirable elements from the East German scene, but also reduces somewhat the deterrent value of imprisonment.

The treatment meted out to the Jena Peace Community, the entire inner circle of which has now been expelled to the West after a lengthy history of arrests, releases, rearrests, and short imprisonments, is symptomatic of the dilemmas facing the peace groups everywhere in the GDR. There is a widespread feeling in East Berlin, for instance, that the Jena group 'went too far'

and thus brought the repression upon itself. The counter-argument is not only that they had little choice given the refusal of the local church to support and protect them, but that a peace movement rigidly respecting the official limits will become effectively 'ghettoised'. The issue, in a nutshell, is how to consolidate and extend the very limited and precarious space available for an independent peace movement in East Germany today without provoking a massive repressive reaction. The principal danger is not, at present the total extinction of the entire peace movement, but 'decapitation': the arrest and expulsion of the most dynamic activists with some political background (in Jena, especially, many of them saw themselves as socialists to the left of the SED and have expressed strong sympathy for the Polish

Solidarnosc) and organisational skill.

A lot will depend not only on the attitude of the church hierarchy and its willingness to risk some conflict with the state in order to defend the peace movement, but also on the solidarity shown by Western peace movements and socialists. They must establish the closest possible contact and collaboration with the East German activists through correspondence and — whenever possible — personal visits, and not hesitate to react to each and every case of protest, imprisonment and expulsion with loud and clear protests. Thus they may not be able to prevent repression in every instance, but to raise the political price that the regime has to pay for it — a consideration which, as past experience shows, does enter into its calculations.

Postscript: Much of the above assessment is based on interviews with exiled East German peace activists conducted during 1983 in West Berlin. Thanks are due in particular to Peter Rösch, Thomas Auerbach, and Jürgen Fuchs for their patient help, even though they may not fully share all the views expressed in the article. Readers of Labour Focus wishing to find out more about the origins and the development of the East German peace movement are strongly recommended to read John Sandford's The Sword and the Ploughshare. Autonomous Peace Initiatives in East Germany, published by Merlin Press/European Nuclear Disarmament in the series of END Special Reports, which also contains some important documents and a useful chronology of events.



Peace picket in Jena. Jahn carries placard (left) saying 'Swords into Ploughshares'

Unilateralism in the East

Interview with East German Activist

(The following interview with Roland Jahn of the Jena Peace Community was conducted by our West Berlin correspondent Traude Ratsch soon after Jahn's expulsion from the GDR in June 1983. The translation from the German is by Peter Thompson.)

What role does the demand for unilateral disarmament play for you in the GDR?

There are many different opinions on this. Personally I see it this way: disarmament must be bilateral but one should in certain circumstances set examples. One should take steps in order to make others follow

suit.

Would you promote that principle in the GDR despite your well-known position on NATO rearmament?

Yes. One must take steps that will set an example to others. However, that does not mean I demand unilateral disarmament. The whole numbers game around nuclear capabilities is senseless and therefore I do not think about the computations a great deal. Likewise, I find the talks in Geneva, if not exactly senseless, then at least fruitless. I find the idea of disarmament measures in-

dependent of the superpowers far more important and we must look for ways of achieving them. That is why communications between east and west and the individuals' refusal to cooperate in the mentality are so important.

Those in power in both east and west have absolutely no interest whatsoever in disarmament. One side makes its profits from the arms industry, and the other side needs militarism and armaments in order to preserve its power structures. Not power for power's sake in a psychological sense, but rather materially, as everything in the east is

built around the military system. The officers and those who hold responsible positions in the arms industry are well paid, and they do derive profit from it, albeit in a different form to the capitalist, ie. from their position on the hierarchical ladder. The officer, the general who carries the golden sword and who has a good life whilst doing so is not going to be the one who demands to be put to the plough and be made to sweat. That is why he defends himself against the slogan 'swords into ploughshares'.

For these reasons the peace movement from below must continue to mobilise. People must refuse to cooperate. In other, very simple, words: if no one produces any rockets then none will exist. And who constructs the rockets? The workers. That is where one should be active and that is where the demand for unilateral disarmament is a cogent one. Begin unilaterally with yourself by refusing to do your national service, or refusing to produce war toys, by beginning with an education for peace with very simple things.

But the essence of my previous question was whether you would want to demand unilateral steps towards disarmament by the GDR?

One must decide what the possibilities are. If real steps were now to be taken in the eastern bloc, that showed a real desire for peace, and by their nature they would need to be very risky steps, that would then make any justification for the deployment of missiles in Western Europe much more difficult.

More and more people would then declare themselves to be against the deployment and demands for things like referendums would eventually have to be met. I am simply demanding that the desire for peace of the eastern bloc should be clearly demonstrated. I do not believe that complete unilateral disarmament is the way forward, but I would propose measures that would make the justifications for Western rearmament much more difficult.

In West Germany the Communist Party maintains that the consequences of the pacifism of the East German independent peace groups would mean that they would also have to oppose the military armament of the Nicaraguan people in order to defend their revolution.

There are many different shades of opinion in the independent peace groups in the GDR. There are indeed a number of unconditional pacifists. Personally I am not a pacifist and I would in certain circumstances take a gun in my hand. It would depend on the circumstances I found myself in. And that is where there is a great difference between Central America and Europe. In the event of a war here in Europe it would mean the end, there would be no winners. In Central America, however, the suppression of democracy has taken on such characteristics that by using passive resistance and non-violence the people would simply be wiped out. One has to respond to circumstances.

The guerrillas in El Salvador have often made offers of negotiations, but when it

comes to a point when ordinary people are being murdered then there has to be a limit.

You see, in Europe it is not on the agenda that you could be dragged off and shot in some dirty corner somewhere. Here we have the opportunities to use non-violence to bring about change. In Central America, on the other hand, one has to take up arms. That is my personal view on the subject but as to the position of the West German CP, I would like to add one more comment. They have taken the slogan 'Swords to ploughshares', which is in any case a utopian view, and presented it in such a dogmatic way as to be in principle a defamation of the independent peace groups. These groups in the GDR have as their main objective a demand for the right to just articulate their own thoughts, and then be able to discuss them. However, one must first have the right to talk and this is where our main problem lies. There are committed pacifists here, but everyone should have the right to speak and not be locked away for their ideas. I wouldn't lock up some army officer because he believes in protecting his country with weapons, and vice versa I don't expect him to lock me up when I say that I will not take a gun in my hand and serve in any army which may well end up sending me to Poland. I shall decide for myself what I wish to defend, that is the right to self-determination of the individual and that must be protected everywhere.

The GDR propaganda says that the foremost human right is the right to life, but that right is simply not being recognised where I can be forced to go into an army for principles with which I may not necessarily agree. However, in Nicaragua I would be prepared to fight and at the same time I would consider myself to be fighting for peace, that is for peace in that country. I sing of peace in the middle of war, as Biermann says in one of his songs.

I would like to make one more observation about the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union. The West German CP says that there is no interest in arms and militarism there because the Soviet Union is a socialist country and nobody makes money from arms, etc. I have already said something about the material aspects in the east, but at the same time what the West German CP says is quite true. Peace and socialism are inseparable but the point is that the Soviet Union is as peaceful as it is socialist. I know of no socialist country in the world, there simply are none, and therefore what was written about me in *Der Spiegel* was wrong: that I was not against the system. I am against the present system in the GDR because I am a socialist, and in the GDR now, as far as I am concerned, there is no socialism.

What effect have the events in Poland had on the GDR?

That varied a great deal. It brought forward many hopes especially amongst the younger generation. That movement which is now described as the peace movement feels itself to be an alternative movement for the whole of society. People are prepared to give up the chance of a career because of the perils around them. That mood then develops fur-

ther into a desire for self-fulfilment and that of course is only possible in democratic conditions. Naturally every step nearer this goal is warmly greeted. Poland was as the GDR is now, 99% election results, and then all of a sudden people learnt how to express themselves! That made many people very optimistic and gave rise to great hopes for the future of the GDR. Of course, on the other hand, it is realised that the GDR is not Poland. In the GDR people are still fairly well off, materially I mean.

Then some people even had almost chauvinistic views on Poland. Striking!?! the lazy pigs should be working!

But there was also a great deal of solidarity. I tried myself to get people to think about the events in Poland, and when I tied a Polish flag to my bicycle a few people in the street called out to me 'Solidarnosc!'. At the factory we also discussed the situation. Many people realised that the demands they were making were justified and we compared Solidarnosc to our own unions in the GDR where nobody opens their mouths. There in Poland suddenly people were allowed to talk and organise and air their grievances. Somehow a lot of enthusiasm was in the air.

You could not say that this or that was the attitude of the GDR population, but on the whole I would say that most people were sympathetic but expressed themselves in different ways. Some happily at home watching it all on the TV, some would come forward at their own workplace much more confidently. That of course brought problems with it. It was like that with me. I was supposed to become the union shop steward at work because I had always stood up for the rights of my fellow workers, but the state intervened and I was not allowed to be elected to the post. I then resigned from the union and was immediately accused of wishing to form an independent union. They then said to me that I could not be elected as they didn't want any homegrown Lech Walesas. In all events they were simply scared that things could develop in the same way as they had in Poland.

Where will things go from here in Jena? The peace community there has, after all, lost many of its members.

There are enough people left to carry on. It is after all a community and not an organisation with a chairman, etc., but there is nevertheless a structure there. We had given ourselves a general conception and then hit upon the idea of going further and working in groups.

The first problem we had to deal with was, of course, militarism, which then raised the question of where it all started and the answer of course is: in education. Therefore an education group was formed. We then asked ourselves what else was threatening us and from that an ecology group was formed. Then many people are sent to prison and are open to the arbitrariness of the state without knowing the laws. That led to the formation of a group dealing with legal problems. We asked ourselves: Are we alone in the GDR? There must be groups such as ours everywhere and we must therefore

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build up contacts and exchange information.

Each brought into the group special abilities and skills, amongst them artists. We worked a lot with the techniques of photography, made postcards on the theme of peace and sent them out all over the GDR.

All that is still in existence as before, many people have left us and amongst them were many on whom we relied a lot, but because of the way it was organised it still exists. Even though one can't determine exactly how strong numerically the peace movement is, one can say that something of it has remained in the minds of the people.

Increasing armaments and militarism, increasing state power and concrete examples of it such as my expulsion, have all left a mark on people so that they are now beginning to look for new ways of working together against these threats. That is how these groups have developed and how they will always attract new members.

Documents from the Unofficial Peace Movement

Petition Against Soviet Missiles

(The following appeal against the deployment of Soviet SS-21 nuclear missiles on the territory of the GDR in response to Cruise and Pershing II is now circulating in East Germany. Known as the 'Rostock Appeal', it was initially signed by 100 individuals. The translation from the German is by Günter Minnerup.)

We, the undersigned, Christians and non-Christians, have noted with abhorrence the announcement by the National Defence Council of the GDR on 25 October 1983 concerning the planned deployment of operative-tactical Soviet missile complexes.

On the basis of our Christian and humanist values and the fact that never again must a war originate from German soil, we are firmly convinced that:

— the planned deployment of these missiles will not reduce, but increase the danger of war for the German people;

— these measures mean the abandonment of the Swedish proposal for a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe which had hitherto been considered so valuable.

We therefore protest vigorously against the measures decided upon by the National Defence Council. Our protest is totally in line with the resolution adopted by the Synod of the Evangelical Church of the GDR on 20 September 1983, which appealed to the Government of the GDR to argue within the Warsaw Treaty against any deployment of nuclear short-distance missiles on the territory of the GDR either during the current negotiations nor at a later time.

We demand of the National Defence Council an immediate annulment of the decision made.

We are asking all those who are no longer willing to be reconciled with the ever more likely annihilation of life here and elsewhere to support this appeal and to send it, with their signatures, to the Chairman of the Defence Council of the GDR, Erich Honecker. There is too much at stake for us to leave the decision over life and death to the politicians and military people alone.

Rostock

11 November 1983

Peace Activists' Appeal to Western Peace Activists

(The following text was sent to Labour Focus by the exiled East German writer Jürgen Fuchs. It has also been published by the END Journal No.7, whose translation from the German we gratefully reproduce here.)

To Everyone who is demonstrating against the latest American missiles.

We are members of various independent peace groups in the GDR. We, too, say *No* to the latest American missiles. We are also demanding the dismantling of Soviet missiles. But we do not forget: peace is not just a question of missiles. Above all it is about the people who operate them, it is about those who carry out the deed and those who are the victims. It is about the indifferent or eager carrying out of orders. It is about a society which produces two types of people — those who give orders and those who execute them. Even without the latest American missiles, the world can be destroyed a hundred times over.

We know why certain people in the West will always have an interest in armament. Meticulous research has been carried out into the economic interests of the arms industry. We do not play these down and they are a threat to us too. We are also threatened by developments that have hardly been researched yet, developments in socialist states.

To what extent can a neurotic need for security constitute a danger to peace? To what extent should the State, as owner of the arms industry, make money out of it — even if it is only from selling to developing countries? A connection is often made, in an abstract way, between the peace question and human rights. This sometimes sounds like someone fulfilling a moral obligation. If you take peace as an isolated issue it seems to be so much more important than the right to free travel, for example.

However, we think this is the wrong way to put the question. We ask: how closely is the right to refuse to obey an order linked with endangering or maintaining peace? To what extent does the right to publicly criticise increasing militarisation constitute a significant element in the securing of peace?

For there are certain paragraphs in the GDR's criminal law which endanger the peaceful exchange of opinions and information. 'Ganging up' outside an army base, considered by the State to be extremely dangerous for its own military strike-force, can lead to a death sentence in our country. If you do not face these facts then you are not living in the real world.

How can you achieve real peace if you are not fully aware of the actual conditions? The Soviet Union does not want war — the USA probably does not either — but one country might anticipate an attack from the other and start a war by wanting to beat the other to it. It is hard for us in the GDR to treat the matter as an abstract problem. We cannot talk about humanity without looking at individual people and the possibilities they have to live peacefully and to demand it of their society.

We come across big differences here between what our government says and what it does. The GDR is becoming a more militarised society every year. That endangers peace. Rochau, Funke and Kathrin Eigenfeld are in prison in Halle because they wrote a paper on the peace issue. The paper is based on information from public sources, there are no State secrets involved. But the boundary of so-called 'State secrets' is much more quickly reached here.

The three from Halle are offering advice on how to become a *Bausoldat* ('construction soldier') or a conscientious objector — entirely within the law. But giving advice on how to make use of laws is regarded as punishable. It is called 'prevention of state-controlled measures'. We call it a threat to peace.

And the registration of women for military service has now begun. Hundreds of women in several towns of the GDR are now being subjected to 'suitability tests', after which a military registration card is issued. They are told to consider themselves part of the army.

In the interest of peace we object to such measures and demand the demilitarisation of public life. This is an area where the GDR could carry out unilateral disarmament without suddenly being defenceless.

We ask you: notice what goes on here. Comment on it, as we comment on the American threat to peace. Apart from protests, it is perhaps even more important to take a genuine interest in what goes on in the East.

It takes some effort to understand what is happening here. It is no use taking a dogmatically pro-communist or anti-communist viewpoint. One must try to see things as they are. Our peace activities stem from various sources: religious and socialist, liberal-democratic and radical. Poetry, songs, plays, art, photographs and political books have an important role to play, and especially literature, whose critical awareness helped the peace movement onto its feet.

Forgive us for not signing our names on this letter. We do not want to put ourselves as individuals into the forefront, we want to express an opinion which is widespread in this country.

In solidarity, best wishes,
Peace-friends of the GDR

The Case of Lothar Rochau

The arrest, in June 1983, and sentencing on 18 September to three years' imprisonment for 'anti-state agitation' of the church youth worker Lothar Rochau in Halle has led to widespread international protests. Readers of *Labour Focus* are asked to add their own voices to these protests by writing to the Embassy of the GDR in London demanding Rochau's release, and getting their political or trade-union organisation as well as CND group to do the same.

Lothar Rochau was born in 1952 and served an apprenticeship as a toolmaker. In 1973 he began his training course as a church worker and was employed to take charge of protestant work among young people and children in Halle-Neustadt in 1977, where he set up an 'open' youth group (*Junge Gemeinde*). He was one of the first signatories of Pastor Rainer Eppelmann's 'Berlin Appeal' and one of the organisers of the 'three churches march' during the protestant Peace Decade in November 1981, which attracted 700 participants under the slogan 'Disarmament in East and West — Swords into Ploughshares'. The *Junge Gemeinde* in Halle-Neustadt collected over 1,000 signatures for the demand for a 'social peace service' as an alternative to military service.

Pressures from the state forced his suspension in December 1982 and eventual removal from his post in March 1983. After twelve unsuccessful applications for other church posts he was eventually offered new employment in Erfurt, but prevented from taking it up by his arrest at the end of June shortly after his participation in a bicycle demonstration through the streets of Halle to protest against the pollution of the atmosphere by the local *Buna* chemical works. He is married and has a seven-year-old son.

(We publish here two documents illustrating Rochau's approach to his work: a description of the aims of the Junge Gemeinde group he built in Halle-Neustadt, and his views on the peace movement as expressed in a letter to a friend on 3 May 1983. The translation from the German is by Günter Minnerup.)

THE PROTESTANT YOUTH GROUP IN HALLE-NEUSTADT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. A meeting place for young Christians and non-Christians.
2. Offer of open conversations and discussions, as these are only possible within the framework of the church.
3. Development of a political and humanistic problem consciousness, including: the problem of space, ecological problems, legal questions, human rights, new forms of living together, sexuality, social problems, questions of religion, art and culture.
4. Fostering the individual's own creativity and independent solution of problems.
5. The formation of different working groups on, for example: literature, ecology, peace, scripture, painting, women for peace, music.
6. Twice-weekly open evenings with discussion of current political themes.
7. Joint weekend trips and holidays with friends from other towns.



Lothar Rochau

8. The organisation of twice-yearly weekend workshops with the following programme: readings by progressive authors; performances by pantomime, theatre and music groups as well as songwriters; exhibitions of paintings, graphics, sculptures, photography and cartoons; opportunities for creative self-activity; working groups on contemporary ecclesiastical and political topics; meetings and exchanges of opinions with young people from other parishes.

FROM A LETTER TO A FRIEND

I am of the opinion that a personal peace attitude (service in construction brigades, readiness to solve conflicts peacefully, peace education in family, circle of friends and parish) must overlap with and be informed by a political responsibility for peace. An emotional 'charge' can be important, but must never express itself without an ethic-moral and political-rational motive for peace.

If I had to describe my own personal stance in the present peace discussion, I would speak of a christian-revolutionary pacifism.

What do I mean by that?

In a time of massive nuclear rearmament in East and West, against the background of a scandalous injustice and poverty in the Third World, the only possible position for a Christian is a profoundly pacifist and revolutionary one. I do not mean to say that the pacifist has an answer to every question, but he should point the way — that is, he should show how the military security policy in East and West can be overcome.

He should be a permanent challenge to all his contemporaries in the ethical and the political spheres. The pacifist I am talking about should become the bad conscience of the politicians and the powerful in this world.

HUNGARY

The Dialogue Breaks Down

Bill Lomax assesses the problems facing the independent peace movement

The past year has witnessed both advances and setbacks for the independent Hungarian peace movement, whose formation and activities were reported on in earlier issues of *Labour Focus*.

PEACE GROUP FOR DIALOGUE

The Peace Group for Dialogue was formed on 2 September 1982 shortly before E.P. Thompson's visit to Hungary later that month when he delivered a lecture before about a hundred supporters of the indepen-

dent peace groups. Thompson's visit gave a bit boost to the fledgling movement of peace groups, and in the following months their aspiration to establish themselves as an independent but not oppositional movement seemed to be looked on not too unfavourably by the authorities. Indeed in November several of the Dialogue Group's representatives were invited for friendly discussions with the Hungarian Communist Party's cultural and ideological overlord György Aczél.

Though Thompson had been refused permission to deliver his lecture on Universi-

ty premises, when two further representatives of the Western peace movement, Mary Kaldor of the British-based *European Nuclear Disarmament* (END), and Mient Jan Faber of the Netherlands' *Interchurch Peace Council* (IKV) visited Budapest at the end of November they were invited to address a public meeting on the premises of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences under the auspices of the Academy's Peace Research Centre. An audience of between 100 and 200, predominantly young supporters of *Dialogue*, heard them outline the role of their respective organisations in the search for peace in Europe. The speeches were

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followed by a lively discussion and the meeting lasted for over four hours.

Two days later, on 24 November, the Peace Group for Dialogue was itself allowed to hold a public meeting, this time on the premises of the state-run Hungarian Peace Council. Four of their representatives — Ferenc Kőszegi, Ferenc Ruzsa, János László and Éva Forgács — outlined their views on the need for a nuclear-free Europe and an end to the Cold War. An end to the arms race, they declared, could only be brought about by achieving a real detente between ordinary people and not only that only existed at the level of governments. With regard to Hungary their proposals included the mutual withdrawal of foreign troops from European countries, an expanded Rapacki plan to include Hungary in a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe, a non-aggression pact with Austria and Yugoslavia, and a defence policy based on anti-tank weapons rather than tanks. Some 300 to 400 young people attended the meeting.

In January 1983, *Dialogue* held a further public meeting, again on the premises of the official Hungarian Peace Council, this time addressed by the former prime minister of Hungary, András Hegedűs. About 300 people turned out to hear Hegedűs speak of the ideological differences that had led to the Second World War, and compare them with the current tensions between Eastern and Western Europe today. Hegedűs expressed his support for independent groups like *Dialogue* working within the framework of a socialist society, but argued that because of the different social system in Eastern Europe, they should not seek to model themselves too closely on the non-aligned peace movements of the West.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The success of their public meetings led to growing support for and interest in the Dialogue Group's activities, and greater self-confidence on the part of its leading activists that the state was willing to recognise their right to exist. They had emphasised from the start their unwillingness to do anything that would bring them into conflict with the law even if this restricted their abilities to organise and publicise their ideas, and they had carried out all their activities openly and publicly. They had also sought out possibilities for working together with official organisations like the state-run Hungarian Peace Council.

Negotiations with the Hungarian Peace Council, however, had not led to the hoped-for cooperation, nor achieved any concrete results. The Dialogue Group's requests for premises of their own to serve as a club, meeting place and library, and for the authorisation to publish their own paper, met with continual stonewalling. When, at the beginning of 1983, the Peace Council set up its own youth wing, it became clearer that they were seeking to counter, rather than to assist, the growth of the independent peace movement.

The authorities were also alarmed by the Dialogue Group's growing number of international contacts which they now sought to



'Hungary will not be Hiroshima' — card designed by Independent Peace Activists in 1983

restrict. In February 1983 Ferenc Ruzsa was refused permission to travel to Greece to participate in a meeting on the prospects for a Balkan nuclear-free zone, and in April members of the group were not allowed to travel to attend the END Convention in Berlin. In June *Dialogue* members were also prevented from fully participating in the Prague Peace Assembly.

Within Hungary, however, the group's membership continued to grow, resulting in the Budapest group splitting up into five separate ones, and in other groups being established in countryside towns, at places like Debrecen, Szeged and Pécs. At the beginning of the year a fortnightly typed journal, called *Dialogus*, was launched. These developments led in turn to an increased concern by the authorities, manifested in growing police activities and increased surveillance of the group's members and their activities.

POLICE HARASSMENT

April 1983 also saw the onset of more serious police harassment, with police raids

Both problems and tensions were clearly building up when the Peace Group for Dialogue held its first National Conference at Visegrad on 14-17 April with almost a hundred delegates in attendance, many more than had been expected, and many of them relatively new recruits to the movement.

While some of the Dialogue Group's founder members, amongst them Ferenc Kőszegi, argued for a moderate approach of conscious self-restraint to keep within limits that would be tolerated by the authorities, two-thirds of those present supported more radical demands for greater autonomy and more independent activity. The Conference also established a more organised national structure with a Coordinating Committee in which Kőszegi and his supporters declined to take part.

The result of the Visegrad Conference's decisions was effectively a split into what might be loosely described as moderate and

radical tendencies, and one which would continue to polarise the independent movement's activities throughout the rest of the year.

and house searches of some of the more prominent activists, and many ordinary members being called in for questioning by their superiors at work, school or university, with veiled threats to their job and career prospects if they remained active in the independent movement.

At the end of the month *Dialogue* representatives were invited to speak during a pop concert by the popular 'new wave' group *Kontroll*, but the authorities intervened to prevent this. Nevertheless, an informal gathering was held in the cafeteria area at the end of the concert, and met with much interest and success.

At the beginning of May, three members of the Group were called into the Ministry of Interior to answer questions about their activities, but the questioning was conducted in a polite and amicable manner.

Despite these harassments, the Dialogue Group achieved one of its biggest public successes on 7 May when a contingent of over 400 *Dialogue* supporters took part with their own banners in an official Peace Council march. The march ended at the Margaret Island where the *Dialogue* contingent formed a human chain, and later staged a Western-style mock 'die-in' to dramatise the result of a nuclear war.

PEACE CAMP

Plans had been underway since the previous year to hold an international peace convention or peace camp in the summer of 1983 to which Western peace activists would also be invited. The original plan was to organise the camp in cooperation with the official Peace Council, but after a series of negotiations in which they had initially been sympathetic to the idea, the Peace Council later withdrew their cooperation. Against the advice of the moderates, the more radical members of *Dialogue* then decided to go ahead with organising a camp on their own

initiative for the week of 4 to 10 July near the town of Debrecen in eastern Hungary.

At the end of June permission for the camp was withdrawn on the pretext that the site was already fully booked, and attempts to find an alternative site met with further obstruction. It was then decided to meet the Western visitors at the West Railway Station on the afternoon of Monday 4 July, and to make ad-hoc arrangements for camping at a site near Budapest.

The afternoon of 4 July, however, saw a large police presence at the station and some twenty young Hungarians wearing Dialogue Group badges who went there to greet their foreign guests were taken away by the police and held for questioning, and only released some three hours later. The arriving foreigners somehow found places to stay either on camp sites or at the homes of Hungarian friends. Four women from Greenham Common who arrived in Hungary by van set up camp at the Romai camp site in Obuda, hoping that others would be able to join them there, but Hungarians who tried to do so were refused entry to the site.

Eventually a number of informal meetings were held at camp site swimming pools and in private flats. Topics discussed ranged from the possibilities for peace work in Hungary and the question of relations with the official Peace Council, to wider issues of Hungarian history and the Cold War, and East-West relations in general.

On Wednesday morning 6 July police went to the Obuda camp site and took the four Greenham Common women in for questioning. After being held for over four hours they were expelled from the country — driven under escort to the Austrian border with their visas cancelled. The discussions amongst those remaining now centred on how to respond to the authorities' actions, and attempts were made to make representations through the Peace Council.

On the morning of 8 July most of the remaining foreigners — 3 from Austria, 3 from Holland, 2 from Sweden and 1 from Britain — were also picked up by the police at the Árpád Park swimming pool and taken in for questioning. After refusing to sign statements saying that they had come to Hungary with the aim of inciting people against the state, they too were expelled and driven to the Austrian border in police cars.

At the same time that the foreigners were being expelled, a number of Hungarians were also called in by the police for questioning, amongst them Ferenc Ruzsa who was ordered to desist from activities hostile to the Government, and told that if the Dialogue Group continued with its activities and its contacts with foreigners, he would be held responsible.

Following these events, a meeting of the Dialogue Group held the next day, 9 July, took the decision to dissolve the Group, though not necessarily to suspend independent peace activities. When the Group had been formed, members who joined had been told that they were doing nothing illegal for which they might be penalised. Now, however, when the authorities had made it

clear that they viewed the Dialogue Group's activities as hostile to the Hungarian state, it was felt that it was necessary to dissolve the Group so as to allow those who wanted to leave to do so.

Those who wished to continue independent peace work in the spirit of the Dialogue Group, however, have continued to meet and to carry on their activities under the name of *Dialogue*. One of their first actions was to send a letter to the Peace Council and to all 500 members of the Hungarian Parliament announcing the dissolution of the Dialogue Group and protesting against the police harassment which had led to this and against the expulsion of the foreigners who had come to attend the peace camp.

SS 20s

Many people felt that the new hard line against the independent peace movement was a result of the Hungarian Government's fear that the Geneva talks on limiting the deployment of intermediate range nuclear weapons would break down, and that the deployment of Cruise and Pershing in Western Europe could lead the Soviets to install SS-20s in the countries of the Warsaw Pact, including Hungary itself. In such an event, the authorities clearly feared the prospect of an independent peace movement gaining wider popular support.

The threat of the stationing of SS-20s in Hungary was also coming to the forefront of the peace groups' own concern, making ever more relevant and urgent their call for the establishment of nuclear-free zones and for a nuclear-free Hungary as a step in that direction. It was in this spirit that the more radical former members of *Dialogue* now tried to continue with their activities.

On 27 July they prepared leaflets calling on people to declare their homes and streets, parks and local communities as nuclear-free zones. The leaflets were distributed, and small white flags and pennants put up on trees in the Vérmező Park, a traditional place for military parades in Budapest, declaring it a nuclear-free zone. Though the tactic had been designed as one that would not provoke the authorities, a number of those leafletting and putting up pennants were in fact detained by the police, but soon released after questioning.

At the end of the week a cultural festival in the southern city of Szeged was leafletted by members of the Szeged Dialogue Group, with leaflets drawing attention to the danger of SS-20s being stationed in Hungary and calling for the country to be declared nuclear-free. Members of the Budapest group went down to participate, while a number of foreigners who had been at an international workcamp in Szeged were also present. *Dialogue* activists invited to the workcamp were not allowed in, but they were able to hold an impromptu meeting with the foreigners in a local park.

Meanwhile, two members of the Szeged group, István Gonda and János Tóth, were taken in by the police and held for questioning, while Gonda's flat was raided and books, badges, magazines and a typewriter taken away. Subsequently, Gonda and Tóth were threatened that they could be charged with violations of the Hungarian press laws.

DIALOGUE CONTINUES

The ongoing harassment of their activities has led to long discussions amongst those still wishing to be active in the peace groups as to just how they should organise in the future. While the remaining supporters have continued to hold informal meetings, activities are being undertaken more and more on independent or decentralised initiatives.

One of these is a campaign for a peaceful alternative to military service for those conscientiously opposed to the use of violence. A former conscientious objector, himself imprisoned for refusing military service, Károly Kiszely, has drawn up proposals for the institution of an alternative social service to give 'legal status to those who cannot undertake military service for reasons of conscience'. Although an independent initiative, the proposals — presented in the form of a petition — are being circulated by many *Dialogue* supporters and have also been publicised in the opposition journal *Beszélő*. It is hoped to collect several thousand signatures and present the petition as a civil initiative to the Hungarian Government.

A number of activities were also organised to coincide with the autumn demonstrations in the West against the American deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles. On 16 October a children's art competition was held in front of the National Museum in Budapest, when *Dialogue* supporters brought children to draw peace pictures on the pavement, and involved members of the public in conversation and discussion. On 29 October a number of separate activities were carried out by small groups of four or less in the hope that this would avoid police interference. Further actions are planned for 12 December, the anniversary of the NATO dual-track decision.

Other ongoing activities include paint spraying of peace symbols in the city and the selling of *Dialogue* badges. Articles reporting on Western peace movements cut out from the official press are also regularly posted up around Budapest. Meanwhile, the re-formed 'core' of the Dialogue Group has started to publish a number of articles under the series title *View From Underground* and are also in the course of preparing a history of the independent peace movement.

Finally, on the initiative of Ferenc Kőszegi, who has now distanced himself from the Dialogue Group, a new Peace Club has been formed under the auspices of the Hungarian Peace Council, and held a number of meetings in which supporters of *Dialogue* have also participated.

Although 1983 has seen a setback to the hopes of the more optimistic members of *Dialogue* who thought an independent peace movement could develop in Hungary almost along Western lines, and though police harassment has led to internal dissensions and conflicts within the peace groups themselves, the prospects for independent peace activity in Hungary are far from bleak. The future is likely to see a wider range of groups and a greater variety of actions and initiatives, but in a police state like Hungary such diversity could well provide the basis for a stronger and less vulnerable movement.

Independent Peace Leaflets

**PEACE GROUP FOR DIALOGUE'S LEAFLET
DISTRIBUTED IN VERMEZŐ PARK IN BUDAPEST ON 27
July 1983**

The Peace Group for Dialogue initiates a campaign for all peace-loving Hungarian citizens in the whole country and invites the Hungarian Peace Council and other social institutions to join the appeal.

**LET'S DECLARE OUR HOMES, FLATS, STREETS,
SQUARES, VILLAGES, TOWNS AND FINALLY THE
WHOLE COUNTRY TO BE NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE
TERRITORY!**

A decision will be made by the Warsaw Treaty members by the end of the year about deploying SS-20s in the allied socialist countries, like Hungary, as a response to the NATO dual-track decision. If it goes ahead our country automatically becomes a target for Pershing II missiles.

Let's demonstrate that we don't want nuclear weapons, or any instruments and institutions that serve nuclear weapons, in our neighbourhood.

We are aware of the fact that without similar proposals by the government, our initiative cannot avert the danger of locating nuclear weapons in Hungary. This nuclear-weapon-free campaign has symbolic significance by declaring unambiguously that we don't want dangerous weapons in our homeland.

The Peace Group for Dialogue started the campaign on 27 July by placing posters and small flags on pins in Vermező in Buda. We hope that there will be more and more communities in schools, workplaces and homes who will make this symbolic gesture and that representatives, leaders and local authorities will support our campaign.

People in many European countries have demonstrated that they don't want nuclear weapons in their districts or towns. Now it's our turn to follow their example.

**LET'S DECLARE HUNGARY, EUROPE AND THE
WHOLE WORLD NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE!**

**LEAFLET OF SZEGED PEACE GROUP
DISTRIBUTED ON 29 July 1983**

As the end of the year draws dangerously close, the hope of agreement at the Geneva negotiations on the deployment of intermediate range missiles in Europe appears ever more distant.

Owing to the impotent behaviour of the big powers, the deployment of American missiles in Europe is almost already an accomplished fact. The Soviet Union has already let it be known in advance that it will take necessary measures in response. From more and more people we are hearing the whispered news that SS-20 missiles will be stationed in the countries of the Warsaw Treaty, Hungary amongst them. With this step the process would be completed once and for all of our country being turned into the target of a nuclear war.

At no other time was so timely the idea, the idea raised many times by many people, for a **NUCLEAR-FREE HUNGARY**.

For this reason we appeal to all the peace-loving fellow citizens of our country!

**LET US REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO HAVE OUR
COUNTRY DECLARED NUCLEAR-FREE FOR EVER-
MORE!**

This step is in the vital interest of every one of us. At the same time it could greatly help towards the establishment of a central-European, a Balkan, or a north-European nuclear-free zone. The generation living today has an overwhelming responsibility for the future destiny of our people. If we let slip this opportunity now, we may never again have the chance to free Hungary from nuclear weapons.

**LET US ACT TODAY, SO WE CAN HAVE A TOMOR-
ROW!**

29 July 1983

Szeged Peace Group

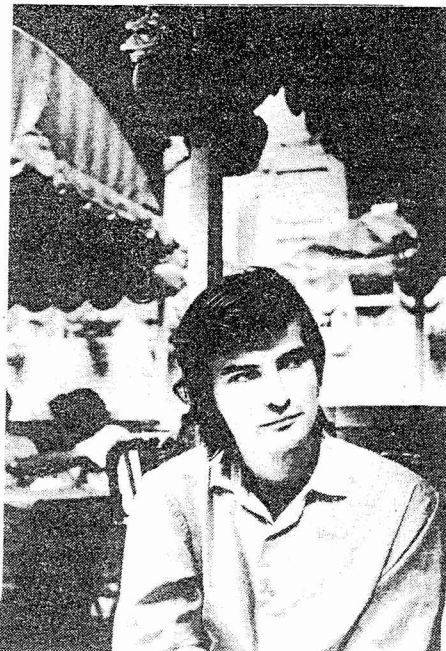
Samizdat Publisher Sentenced

By Bill Lomax

At one of the first political trials to be held in Budapest for over ten years, the independent publisher Gábor Demszky has received a six-month suspended jail sentence.

As the culmination of a series of incidents of police harassment of Gábor Demszky and other samizdat activists over the past year, Demszky was beaten up by uniformed policemen in broad daylight on a Budapest street on 24 September 1983. After the attack he spent several days in hospital suffering from concussion. But in spite of several protests against the police action, it was eventually Demszky himself who was brought to trial at the Central Court of Budapest on 21 December 1983 charged with assault on the police.

Gábor Demszky has been one of the key figures in the movement to establish *democratic rights and freedom of expression* in Hungary over the past five years. He was one of the early members of *SZETA*, the voluntary *Foundation to Assist the Poor* established to campaign over the issue of poverty in Hungary, and he was active in organising actions in support of the Polish workers in the period since August 1980. In 1981 together with Jenő Nagy and László Rajk he founded the independent samizdat publishing house *AB Independent Publishers* which has since published over



Gabor Demszky

300 titles, amongst them works denied the Hungarian public by the official censorship, by writers such as György Konrád, György Petri, Miklós Haraszti, Arthur Koestler, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Mahatma Gandhi.

The news of Demszky's beating-up and trial caused indignation throughout student

and intellectual circles in Budapest. Over 100 people turned up on 21 December to attend his trial which was originally due to be held in open court. Without any explanation, however, the judge announced that the trial would be held in closed court, and the only people admitted were to be specially accredited observers.

Angered at the attempt to exclude them, the 100-strong crowd forced their way into the courtroom and demanded their right to be present at the trial. The judges then withdrew, and the trial only later commenced, in secret and in a separate courtroom. After the charges were presented the judge declared an adjournment for lunch, but when the trial recommenced in the afternoon, even those accredited Western observers who had earlier been present were not allowed to return to the courtroom.

Outside, meanwhile, a petition had been drawn up protesting against the unconstitutional action of the judge in declaring closed proceedings and excluding the public from the trial. By afternoon some 53 of those present had signed it.

The trial continued in closed court throughout the afternoon, and was then prolonged into the evening. When the verdict was finally announced, Gábor Demszky was found guilty of assault and sentenced to six months' imprisonment suspended for three years.

Harassment of Opposition Intensifies

By Bill Lomax

In the last number of *Labour Focus* we reported on the eviction of Hungarian dissident László Rajk from his flat in the centre of Budapest where for the previous two years he had been operating an independent bookshop known as the 'samizdat boutique'.

Rajk, however, immediately re-opened his bookshop in his new flat in Buda, and although this was further from the city centre, the following weeks saw even more visitors than previously to the regular Tuesday evening sessions. At the same time, although the samizdat publishers had suffered serious material losses during the police raids in December, they too refused to be intimidated, and even brought out a new publication, a monthly *Information Bulletin*, in which they announced the continuing functioning of the boutique and the new programme of Free University lectures.

The police replied to this defiant behaviour by stepping up their surveillance even more. Armed police stood threateningly at the house entrance to Rajk's flat on Tuesday nights, and everyone going in was stopped and identified. Cars approaching the house were likewise stopped by police cars, searched and their drivers ordered to leave the district. Repeated police raids at the flats of László Rajk, Gábor Demszky and Ferenc Köszeg resulted in the confiscation of further large quantities of samizdat.

As a consequence of these actions, in April the editors of the *AB Information Bulletin*, of which three numbers had appeared in January to March, announced that due to the continuing harassment they were ceasing publication. At the same time László Rajk announced that, for the same reason, the samizdat boutique would temporarily suspend its activities from 1 May. People interested in the 'second publicity', however, were still welcome to visit his flat at the usual time on Tuesday evenings for friendly discussions.

POLICE HARASSMENT ESCALATES

Despite the closure of the boutique, the police have continued their aggressive harassment of opposition activists, constantly tailing them, and repeatedly stopping their cars and subjecting them to searches. Inevitably these actions have led to a number of incidents which can only be seen as an escalation of police violence.

On 7 April Gábor Demszky's car was stopped by police on the pretext of a normal traffic check. When his papers were found to be in order, László Rajk who was travelling with him was also asked to identify himself. When his papers were also found to be in order, the police ordered both Rajk and Demszky to open up their briefcases. When they refused to comply with this demand, on the grounds that the police had no right to make such a demand in the course of a routine traffic check, the police drew their

revolvers and forced Rajk and Demszky to accompany them at gunpoint to the local police station. They were held for several hours and later released with a warning that they would be charged with insulting behaviour towards the police.

Similar incidents occurred throughout the summer. On many occasions, in several parts of the city, the tyres of Rajk's, Demszky's and Haraszti's cars were slashed — and always two at a time so there could be no misunderstanding! The windscreen of Demszky's car was also smashed. On another occasion chemicals were poured over the car of Rajk's girl friend, damaging the paintwork. At the same time these and other dissidents were continually being stopped and searched by the police — who seemed to be always following them *except* on those occasions when their cars met with some mishap.

The most serious of these incidents so far occurred on the afternoon of Saturday 24 September when four policemen stopped the car of Gábor Demszky in the street just outside Rajk's flat. After Demszky had identified himself and presented his driving papers, and the police had examined the car, they also demanded that he hand over his briefcase. When he refused to do so and demanded to see their authorisation, they took it from him by force, opened it and took out a private letter. Demszky then protested against their reading the letter, whereupon they drew their truncheons and knocked him to the ground, then proceeded to beat him on the ground with their truncheons.

Gábor Demszky was taken by the police to the Central Police Headquarters, and only later to hospital where, besides his cuts and bruises, he was diagnosed as suffering from concussion. He had to remain in hospital for several days for treatment and supervision.

Demszky was subsequently called into police headquarters in the middle of October and told that he would be charged with the use of violence against the authorities. Meanwhile, however, several protests had been made about the police's action, some by authors speaking up in defence of their publisher, and one to the Chief Public Prosecutor by the opposition spokespersons Miklós Haraszti, László Rajk and János Kis. By the end of November the time had expired within which Demszky should have received an official summons and it appeared that the authorities had themselves decided to drop the charges, fearing that court proceedings could only draw further attention to their own illegal use of violence. (See article above on Demszky's subsequent trial.)

SAMIZDAT CONTINUES

The escalating police harassment has not succeeded in its aim of putting a stop to the

opposition's activities.

In 1983 the Free University sessions continued with a series of fortnightly lectures by the young historian Sándor Szilágyi on the less known works of the political essayist István Bibó, alternating with a course of lectures by the philosopher Gáspár Miklós Tamás on Internationalism which he had been banned from giving at the young writers' club. Finally, a new speaker to address the Free University was Pál Demény, the former leader of a leftist faction of the Hungarian Communist Party based in Csepel in the 1930s and 40s, who had been imprisoned from 1945 to 1957 (under Rákosi, Nagy and Kádár!), and who gave a series of talks on his life and activity in the Hungarian workers' movement.

On 13 June a special extraordinary session of the Free University was held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the execution of the leaders of the 1956 revolution — Imre Nagy, Pál Maléter, Miklós Gimes, Géza Losonczy and József Szilágyi. After an introductory speech by György Krassó about the executed, the widow of Pál Maléter, and the former friend of Miklós Gimes, Aliz Halda, recalled personal memories of their companions. Recordings of speeches made during the revolution in October 1956 by Imre Nagy and János Kádár were played to those present, and the evening ended with György Petri reading a poem in honour of Imre Nagy.

The *AB Independent Publishers* have also continued their activities, re-issuing György Konrád's novel *The Accomplice* in a paperback edition, as well as publishing Gáspár Miklós Tamás' introduction to politics entitled *The Eye and the Hand*, and Zoltán Zsille's account of his oppositional activities in Hungary, *The Biography of a Bighead*. Successful sales of these titles have gone a long way to making good the losses suffered in the course of police raids earlier in the year.

Finally, the seventh issue of *Beszélő* appeared as planned in the autumn with an editorial on the prospects facing Hungary in 1983, and including further contributions to the ongoing debate on the role of the opposition, obituaries of the writer Gyula Illyes and the 1956 workers' council member Miklós Péterfi, and reports on the situation in Romania, Poland and Hungary itself. Perhaps the most significant contribution, however, was a long interview with the President of the Central Workers' Council of Budapest in 1956, Sándor Rác, given on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday, and the 25th anniversary of his trial in 1958.

STALEMATE NOT CHECKMATE

At the end of 1983 it is clear that the Hungarian authorities have been unable to effectively implement their decision to bring an end to the open functioning of the democratic opposition and the independent

samizdat publishers. While they remain determined to do all they can to restrict the opposition's activities, it is unlikely they will want to see any further escalation of police violence which rapidly becomes counter-productive and is also likely to receive increasing publicity in the West.

Recognising these dangers, the regime is now prepared to intensify administrative measures of repression against the 'second sphere' of public opinion. Already at the beginning of September a new law was decreed making the possession of even small quantities of samizdat publications subject

to a fine of up to 10,000 forints. The aim is clearly to make even more difficult the distribution of samizdat literature following the closure of the Rajk 'boutique'. At the same time, while the police case instigated in April against Gábor Demszky and others involved in the publishing of samizdat has been finally dropped, it cannot be ruled out that fines may still be imposed on those people in whose homes samizdat materials were found and confiscated during the police raids earlier in the year.

While these measures may continue to check and hamper the opposition's ac-

tivities, they cannot bring them to an end. The activists of the democratic movement and the independent publishers have made it abundantly clear that neither fines nor threats of violence will serve to intimidate them or lead them to desist from their activities. And there is one significant difference between the present generation of dissidents and previous ones — they have neither wish nor intention of emigrating to the West. Sooner or later the Hungarian regime will be obliged to acknowledge that the rights and freedoms they have struggled to establish are also there to stay.

Avant-Garde Journal Under Attack

By Bill Lomax

The journal *Mozgó Világ* ('The World in Motion'), an avant-garde literary and cultural periodical, has incurred the wrath of Party authorities several times since it started commercial publication in 1975. Through giving expression to demands for alternative lifestyles and independent cultural attitudes, the journal became extraordinarily popular amongst students and young people, and in recent years was unavailable at newsstands within days, if not hours, of its publication. At the same time it dared to discuss ever more controversial topics in an open and critical way. Recent issues have included articles on the future of Hungary's economic reforms, the conditions of the Hungarian minorities in neighbouring socialist countries, and the literary revolt that preceded the 1956 revolution, as well as the tragic losses suffered by the Hungarian army on the Russian front in the winter of 1942-3 — one of the most sensitive topics of modern Hungarian history.

Not only did the authorities come to feel that the journal was being turned into a licensed forum for the expression of oppositional views, but that it was increasingly touching on topics the breaching of which would cause the regime embarrassment with neighbouring countries including the Soviet Union itself.

Already in 1981 the journal had been suspended for three months after it had planned to publish articles on drug-taking in Hungary, and the events of the previous summer in Poland. At that time its editor, Miklós Veress, had been removed. In September 1983, however, the new editor installed in 1981, Ferenc Kulin, was in turn dismissed. The sacking was announced by the Deputy Minister of Culture, Dezső Tóth, in an interview in the official literary weekly *Life and Literature* in which he condemned the views, contents and editorial policy of the journal for departing from basic Marxist principles.

The decision to gag the popular journal occasioned immediate protests amongst cultural circles in Hungary and from youth and student organisations. Within days of the announcement, the Attila József Circle of young writers sent a resolution to the Writers Association protesting against the



Front Cover of *Mozgó Világ*

dismissal of the editor of *Mozgó Világ*, and condemning other recent interferences with cultural freedoms such as the blacklisting of the writer Sándor Csoóri and attempts to restrict the Attila József Circle's own activities. The remaining members of the editorial board of *Mozgó Világ* had already threatened to refuse to cooperate with any new editor-in-chief imposed upon them against their wishes, and in the same spirit the Attila József Circle announced that its members would refuse to submit articles for publication.

These initial protests soon found a wider echo amongst Budapest's university and high school students. The issue was raised at the annual Student Parliament in the Arts Faculty of Budapest University on 18 October and a resolution passed condemning the statement of the Deputy Minister of Culture and demanding the reinstatement of Ferenc Kulin as *Mozgó Világ's* editor. In the following week posters and leaflets protesting against the measures appeared in high schools and university faculties throughout the city, and a number of petitions and protest letters were also being circulated.

On 25 October students in the Arts Faculty were collecting signatures to a petition when the Dean of the Faculty tore down their poster, seized the signatures already collected, and called the police with instructions to surround the building and admit only students carrying student cards. As no one normally carries these cards, the result was effectively to close the University for the day.

Three days later, on the afternoon of 28 October, some 6-700 students packed into a meeting in the nearby Law Faculty called by the official Communist youth and student organisation, KISZ, to give the Deputy Minister of Culture, Dezső Tóth, the opportunity to explain his actions. The meeting was overwhelmingly hostile, and Tóth became increasingly irritated in the course of replying to his critics. The Deputy Minister was first presented with the Arts Faculty students' resolution and a petition for the reinstatement of Kulin carrying almost 700 signatures.

A lively and heated session of questioning and debate followed in which demands were repeatedly raised for freedom of the press, and even the issue of 1956 was brought into the argument. When Tóth tried to turn on his opponents by saying they were people who got their views publicised by *Radio Free Europe*, they replied that this was hardly avoidable when the authorities interfered in the editorial policy of cultural journals and refused even to reply to the requests of independent journals like *Beszélő* (the democratic opposition's samizdat quarterly) for legal authorisation. Several hours later an irate and tired Minister departed from a still heated and angry student audience — after a meeting that was itself unique in recent Hungarian cultural history.

At the end of 1983 the future of *Mozgó Világ* is still in doubt, with a new editorial team due to take over early in 1984. Whatever the final outcome, however, one thing is clear. The regime's attempt to restrict the freedoms that it had in recent years allowed to expand in the literary and cultural fields will not be an easy task. Far from restoring conformism and stability in the ideological and cultural field, its actions are more likely to stir up yet further protest and dissent.

Yugoslavia and the IMF.

The League of Communists at the Crossroads

(The article we publish below gives a vivid illustration of the debates raging in the Yugoslav League of Communists as it grapples with the problems of the 1980s. Its author, Luka Marković, an economist attached to the University of Zagreb, became known in 1978 after the publication of his Class Struggle and Concepts of Development in which he criticised The Foundation of a Common Policy for the Long-term Development of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, fruit of a joint effort by some forty Yugoslav economists, which was originally commissioned by the Yugoslav government and adopted in 1975 by the country's Assembly as the basis for its economic strategy. That strategy has long since been abandoned, under the pressure of an exceptionally acute economic crisis, one of whose aspects is a foreign debt of some \$20,000m (higher per capita than that of Poland in 1980).

In an article published last December in the Zagreb theoretical journal Nase Teme, Marković examined the implications of the current programme for 'economic stabilisation', produced by the so-called Kraigher Commission (Sergej Kraigher is the Slovene member of the Yugoslav Presidency). Six months later, he and his article were criticised by Fuad Muhić, a member of the Central Committee of the Bosnian party, in the Zagreb weekly Danas. Marković's reply to Muhić appeared four weeks later in the same journal: Yugoslavia's League of Communists at the Crossroads, translated below, is a shortened version of his reply.

In his article, Muhić noted with consternation Marković's description of the Kraigher Commission as 'Reaganite', given its acceptance of IMF terms 'appropriate to an occupied country' rather than a sovereign state; as being 'hopelessly inspired by the ideology of pure economic laws' and 'economic rather than ad-

ministrative force' in its efforts to push through the IMF terms. Muhić levelled the charge that all of Marković's warnings against the danger that the Party might become a prisoner of the country's bureaucracy and technocracy were nothing but an attempt to 'eliminate the LCY from the existing social system'. He asked whether the freedom given to Marković to voice his views was not really a backdoor 'legalisation' of a left tendency inside the Party which, if allowed to succeed, would soon present itself as 'an alternative' (presumably to the present majority). Though agreeing with his interlocutor that 'the LCY cannot maintain itself just by constant recall of its vanguard role in the revolution, but must continuously prove itself' in practice, Muhić claimed that Marković's positions, taken together, were nothing but an 'emotional voluntarism (reminiscent) of the Chinese Cultural Revolution', advocating in effect a new 'Jacobin dictatorship' and the terror of a 'third revolution' in place of the existing democracy. These are only a few of the accusations to which Marković is replying in the article published here.

The exchange between Muhić and Marković, members of the LCY and belonging to the same post-war generation (both are in their early forties), gives a flavour of the themes and passions animating the Yugoslav political scene today. It is one of the more remarkable contradictions of the current Yugoslav political life that the increasing intolerance towards unauthorised expression of opinion referred to elsewhere in this issue of Labour Focus exists side by side with a public debate, among party intellectuals and others enjoying access to the media, more open, wide-ranging and vital than anything seen in the country since the late sixties.

Translation for Labour Focus by Michèle Lee.)

By Luka Marković

Nobody can 'eliminate the Party from the political system' except the Party (LCY) itself, and I think we should talk about this quite openly and concretely. Let us take an example. Workers' councils are sitting today from Triglav (Slovenia) to Devdelija (Macedonia); delegates are fighting self-management battles in communal assemblies and socio-political institutions; every activity financed from local citizens' contributions is publicly discussed and directly voted on. Yet nowhere do we discuss or vote on our continuous and increasing foreign indebtedness, and what is more, because of the way in which international bankers operate, only a very narrow circle of people is involved in these negotiations. In this way the Party leadership, albeit against its will, has eliminated its own Party from the political system — and indeed, in this concrete case, suspended our very political system itself.

If this were a one-off instance, over and done with, it might be possible to justify and accept it as due to exceptional circumstances. But as the Indian proverb says, once you climb on the tiger's back you cannot get off again. One would have to be either naive or hypocritical to maintain that it is possible to squeeze the debt of some twenty billion dollars (plus several times that sum which will accrue in the course of all the future re-schedulings) from our working class in the next ten years and at the same time feed our own 'centres of alienated power', without many similar further suspensions of our political system. It is here that I see the main danger that threatens to eliminate the LCY from the political scene or at least transform the perception of its historical role.

If we want to talk of 'terror', then once again we must do so concretely. We should openly state what is perfectly plain to anyone who cares to see it, that a lot more class terror, by the quite 'real forces' of the world and our domestic bourgeoisie, will be re-

quired in order to carry through our present policies of debt. It is perfectly possible, by using economic terror, to push down the workers' real wages (for the fourth successive year already, in our case) and the workers may remain silent. But if this continues for much longer, then other forms of terror will have to be used, in addition to economic violence, against our working class. This additional terror is already inscribed in our present-day society, and remains only to be manifested fully: only a revolution, I would argue, can avert it. Without such a revolution, the LCY will find itself on the side of this terror and thus irrevocably destroy its historic *raison d'être*.

With respect to our independence, Comrade Ribicic has already spelt out where we are (in official political language): 'Our country is now engaged in a battle of wide dimensions (which) can be compared to our national liberation struggle and our struggle against Stalinism, for our independent road to socialism'. If 1983 is really comparable to 1941 and 1948, then surely the solutions we must seek should likewise have the scope of the revolutionary solutions produced by those years. So far as I am aware, all we have in the way of a Party view on how to 'get out of our current difficulties' is the document 'Starting-points for a Long-term Programme of Economic Stabilisation' — which not even the members of the Kraigher Commission which produced it would place alongside the call to revolt in 1941, or the resistance to Stalin and the introduction of self-management in 1948-50. We produce many such documents, with great fanfare, only to leave them to the winds or the collectors of old paper. One need not have any 'confidential sources' — just a simple feeling for reality — to know that the Federal government has new 'packages' in store for us that will all be neatly gift-wrapped in the 'Starting-points'.

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Days of Hope: Yugoslav CP leaders on the eve of victory in the partisan revolutionary struggle. Seated far right, Kardelj, on his left Rankovic

In the world capitalist system, dependence means exploitation; the struggle for independence is, therefore, necessarily a class struggle against both the foreign exploiter and his domestic support. This struggle must thus involve a movement of the exploited masses, and is not just a matter for specialists, closed meetings and hermetic language that nobody can understand.

It is not as if our independence were something found buried in our Balkan genes: our 'glorious forebearers' for much of the time were mere pawns in other people's games. The Yugoslav backbone was bent for much of its history, and the tales of the 'freedom-loving tradition of our nations and nationalities' are quite simple tales. The miracle of the first popular stiffening of that backbone was achieved in a completely 'voluntarist' and 'unscientific' manner by Tito and his partisans. The struggles for independence from foreign capital (1941) or from Stalinism (1948) were also class struggles, revolutions, the opening-up of new perspectives for the masses, the freeing of their initiative. This is the only road to independence. Nothing in our history was really democratic, except for our revolution.

What are we to do if we are to develop our revolution, independence and democracy? I believe that it is impossible to regain our independence, and for the LCY to regain its historic role, without dealing first with the question of what class interests are lined up for or against this goal in Yugoslavia today. Marx's theoretical language is still the most relevant for any such class analysis. However, within this language and this analysis, it is necessary also to talk about the bourgeoisie under socialism; for this is how our working class will speak a few years from now, when the continuously deepening world and domestic crisis awakens its own class consciousness. As a Communist, I do not want the LCY to find itself the target of this working-class dissatisfaction: it should instead place itself at its head and help it to become revolutionary. I believe the only way out of the present system is the reunification of the working class and the LCY. Unless the Party can find a new strength within itself and unite all the progressive forces in our society, the working class of Yugoslavia in the coming decades will be led by foreign bourgeois forces. The workers' councils will be transformed into managing boards of Yugoslav branch offices of multinational companies; the Party will become the party of the peripheral bourgeoisie — just as in 1948 it ran the risk of becoming a provincial section of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

What is the Yugoslav bourgeoisie? Into this camp we must place our bureaucracy and technocracy, jointly responsible for our indebtedness to international capital, as well as the petty bourgeoisie, or small business. I think there is nothing wrong with encouraging 'small business' and opening up some perspective for this bourgeois fraction. Yet, as everybody knows, this social layer can hardly be seen as the class carrier of the struggle for independence. It is likely that some of its members, out of a sense of insecurity caused by the economic crisis and under the banner of left populism, will lean to the working class; but it is equally probable that its majority will join the bureaucracy under the banner of right populism (e.g. nationalism) pulling behind it also the more

backward layers of the working class.

As for the working class itself, its present perspective is that the major part of its working life will be spent paying interest rates on continuously re-scheduled debts. As its class awareness develops, it will certainly pin the convict's badge on foreign capital as its main exploiter, and on the domestic bourgeoisie as the mainstay of its economic dependence. The workers' children will inherit the payment of the interest rates from their parents. Those who acquire some higher education (and these will be few, since the IMF does not like educated debtors) can look forward to a life spent supervising the production of toothpaste under a foreign licence: they will, in practice, be nothing but skilled foremen overseeing the workers on behalf of foreign capital. Yet this educated youth will certainly want to be able to study genetic engineering, microelectronics, optical fibres, robots and so on in their own country; and insofar as this natural, hence indestructible, desire becomes politically articulated, it will become a struggle for independence.

In short, without a struggle for independence from foreign capital there is no League of Communists; and without a mobilised working class and intelligentsia, there is no struggle for independence. The question is: will this class alliance between workers and progressive youth be achieved in an uncontrolled and elemental manner against the LCY (in which case the latter will become the party of the bourgeoisie), or will the LCY today, in advance, with a new programme provide the necessary platform for revolution and independence, thereby opening the questions of the 21st century.

Nothing, of course, guarantees that the movement of the working class and intelligentsia will in its first upsurge be Communist, in which case, as in Poland, the newly-created situation will be resolved by Big Brother. It is, therefore, important that this movement is organised from the start as a 'third' revolution under the leadership of the LCY. When revolution looms, conservatives of every kind find it convenient to shout 'violence', in an attempt to preserve the *status quo*. However, revolution is the only way to avoid violence. I am convinced that only a revolutionary LCY would today be able to remove without force from their positions of power those who are most obviously and most grossly responsible for the current situation, and whom nobody can defend with any 'scientific' arguments. Energetically and uncompromisingly, without sweeping decrees, but rather by simple individual or collective decision, the LCY must either move these people to other jobs where they cannot do much harm, or send them to read the papers and feed the pigeons in the park.

For the vast majority of our people the question is no longer whether it will be necessary, in the near future, to give up all those many things to which we have become accustomed, but whether the sacrifice is worth it or not: whether it is a sacrifice on behalf of the world bourgeoisie and its domestic servants, or one for higher and more noble aims! Which aims would these be? Clearly, world capitalism as it moves from the 20th to the 21st century is dividing the whole world into creators and consumers of knowledge, so that for the young generation production of knowledge has the same meaning and relevance as industrialisation had for that which emerged from the revolution of 1941-5. Of course, it is impossible from the surplus created by the working class simultaneously to realise this scientific revolution and to pay off our foreign debts.

This means that questions of intellectual, artistic and political freedom are being posed afresh, in an entirely novel form. Similarly, the future society is unthinkable with a continuation of the present inequality of women, so that the question of women's liberation is likewise posed today in all its revolutionary potential.

I admit quite freely that I cannot myself identify all the other great aims which would be appropriate for a new revolutionary alliance. Such a programme can come about only as a result of a collective effort of revolutionary imagination, which would certainly be facilitated by the LCY's participation. However, if the Party is unable to set out on the path of political renewal of its ranks, and remains the party of bureaucrats and technocrats, the party of our dependence, then the very logic of our semi-colonial status will turn it more and more into a party of terror directed against its own working class, on behalf of foreign capital. It is absurd today to be fanning fears of 'left radicalism' and 'left violence'. For the entirely conceivable violence today might appear in our country bearing a Communist name — though such violence would, of course, have nothing Communist about it.

Belgrade Prisons: Theory and Practice

(In the winter 1982/3 issue of Labour Focus we published an account of an incident on 16 July 1982, when eight people were arrested in Belgrade for demonstrating in solidarity with Solidarnosc during a public meeting in support of the Palestinian national struggle. Three weeks later, another group was arrested in Belgrade, this time for protesting against their comrades' arrest. On this occasion, seven of the demonstrators were sentenced to between twenty and thirty days in prison. One of those sentenced, Ivan Jankovic, himself a criminologist, subsequently wrote an open letter to the President of the Belgrade City Assembly, the President of the Belgrade District Court, and others describing, through the prism of his own experience, the systematic flouting of legal norms tolerated by prison authorities in the Yugoslav capital. His letter is published below. A document in its own right, Jankovic's letter also raises wider problems regarding the treatment of political and other prisoners in Yugoslav theory and practice.*

According to Amnesty International Report 1983, the number of political prisoners has risen sharply in Yugoslavia since 1981. This increase has largely been due to the intake of ethnic Albanians, following the rebellion in Kosovo in the spring of that year (See Michele Lee, 'The Two Albanias', New Left Review 140). But it suggests also that there has been growing political repression in the years since Tito's death. A large trial of 'Muslim nationalists' charged with aiming to set up a separate Muslim state based on Bosnia (in reality, a group of Islamic revivalists dedicated to the creation of a 'unified Islamic community from Morocco to Indonesia') was held in Sarajevo in the summer of 1983; its outcome, with twelve of the defendants being given prison sentences of up to 15 years, shows that the trend is continuing.

The last two years have witnessed a lively discussion in the Yugoslav press, sparked off by the publication of a number of novels, with a strong documentary basis, describing the terrible fate of some 12,000 of the so-called 'Informbirovci' who, after the

Yugoslav-Soviet break in 1948, were imprisoned without trial on the Adriatic Island of Goli Otok and submitted to the most inhuman treatment. Certainly, the experience of Goli Otok in that period was a unique one, and systematic terror against political prisoners has not since then been normal practice of the Yugoslav authorities. There are reasons to believe, however, that despite retrospective official condemnation of the methods of 1948, there has not been a complete break with the past. A number of reports indicate that Albanian prisoners, in particular (those, for example, serving their long sentences in prisons in the Socialist Republic of Croatia), enjoy little protection against wilful cruelty from their warders. The universal condemnation of, and public revulsion against, the violence conducted on Goli Otok has thus not been effective in preventing abuse of fundamental human rights in Yugoslav prisons.

In June 1983, a petition calling for a change to Article 154 of the Constitution was signed by some 158 intellectuals from all over Yugoslavia. The article in question, which spells out the equality of citizens before law, reads (with the proposed changes in brackets): 'Citizens are equal in their rights and duties irrespective of their nationality, race, sex, language, religion, education, social status (as well as their political and other beliefs). All are equal before the law.' It is clear that the proposed amendment would help to differentiate between the right to hold different political views, on the one hand, and violent action directed against fundamental achievements of the Yugoslav socialist revolution, on the other. By limiting the arbitrary power of the state in respect to political dissent, it would also strengthen the possibility of public control over the state's penal practices, something whose value and necessity is forcibly argued here by Ivan Jankovic.

Translation of the document by Michèle Lee for Labour Focus.)

* See Amnesty International Report 1983, pp. 294-5.

By Ivan Jankovic

Dear Comrade Ćosić,
Since according to the law (Art. 324, pt. 1 of the Law of Application of Penal Sanctions in the Socialist Republic of Serbia — ZIKS) you are responsible for supervising the lawful and correct treatment of prisoners, I would like to inform you about the situation in the Belgrade District Prison in which I recently had the opportunity to spend one month. For this I shall make use of my theoretical and practical knowledge of criminology and penology, direct observations of some 15 of my male and female comrades (who were imprisoned together with me), as well as the rich experience of the prisoners I met at Pandinska Skela and the Central Prison.

I have forwarded copies of this letter to the President of the Belgrade City Assembly, the President of the Belgrade District Court, the Governor of the Belgrade District Prison, and to several Yugoslav journals and dailies. I have done this because I believe that questions regarding the penal system are not without interest for the public at large, and that secrecy and anonymity of penal practice prevent fruitful public debates; prevent public participation in the planning and execution of penal reforms. The public is indeed the best guarantor of legality and the most effective protector of prisoners' human dignity and rights. No purely administrative supervision, even when conducted more effectively than is the case with your Secretariat, can endow the prisoners with a sense of security and trust in a way that the public can, through the media and by way of citizens' pressure groups for penal reform, etc. Finally, the question of conditions of prison life is likely to become relevant for an increasing number of Yugoslavs in the near future, since criminological research has indubitably shown that the prison population increases with an increase in unemployment. As unemployment grows in Yugoslavia, we can be

certain that more people will become imprisoned, including many for whom being gaoled is not a frequent or common experience.

During my stay at the District Prison I became convinced that the prisoners' dignity is intentionally and systematically violated; that prisoners are beaten; that prison labour is openly exploited; that the prisoners have no adequate medical protection; that the institution is not immune from corruption; and that the external supervision is insufficient and ineffective. I will expand below on each of these points, using my personal and other people's experience.

1. HUMAN DIGNITY

Article 10 of ZIKS states that 'the treatment of the prisoner must be humane, respectful of his dignity and his physical and mental well-being, with due regard for the maintenance of work and discipline'. However, the conditions and habits of the prison régime are such that the human dignity of those who are imprisoned there is seriously at risk and exposed to abuse. I do not refer here to personal dignity which, of course, varies from prisoner to prisoner, but to human dignity, ie. the treatment and the conditions of existence to which a human being is entitled at all times, a certain minimum of civilisation whose content is derived from the country's level of economic, cultural and political development. This minimum must be made available to all prisoners, including those whose personal dignity outside the prison walls falls below that minimum: those who, when free, go hungry, dress in rags, lie, cheat and steal. Here we find the civilising or, more narrowly, educational function of the prison sentence.

Human dignity is abused, above all, by the unnecessary but nevertheless persistent, calculated and cultivated rudeness practised by the prison staff. This rudeness is expressed in tone, in in-

sulting and vulgar expressions, and in frequent threats directed at the prisoners. According to the House Regulations, the prisoners are bound to address all the staff by the (formal) 'you'; the officials, however, address all the prisoners by the (intimate) 'thou'. When a young prison guard shouts at a forty-year-old man: 'Hey, boy, come thou here!', he visibly offends his personal dignity. The belief that this mode of address is demanded by law is prevalent among the staff. Thus, for example, a prisoner (otherwise a university professor) who, surprised at being addressed by the prison doctor as 'thou', was informed by him that this form of address is included in the House Regulations. Naturally, the doctor was wrong. The Regulations do not specify — nor can one derive from them by argument *a contrario* — that the officers must or ought to address the inmates as 'thou'. On the contrary, any interpretation of article 10 of ZIKS is more in accordance with the obligation to address the prisoners formally, as demanded by the principle of respect for human dignity. This problem — a matter minor only in appearance — could be solved by a clarification of the prison rules, coming either from the Secretary or the Prison Governor. An explicit institutionalisation of the need by the prison staff to address the inmates as 'you' would have other good consequences: it is more difficult to swear at or beat a person whom you have to address in the formal manner. This reform would, therefore, make less likely the otherwise numerous instances of cursing, hitting and beating the prisoners.

The prison officers are protected by anonymity in their dealings with the prisoners. The prisoner has no way of learning the name of the officer who insults or threatens him, or otherwise acts unlawfully. In the above-mentioned episode with the doctor, the prisoner was surprised to see that the doctor's name did not appear on his white coat, as is customary. Indeed, this doctor went on to report the prisoner for 'impudent behaviour' and demanded disciplinary punishment for him. The prisoners, when talking among themselves, call the guards by their nicknames (e.g. Vampire, Clothes-hanger, Little Bulldog) and are unable to identify them in a correct manner when protesting against their behaviour. Anonymity helps the avoidance of responsibility: if the officers were identifiable, they would then take more trouble with their manners. An easy remedy would be to oblige the prison personnel to wear a badge showing their name and position, when on duty.

The convicted are given a uniform on arrival which is such that it cannot but be seen as a blow against the human dignity of the wearer. When there are no great holes to cover the knees, the trousers are adorned with patches of many different colours. Trousers which are too large are tied round the waist with string or wire, and those which are too small have to be worn undone at all times. The same is true of other articles of clothing. Dressed in this manner the *mardeljasi* (*mardelj* = prison) appear rather picturesque, but hardly dignified. Indeed, when the prisoners have for some reason or another to see a superior functionary or an inspector, the guards quickly distribute among them somewhat cleaner and less torn clothes. (Speaking of clothes, it should be noted that the relevant section of Regulations Concerning Clothes, Underwear and Footwear of Persons in Institutions of Penal Servitude, published in *Official Register of S.R.S.* no. 30, 1978, is totally ignored. The inmates normally get less than half of the articles demanded by Regulations; nobody inside ever saw such items as shoes, belts, pyjamas/nightdresses, etc.).

Swearing in prison is common and terrible. There are artists among the prisoners who invent the most complex obscene or perverse swear-words. Yet swearing is not confined to the prisoners. There is a great deal of similarity between the prisoners and the staff (especially the guards), partly due to long and intimate contact and partly to similar social background and education. They both read the same comics, enjoy the same type of music, have similar attitudes to violence and women, possess many values in common. It is therefore not unusual for the guards to swear as well. Sometimes this is little more than a matter of using swearwords in ordinary speech, with no ill intent behind it, as is common among people of limited vocabulary and ability of articulation. At other times swearing is used as a special form of threat, as when describing things which are likely to happen to the abused, usually by way of a sexual metaphor. Finally, there is the swearing whose aim is to insult and generally humiliate the prisoner. Of countless instances I shall quote two.

On 3 August 1982 a guard, Zoran Savić, swore at a prisoner G.-J., a student. One day later, a prison technician, a certain Jovo (surname unknown) cursed an Albanian prisoner's 'fucking Siptar sun' (Siptar = vulg. for Albanian). In both cases complaints were made to the Prison Governor as well as to your Secretariat, but no reply was received. It is not, as I have argued, strange that the guards should swear at the prisoners. What is strange, I would think, is that the prisoners' complaints are left unanswered. This is against the explicit legal requirement (Art. 112, pt. 2 of ZIKS); it cannot be explained in any other way than that your Secretariat, as well as the prison administration, refuse to extend to the prisoners the legal protection to which they are entitled, and hence approve and encourage the abuse of prisoners and of their human dignity.



Socialist intellectual Milan Nikolic in a cell in the Belgrade Police Headquarters in August 1982 because of his protest on behalf of Solidarity

2. THE USE OF FORCE

To say that in the Belgrade District Prison order and discipline rest on fear of physical punishment is no exaggeration. The inmates are often beaten, and are threatened with physical punishment every day and indeed at all times. The prisoners are told that this use of violence is sanctioned by law; its purpose is to break 'passive resistance'. Such resistance is seen to exist when 'the condemned does not obey a lawful order coming from an authorised person, or places himself in a position which prevents the execution of such an order' (art. 7 pt. 5 of Regulations Concerning Means and Conditions of Use of Force in the Institutions of Penal Servitude, the *Official Register of S.R.S.*, no.30, 1978). The interpretation of this law is rather loose in actual practice. Prisoners who work slowly or badly are beaten with truncheons; those who do not wake up on time are beaten in their beds; those too slow in lining up are slapped. I shall quote a few examples. The guard Z. Savić was seen to beat without reason a student prisoner with his fists and his truncheon. He continued to beat him even after the man fell to the ground — on the head, the neck and the arms. On 7 August 1982 the same guard hit a prisoner who was somewhat slow in falling into line, in the stomach and on the chin. A guard known as *Karate* used his truncheon on a prisoner who, asleep on a bench, did not hear the bell for the line-up.

Prisoners guilty of more serious breaches of discipline are beaten systematically, by several guards at one and the same time, with fists and truncheons. This is called 'breaking him like a cunt' (in less serious cases, the *mardeljas* merely 'eats pussy'). Such a fate awaits virtually any prisoner who tries to escape, or, having escaped, is returned to the prison. (It should be noted that at the Padinska Skela section of the Belgrade District Prison some fifty prisoners on average are on the run, judging by the daily count.)

According to Art. 12 of Regulations mentioned above, a guard is obliged to produce a written report each time he uses force against a prisoner, and the prison authorities are required to inform the Secretariat every time the truncheon is used. In addition, each instance must be recorded in a special register (see para. 5/7 of 'Instructions Concerning Records and Keeping of Records of Condemned and Imprisoned Persons', the *Official Register of S.R.S.*, no. 58, 1981). I very much wonder if this was done in the three cases I describe above.

In the Belgrade District Prison force is not applied in accordance with the law. Rather, beatings conducted there are intended

to intimidate and punish. In support of this statement I would like to recall an interesting psychological observation. At least one guard with whom I conversed believed, quite sincerely, that physical punishment existed as a legal sanction. A majority of women prisoners believed the same, and quoted twenty-five blows as prescribed by law!

A guard explained patiently to the student D.G., who was late for the line-up, that two types of punishment were provided for such a misdemeanour: 1) scrubbing the prison-hall floor; 2) beating. He also added that the two could be applied consecutively. If one remembers that physical punishment of prisoners was prohibited in Serbia as early as 1873, then we — and most especially you — must feel greatly concerned.

3. EXPLOITATION OF PRISON LABOUR

Historically, prison labour has had two functions. The first was economic; but in the 19th century, labour in prison acquired a purely punitive character. In modern penology, however, it is held that labour should have a pedagogic function (re-socialisation through work). Yugoslav law accepts this second premise: 'the aim of work is to give the prisoner new, or help him to keep or improve old, working skills and expertise which will subsequently facilitate his reintegration into life (outside)' (Art. 15 pt. 3 of ZIKS). Work is obligatory in our prisons (Art. 15 pt. 1). Theoretically, it is arguable whether forced labour can have this pedagogic function, for structural and psychological reasons. I personally think that it cannot, but this is a matter that transcends the scope of my present letter. Starting from the legal obligation of the prisoner to work, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this work is being exploited by the prison administration.

It should be remembered that a prison is a budgeted institution, ie. it receives from the City Assembly all that it requires in order to function. The prison realises an additional income through its own productive activity, and also by leasing out the prisoners' labour power. A part of the income thus acquired — the smaller part — is given to the prisoners in compensation for their work, while the rest is divided between the maintenance of the prison infrastructure and the augmentation of the personal income of the prison staff. Their interest in maximising the profit created by prison labour is evident. Prisoners' 'wages' are not regulated by any general legal act, with the exception of the ruling contained in Art. 120 of ZIKS which states that 'compensation (for labour) should be in the region between 10% and 20% of the guaranteed minimum wage in the Republic'. It appears that the Belgrade District Prison has no rule regulating the compensation or reward for work done by prisoners (contrary to Art. 12, pt. 5 of ZIKS). Indeed, this matter is not regulated at the level of the Republic of Serbia, although other republics (e.g. Croatia) have already enacted the necessary laws.

The section of the District Prison located at Padinska Skela hires out a number of prisoners (40-50) to various Belgrade firms (e.g. 'Janko Lisjak', 'Otpad', etc.). Every morning these prisoners are taken by bus to the enterprises and returned to the prison after their work is done. The prison charges a daily rate for their labour of apparently not less than 600 Din. per person; but the individual prisoner receives some 50 to 100 Din. — the rest is kept by the prison authorities. Several dozen prisoners work inside the Prison itself, mainly in the workshops, while others are used in the kitchen garden, etc. They receive some 20 Din. daily. From time to time the prison concludes a special deal; for example, it recently accepted the job of cleaning 800 tonnes of peppers for canning, on behalf of a firm in Titel. For such large jobs, all prisoners are made to work, even those reported sick (as happened on 16 August 1982).

The prisoners are not given any written statement with their wages, so that it is not possible to check the accuracy of the amount they receive. As an example, a comrade who worked twice as many days as I was paid the same (60 Din.), while a third comrade, whose input was the same as mine, received considerably more (100 Din.). I shall leave to one side the question of unfair competition from forced labour — this is a matter for the trade unions and workers' parties, who dealt with it long ago — in the Gotha Programme. I am concerned here only with the exploitation of this labour. If income produced by prison labour continues to be used to purchase flats and increase the personal income of those

who drive the prisoners to work in the first place, then its exploitation can hardly be avoided.

4. HEALTH CARE

Contrary to legal requirements, convicts are often admitted to prison without a medical examination. For example, three women prisoners, all students, were examined only on the twelfth day of their stay at Padinska Skela, while the prisoners admitted on 2 August were 'examined' only by a nurse. The doctor is frequently absent, and prisoners are warned through the loudspeakers not to report to the sick bay, sometimes for three consecutive days. Naturally, I am not really competent to comment on the quality of training of prison doctors, but I certainly acquired a strong impression that their behaviour is not in accordance with medical ethics. The above-mentioned doctor, Vlada Tanaskovic, for example, did not arrange a specialist examination for one prisoner throughout the latter's twenty-five days in prison, although he had himself recommended this. The same doctor prescribed antibiotics for a prisoner in the isolation cell; on being told that the prisoner was on hunger strike, he advised him to take his medicine when he heard food being distributed to the others!

5. DISCIPLINARY PUNISHMENT

In the Belgrade District Prison, disciplinary punishment by isolation is used in a manner contrary to the law. It is surprising that this has escaped the notice of your inspectors and that the prison Governor, who according to the law (Art. 28 of ZIKS) is responsible for the functioning of the institution, has not been warned. According to Articles 154 and 155 of ZIKS, the isolation cell must contain a bed, a table, and a chair; the prisoner must be visited every day by a doctor, twice a week by a pedagogue and once a week by the Governor. He must be provided with the opportunity of a daily walk of one hour's duration. At the Central Prison, where punishments by isolation are served, none of this is respected.

The collective memory of the *mardeljasi* records not a single instance of somebody sleeping on a mattress when in isolation, and the wildest convict imagination cannot imagine a doctor who voluntarily visits these cells. I was punished, together with six others, to eight days of isolation. Five of my comrades were on hunger strike throughout that time. On the fourth day, after complaining to the Governor about the unlawful state of the prison cells, we were given mattresses, pillows and bedding, and a doctor came to visit us. Other prisoners in the block could not believe their senses. One of my neighbours, who had never received anything good from the Administration and hence had developed an instinctive wariness of Greek gifts, told me: 'They must be preparing you for an interrogation'. In other words, only those under interrogation sleep on mattresses in the Central Prison. The next day the other prisoners received mattresses as well, but no bedding. Sleeping on a bare board with only two dirty and torn blankets is not pleasant. In fact it represents an additional punishment, not envisaged by the law. Such practices go against the fundamental principle of modern criminal law: *nulla poena sine lege*. In the course of the last five years (ie. since the promulgation of the new ZIKS), thousands of individuals have been subjected to this illegal punishment, before the very eyes of the Prison Governor and under the formal supervision of your Secretariat. How, I beg you to consider, can they be compensated for this?

(Here I should add that the Governor of the District Prison is a most mysterious person. I never saw him during the month that I was there, and the other prisoners were not even sure what he looked like. Contrary to the law, the Governor here does not make decisions about punishment by isolation — it certainly did not happen in my case — but they are taken by the chief warden. Nobody had ever heard of an occasion on which the Governor had visited a prisoner in isolation cell. He never replied to a single complaint addressed to him, although the law explicitly obliges him to do so.)

At the Central Prison, exercise lasts half an hour. At least, this is what the guards say, but as the prisoner is not allowed a watch he cannot check this. At best, therefore, the exercise period is half the legal minimum. On Sundays, prisoners have to stay in their cells. This probably happens because the institution is then not fully staffed: the comfort of the officers prevails over the prisoners'

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needs. This is yet another instance of evasion of legal requirements. If the prison is under-budgeted and hence understaffed, then your Secretariat should be informed of this. If your Secretariat cannot help, then the City Assembly should be informed and either the law or the budget should be changed accordingly. What is impermissible is to allow this ad-hoc tampering with the law, which only reduces it to a mockery.

One should not wait for prisoners' complaints in order to act, since the prisoners are usually ignorant of the law and in any case fear the consequences. When I advised a prisoner to ask for a copy of the Law concerning the Application of Penal Section (which the administration is required to provide on request), his reply was: 'Yes, and then they will send five of them to my cell to stomp on me.' Three women comrades, all students, who spent the period between 10 and 16 July at the Central Prison without being properly charged, demanded to see a copy of the Law but were refused. The duty of the prison authorities and of your Secretariat is to safeguard prisoners' legal rights. What — apart from your individual conscience and public pressure — can ensure that this does happen?

6. CORRUPTION

Thanks to secrecy and isolation, prisons are fertile ground for every kind of corruption. Belgrade gaols from time immemorial have been known as corrupt. In 1906 the governor of the Topcider prison, a certain Z. Stanković, made prisoners produce articles for his own use in the prison workshops, and he and his staff used the prisoners' food to fatten their pigs. In 1911, the Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Serbia was called to account in the Assembly for using the prison carriage for the needs of his household. In the Serbian and Yugoslav (interwar) press, numerous examples of this can be found. It would appear that corruption in Belgrade prisons has survived to this day. It is in the nature of things that this charge is difficult to prove, but I shall quote a few instances which your inspectors would find easy to check.

The inmates wash the prison officers' cars regularly and without pay. The majority of officers maintain and repair their cars in the prison workshop, using unpaid labour. When larger repairs are necessary, the owners supply their own materials and sometimes also the mechanics. On 17 August 1982 the prison's Black Maria carried tinsplate for a private garage at Bor. From time to time prisoners are asked to manufacture articles (eg shelves) for the staff. Such instances could easily be multiplied.

ALBANIA

Albania's Isolation in Post-War Politics

By Michèle Lee

(In the present increasingly sharp confrontation between East and West, some prominent figures in Washington are casting doubt on the traditional US policy of accepting the neutral status of Yugoslavia and Albania's isolation from both blocs. Michèle Lee traces Albania's international alignments since the War and examines the ideas of a leading Reaganite in the US Congress about how America should try to redraw the political map of the region.)

Modern Albania is a child of the wartime revolution led by the Communist Party of Albania (since 1948, the Albanian Party of Labour). The CPA was founded in November 1941, two and a half years after the country's invasion by Fascist Italy. It united several groups, based on the main ur-

7. INSPECTION

Supervision exercised by your Secretariat is insufficient and ineffective. The inspectors tend to examine the prison (the buildings, the gardens etc.) and the prison books, but hardly — if at all — communicate with the prisoners. The inmates spend days before each inspection cleaning the buildings and tending the gardens. On the day of inspection, they are sent away to work in the fields or are hidden from the inspectors in other ways. Even when they do meet them, the prisoners prefer not to talk, fully aware that any complaint will later cost them dearly — the officers in any case explicitly warn them beforehand against any action of this kind.

On 23 July such a visit took place at Padinska Skela. In the morning the prisoners were sent to work in the kitchen garden; even the sick were taken into the garden, where they had to hide behind some kind of a wall. The women were kept in, and were instructed on what to say if questioned by the inspectors (who never asked them anything). Only a handful of the most trusty prisoners remained in the central compound. True, the beautifully arranged flower beds in the prison garden were a delight to the eye, but inspectors are there not for the flowers but for the prisoners — their job is to try to learn from the prisoners, in a discreet and reasonable manner, if any injustice or irregularity is taking place in the prison. The inspectors are there to protect the prisoners from the prison authorities, and not the other way round. I am convinced that your inspectors are fully aware where their duty lies, but that, for various reasons, they do not do what they should. It is your task to make sure that they perform their duty properly.

I hope that you will give your full attention to the matters raised in this letter, and that you will take the necessary measures. I also hope that you will make public your response to this letter. The law (art. 329) empowers you to give information from time to time to the public media, and to allow direct inspection by them of penal institutions. The press up till now has tended to publish apologetic reports, full of admiration for our prison system which improves the bad and the sinful. A more realistic, objective and critical reporting — not necessarily flattering to the prison authorities — would be much more useful to our penal system. That is, if we take seriously its stated aims.

In the expectation of your early reply,
I remain respectfully,
Dr Ivan Janković

ban centres, which had hitherto been in mutual competition for the numerically small working class and intelligentsia. The role of catalyst in the process was played by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, on behalf of the Comintern. A national liberation struggle closely coordinated with that led by Tito was conducted, as in Yugoslavia, simultaneously with a bitter civil war, bringing the CPA to power within three years of its foundation: Tirana was liberated from the Nazis by Albanian partisans, commanded by Mehmet Shehu, on 27 November 1944. Although Yugoslav partisans never fought on Albania's territory, CPY influence was dominant until 1948, when Yugoslavia was expelled from the Soviet bloc. The Albanians then became among the staunchest and by far the most durable, of Stalin's followers. Outside Georgia and Manchuria, Albania is today the only place

in the world where Stalin's portraits and statues adorn public places.

The speed of the historic change which engulfed the country in 1941-4 was all the more remarkable, given that the civil war had started in earnest only in August 1943, after the breakdown of talks between the Communist-led National Liberation Front and the bourgeois-nationalist Balli Kombetër (supported for a time by the British: by mutual agreement, the Western Allies' Balkan policy had been in British hands). The imposition of Communist rule was as swift as it was violent, the urgency of consolidating power underscored by the uncertain future which the country, with its unhappy history of numerous foreign interventions and partitions, faced in the impending post-war European settlement. Albania was apparently not a subject of discussion between Churchill and Stalin at

Teheran (November 1943), or in Moscow (October 1944, when Churchill omitted Albania from the notorious piece of paper he shoved across the table to Stalin, indicating a possible division of spheres of influence in the Balkans), or at Yalta (February 1945). The strong Yugoslav influence in Albania, however, ensured that the country would remain part of the system then in formation in Eastern Europe.

At the end of the war Albania was under intense pressure from Belgrade (secretly encouraged by Moscow) to join the Yugoslav Federation as its eighth republic. This policy also meant discouraging Western influence in Albania, which it saw as providing a potential bridgehead for capitalist restoration. Great Britain and the United States, involved in the Greek civil war on the anti-Communist side, were in fact exerting considerable political and economic pressure on the new government in Tirana. They encouraged counter-revolutionary insurgency, openly supported illegitimate Greek claims to southern Albania ('Northern Epirus'), refused to support Albania's application to join the United Nations, and (in the case of the USA) made diplomatic recognition conditional upon the new government's acceptance of all pre-war bilateral treaties. In the spring of 1946 Britain announced that it would not send its ambassador to the Albanian capital, and in the summer of the same year the US Senate voted unanimously to support Greek territorial claims (the Pepper Resolution of 29 July 1946).

The growing East-West tension in the Balkans precipitated the so-called Corfu Channel Incident: in October 1946 four British warships, passing through Albania's territorial waters without previous permission or announcement, struck mines in the Corfu Channel and suffered heavy casualties (at this time 'gunboat diplomacy' formed a natural part of Anglo-American policies in South-eastern Europe whose high point was the counter-revolutionary intervention in Greece). In 1953 the International Court of Justice cleared Albania of any responsibility for the incident — the country had no mine-laying equipment (though Yugoslavia had). Yet after the event, both British and Americans withdrew their diplomatic missions to Tirana, never to return.

During the Cold War, London concentrated on arming Albanian exiles in Italy and organising expeditions such as the one in 1950, when a group of armed 'Albanian patriots' were sent into Albania to start an anti-Communist uprising: thanks to Kim Philby, this British 'Bay of Pigs' was a complete failure. Moreover, British-Albanian relations failed to improve even after the end of the Cold War period.

One reason was that Britain was holding some 2,000 kilogrammes of Albanian gold, representing the total pre-war gold reserves of the country, which the Nazis had originally seized from the National Bank of Albania, and which the British had transferred to the Bank of England from the Berlin Reichsbank at the end of the war. Forty years on, this gold *still* eludes its rightful owners, despite the International Court of

Justice ruling that the gold should be returned to Albania, then and now the poorest country in Europe. Thus, although the present government in Tirana shows no great desire to see the return of a British ambassador, there is no doubt that the restitution of Albanian property would represent an important step in the normalisation of relations between the two states.¹

Today, Albania is the only country in Europe without diplomatic relations either with Great Britain or with the United States. There is no Soviet legation in the Albanian capital either. After 1948, when Albania severed its intimate wartime alliance with Yugoslavia, it established close relations with the Soviet Union, which were maintained until the 20th Congress of the CPSU. There followed a rapid cooling of Soviet-Albanian relations: the dominant wing of the Albanian party felt mortally threatened by the Tito-Khrushchev rapprochement. By 1962 Albania was in open alignment with China, which filled the economic and military gap created by the withdrawal of Soviet and East European aid and personnel. Fourteen years later, however, Albania broke with China as well, ostensibly in protest against the latter's decision to re-establish diplomatic links with the United States.

After the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Albania embarked on a long-term process of mending its relations with Yugoslavia, the only other Balkan country outside the two blocs. During the 1970s, cultural and economic links were strengthened, most of them routed via the Albanian-inhabited Yugoslav province of Kosovo.² After the revolt there in the spring of 1981, for which the Yugoslav propaganda chose to blame Tirana, a new period of hostility opened up between the two countries — though the ambassadors were kept at their posts and trade suffered very little, despite nationalist hawks on both sides of the frontier.

Yugoslavia, especially since the Kosovo revolt, has shown great sensitivity on the issue of Albania's reintegration into international politics, fearing a possible departure from Tirana's current 'non-aligned' stance. In particular, since 1948 Yugoslavia has been involved in a long-standing dispute with its eastern neighbour, Bulgaria, over Macedonia (Bulgaria officially treats Macedonians as Bulgarians). It has, therefore, been anxiously scanning all possible signs of a Bulgarian-Albanian rapprochement, that might presage an Albanian return to the Warsaw Pact. The Yugoslavs were thus quick to note, for example, that in his speech of November 1982 Enver Hoxha talked of Albanian readiness to fight on *Yugoslav territory* against any invasion by 'Bulgarian-Russian revisionists' that threatened the Albanian-inhabited areas west of the Skopje-Kacanik-Podujevo-Gusinje line. Equally, much prominence was given in the Yugoslav press to the fact that the Bulgarian army paper had reported some recent Yugoslav military exercises in Macedonia not directly, but by quoting Albanian sources, even though the Bulgarian General Mitev had attended them

as an official observer. Albania has in fact never abrogated its Treaty of Friendship, Aid and Cooperation with Bulgaria signed in 1947, in stark contrast to its treatment of similar pacts with other East European countries after it had left the Warsaw Pact in 1969.

However, any future change to the Balkan status quo is in reality more likely to come from the West, and in particular from the United States, as an overflow of its strategy in the Middle East. What might be involved was indicated in a speech given before the US Senate last June by Jesse Helms, the Senator from North Carolina, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a prominent activist of the Reaganite 'New Right'.³ After a gloomy survey of American positions in South-eastern Europe and the Middle East, Helms predicted that the Eastern Mediterranean would be in Soviet hands within three years, unless the US intervened to stop it. Helms gave an important role in the scenario to Yugoslavia and Albania, described as potentially unstable and hence open to Soviet manipulation.

He argued that the United States should start supporting various nationalist movements against Communist rule in the Balkans. He described Yugoslavia menacingly as an 'artificial state', which in Kosovo 1981 had taken the first step along the road of disintegration into its national components. Welcoming this 'natural evolution', Helms proposed that the USA should intervene by helping the Yugoslav Albanians to join Albania — provided, of course, that the latter evolved into a 'non-Communist and pro-Western state'. The USA should work towards a rearrangement of South-eastern Europe, based on a 'confederation of free Balkan nations', each 'within its own natural ethnographic borders', and whose integrity and sovereignty would be guaranteed by the USA. This would then present a 'natural barrier' to 'Soviet expansionism' in this part of Europe.

Here then is the new Cold Warriors' policy for 'rolling back' Soviet power in Eastern Europe, as it applies to the Balkans. Reading Senator Helms' speech in full, one is struck by his ignorance of local realities, history and aspirations. His views are, of course, not official US policy. Yet they provide one with a chilling glimpse of what the New Right (not only in the USA, but also in West Germany and to some extent in France) has in mind for the Balkan peoples.

Notes.

1. See Bill Bland, 'The Great Albanian Bullion Robbery', *Tribune*, 25 November 1983. Bill Bland is a secretary of the Albanian Society, 26 Cambridge Rd, Ilford, Essex.

2. Michèle Lee, 'Wrong Turn in Kosovo', *Labour Focus*, Spring 1982. Though not a signatory to the Helsinki agreement (affirming the territorial status quo in Europe), Albania has always emphasised that it has no territorial pretensions on Yugoslavia. After the events in Kosovo, however, it did come out openly in favour of an Albanian constituent republic within the Yugoslav federation — an initiative most unwelcome to Belgrade.

3. See Senate Congressional Records for 7 June 1983, pp. S7815-30.

The Cases of Klebanov and Nikitin

By John Cunningham

(For a number of years, Labour Focus has been seeking to draw attention to two separate cases of repression against Soviet miners' leaders, those of Vladimir Klebanov and Victor Nikitin. During the 1970s, Klebanov had fought a long campaign for the health and safety regulations to be properly observed by mine management in the Donbas, where he worked as a foreman, until he was injured in an industrial accident. Faced with endless obstruction, he formed an independent trade union association in 1978 and was swiftly arrested and sent to a psychiatric hospital and he has disappeared from view ever since. Victor Nikitin was also arrested for his campaign on behalf of fellow-miners in another pit in the Donbas coal field and remains in detention. Here - John Cunningham reports on his recent efforts to raise the cases of these two courageous trade union activists.)



Nikitin before his arrest

My activity on the issue of Klebanov and Nikitin started back in the early part of 1983 at a branch meeting of the NUM at the colliery where I used to work (Dinnington Colliery, South Yorkshire). An item came up on the agenda regarding a proposed visit by the South Yorkshire and Humberside Association of Trades Councils to the Soviet Union.

I proposed that the branch write to the Barnsley Headquarters of the Yorkshire NUM to protest about this visit on the grounds that workers in the Soviet Union who protest about their working conditions etc. are persecuted. An argument followed and the proposal eventually fell. I decided to pursue the issue further and in reading background material became acquainted with the cases of Vladimir Klebanov and Alexei Nikitin.

My first action was to write to Owen Briscoe, the Yorkshire Area General Secretary, who was to go on the visit to the Soviet Union. I asked him if he would make some enquiries about the whereabouts and well-being of these two miners when he was over there. I wrote to him on 10 April 1983 - I am still awaiting his reply.

Next I wrote to the National President, Arthur Scargill, who replied in a most insulting fashion. My further request for an apology was refused. His remarks have deservedly received some publicity in various publications and anyone who wants to read the full texts of both my letters and Scargill's replies can find them in *Socialist Organiser* (4 August 1983).

Support has been received from, amongst others, Eric Heffer MP and Amnesty International (who adopted both men as prisoners of conscience some time ago) and the issue has received publicity in the pages of *Volya*, *Socialist Worker*, *Free Trade Unions* and the *Guardian*. Letters in *Labour Weekly* and the *Yorkshire Miner* (after an article had been refused) have also evoked a good response.

Probably the most interesting develop-

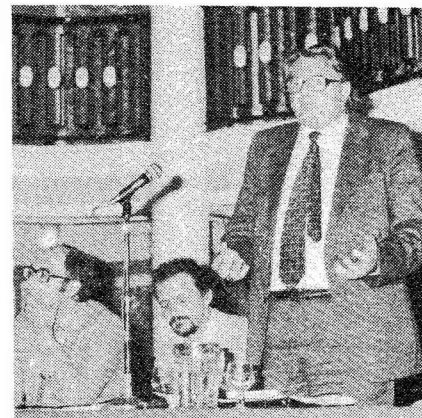
ment however has been the adoption of the following resolution by the Sheffield District Labour Party on 10 October 1983: *'Sheffield DLP calls on the Labour Group on Sheffield City Council to raise the issue of the imprisoned Ukrainian miners Vladimir Klebanov and Alexei Nikitin with the authorities of Donetsk, Ukraine SSR. These enquiries to be pursued with the aim of securing these men's release from the mental asylum in which they have been unjustly imprisoned for a number of years.'*

This is important because Sheffield is twinned with Donetsk, the city where both men lived and worked. While I recognise that it is not a simple matter to raise within the terms of a twinning arrangement it is to be hoped that some action will come out of this resolution in the New Year.

A petition is circulating and will be presented to the Soviet Embassy in the New Year - signatures are still needed and anyone who wants copies of the petition should write to me. Labour Party organisations who wish to do something could follow the example of Salisbury CLP who earlier in the year sent a resolution to the NEC on the question and wrote to the Soviet Embassy. Trade union branches could do similar things and could also write to their appropriate counterpart organisation in the Soviet Union. NUPE branches could write to their NEC asking them what they have done about resolution no. 65 at the 1981 Annual Conference which specifically mentioned Klebanov.

I have written a pamphlet on Klebanov and Nikitin which details their case fully and also looks at the shameful response of the trade union leadership to their continuing persecution. All that is needed now is money to get it printed. Any donations will be gratefully received.

Anyone who wishes to receive copies of the petition, copies of the Scargill correspondence or any information of any kind please write to me at: Ruskin College, Oxford.



Eric Heffer speaking

HEFFER APPEALS FOR RELEASE OF SOLIDARITY 11

On 19 December, Labour Party Chairperson, Eric Heffer MP met the Polish Ambassador in London to appeal for the release of 7 top Solidarity leaders and 4 advisers to the banned trade union. The eleven who have been in jail since December 1981 are charged with subversion and face imprisonment for between one and ten years if tried and convicted.

Eric Heffer, who was making a personal appeal, spent an hour and a half with the Ambassador and was assured that his views would be passed on to the authorities in Warsaw.

Like many other observers of the Polish scene, Heffer believes the Polish authorities are very reluctant to proceed with the trials of the eleven - they could serve no useful practical purpose either at home or abroad. On the other hand, the Polish government seems to fear that if the charges were dropped, this step would be interpreted as a victory for Reagan's hard-line policies towards Poland.

After meeting the Ambassador, Eric Heffer told *Labour Focus*: 'I tried to convince them that the release of the 11 would be welcomed by the Labour movement here as a good will gesture towards the Western Left, the peace movement and the trade union movement. We want increased trade between Britain and Poland for this will help to strengthen the position of working people in both countries. We are opposed to economic sanctions and to the jailing of trade union leaders.'

Eric Heffer was accompanied to the Embassy by Alf Dubs MP, John Fletcher from END and Vladimir Derer from the Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign.

During his conversation with the Ambassador, Eric Heffer also raised the case of the socialist and working class leader, Edmund Baluka, from Szczecin, jailed in June for 5 years for alleged subversion.

JOIN THE E.E.S.C.!

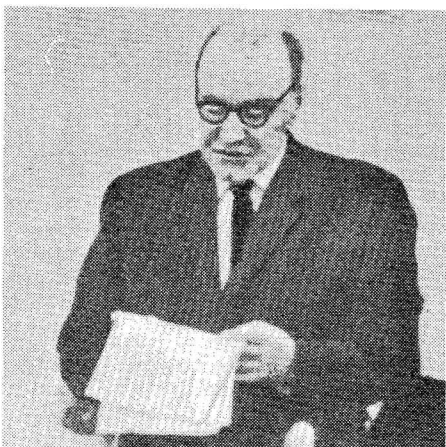
The Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign, set up in 1978, unites socialists and trade unionists in campaigns on behalf of victims of repression in Eastern Europe. At present its main effort is to press for the release of the eleven imprisoned Solidarity leaders and advisers.

Individual socialists, as well as CLPs and trade union bodies, can affiliate. For more information write to:

EESC,
c/o Vladimir Derer,
10 Park Drive, London NW11.

BOOK REVIEWS

With this issue, we are launching a regular book reviews section of *Labour Focus*. Books for review and suggestions for reviews should be sent to our reviews editor, Anna Paczuska, c/o Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Rd., London N4.



Janos Kádár, Doyen of Normalisers

W. Brus, P. Kende and Z. Mlynar, *'Normalisation' Processes in Soviet-Dominated Central Europe, 1982.*

Attempts to predict or influence the future course of the military dictatorship in Poland require, among other things, an awareness of the previous occasions when bureaucratic rule has been re-stabilised in Eastern Europe in the face of apparently overwhelming popular hostility. The three essays in this pamphlet summarise the experience of 'normalisation' in Hungary after the uprising of 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 in a way which helps to illuminate the possibilities facing General Jaruzelski in Poland.

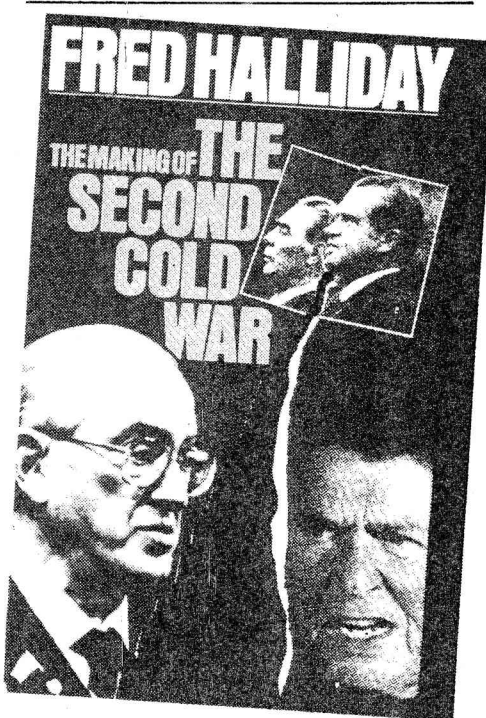
In Hungary, Janos Kadar has succeeded in gaining a wide national consensus, embarking on a bold programme of economic reform and re-orientation of the economy towards the West. In Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, the intensity of the repression has not been lessened over the years and the dependence of the economy on the Soviet Union has constantly increased. Zdenek Mlynar speculates about the failure of a Kadarism to emerge in Prague, and, displaying a wealth of detailed knowledge about the inner workings of the international communist movement, suggests that in 1973 a key turning point was reached and missed. This, he says, was in part due to the desire for the Soviet leadership to avoid concessions to the West — over 'human rights' at the Helsinki conference, and by the unwillingness of the western Eurocommunist parties to do more than protect their own autonomy from Moscow.

Comparison of the essays on Hungary and Czechoslovakia indicates a more profound reason for the different course of 'normalisation'. Janos Kende points out that a crushing, head-on defeat was inflicted on the Hungarian people by the Soviet army. United in defeat, the national consensus was preserved in an effort to reconstruct the country. In the Czechoslovak case 'normalisation' was much more a matter of Czechoslovaks against Czechoslovaks, with all the accompanying bitterness and cynicism. Mlynar emphasises the moral and social decay of Husak's Czechoslovakia, with all its endemic corruption.

In Poland, even more than in Czechoslovakia, Soviet influence has been indirect. It is conceivable that the sheer urgency of a solution to the economic crisis in Poland may provide a lever for the regime to call for social discipline with some credibility. But Wlodzimierz Brus considers that prolonged instability is likely, given the continued resistance of sectors of the population, specifically the vigour with which Polish workers have defended themselves against attempts to end price subsidisation. Increased social inequality also provides an obstacle to market-orientated economic reforms along Hungarian lines.

Continued resistance in Poland takes place against a background of a gathering economic crisis throughout the Eastern bloc, which is intimately related to the world economic crisis. In Czechoslovakia, constantly repeated assertions about the need for more trade with the West are met by deepening dependence on the Soviet Union, while Kadar, who in March 1981 expressed his conviction that the reforms had gone far enough, finds himself engaged in extending them. This suggests that East European leaders are leading less and are becoming unable to take a long term view. The 'normalisations' in Hungary and Czechoslovakia are not just examples for Jaruzelski to copy; they are equally makeshift compromises whose limits are becoming increasingly evident.

Mark Jackson



Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War*, Verso/NLB, Hb £18.50 (\$25), Pb £5.95 (\$9.50).

There are few journalists and writers able to reveal quite as accurately as Fred Halliday the true face of international politics, veiled

as it is behind a web of lies, distortions, rumours and bigotry. With his latest book, *The Making of the Second Cold War*, he has set himself a very demanding task, yet he has maintained his usual rigorous standards in order to produce an invaluable guide to the complex matrix of events over the last two decades which has resulted in the present grave state of international tension.

Before launching into his own analysis, Halliday defines the concept of the Cold War, and then proceeds to outline the eight most important theories of the Cold War. He assesses their relative merits with great clarity.

Halliday agrees with Deutscher's view that 'the Great Contest' between the USA and the USSR is the most influential political dynamic of the post-war era. This is a crucial starting-point, as it enables him to pinpoint the relative responsibility of the two sides. Those who suggest that either the US or the USSR is solely responsible for the Cold War, or that they conspire actively in the creation of tension to facilitate control of their world interests, inevitably offer over-simplified solutions. Halliday insists that although the United States is not solely responsible, it has nevertheless consistently taken the initiative since the war in raising tension in its relations with the Soviet Union.

Four major factors are identified as having contributed to the making of the second Cold War: the decline of US military superiority since the 1960s; the fourteen successful third world revolutions from 1974-80; the rise of the new Right in the US; and the sharpened contradictions between Western countries. Soviet domestic policy makes it all the easier for the hawks in the US administration to sell their aggressive policies to their public, their allies and the regimes in their client states.

To substantiate his assertions, Halliday is meticulous in his documentation, providing the reader with a welter of useful information. This book is accurate and brilliantly subversive.

Andrew Csepel

Carmen Sirianni, *Workers Control and Socialist Democracy*, Verso/NLB, Hb £20, pb £8.95.

In the last twenty years a mass of original work on the social history of the Russian Revolution has conclusively shown it to have been a mass popular uprising rather than a coup d'état of a small number of Bolshevik conspirators. Unfortunately for the general reader much of the recent work has remained hidden in specialist journals. Now Carmen Sirianni has done us all a service by drawing much of this work together in his *Workers Control and Socialist Democracy: the Soviet Experience*.

The core of Sirianni's work is an analysis of the development of popular democracy in 1917. He shows how workers control arose from below as a limited and pragmatic

BOOK REVIEWS

response to problems of job security and threatened living standards. Throughout 1917 it developed into the basis of a new society. In Britain it is a commonplace to play down this development by pointing to the ambiguity of the Russian word 'kontrol' which is normally best translated as meaning 'supervision' — a weaker word than the English 'control'. What Sirianni's work shows is how 'kontrol' gradually developed into 'control' under the pressure of events and the workers' own actions.

This process was complex. It reflected reactions of workers to the opposition and economic sabotage of the employers. Sirianni rejects the 'labour aristocracy thesis', whilst recognising divisions within the working class. But he stresses how these were overcome: 'in periods of revolutionary upsurge ... the relationship tended to be more complementary than conflictual, especially in the more militant sectors, where, the distinctive combination of (social) elements was most pronounced'. Complexity was also apparent in co-ordinating the proliferating institutions of factory committees, soviets, trade unions, and parties.

The Bolshevik Party reflected these difficulties. Its leadership was ambiguous towards new developments from below and it needed the considerable pressure of Lenin at the top and rank and file members at the bottom to get the party to respond. That it was the only party that was capable of doing so accounts for what Sirianni calls its 'breath-taking' rise during 1917.

Sirianni also writes about the period after October. He shows the difficulties faced and the arguments and the debates they produced. Then in the early summer of 1918 the intensification of the civil war put all of these problems on an entirely different plane.

In these debates which sharply divided the Bolsheviks, Sirianni is most in sympathy with the left, and it is good to see them and Osinsky (one of their theorists) treated seriously for a change. The difficulty is that he sees these divisions as prefiguring later ones. But things are not as simple as this — if they were it would be impossible to explain why so many of the 1918 left ended up supporting Stalin.

Mike Haynes

Ferenc Fehér and Agnes Heller, *Hungary 1956 Revisited: The Message of a Revolution — A Quarter of a Century After*, Allen & Unwin, £15.

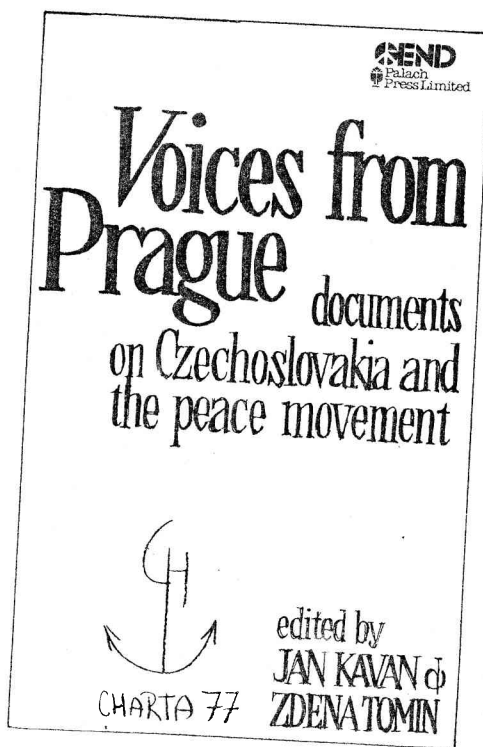
The authors of this new study of the 1956 revolution and its impact on Hungary and the world are two members of the Hungarian New Left, intellectuals not earlier noted for their enthusiasm for the workers' cause. *Hungary 1956 Revisited* is a reappraisal of themselves as well as of the revolution. Conceding that 'the mythical-anonymous "masses", and not ourselves, were right' they have come to recognise that the revolution gave birth to an alternative concept of socialism to that previously held by most East European marxists — 'a new self-understanding of socialism as radical

democracy'.

After this it is disappointing that they concentrate their efforts not on analysing the Hungarian working class' practical contribution to this new model through the creation of workers' councils and their struggle to build a truly workers' state, but on fabricating yet new intellectual theories and idealising the revolution's political leaders like the prime minister Imre Nagy whom they regard as both 'the first Eurocommunist' and the representative of a new type of 'post-Machiavellian politician'.

They nevertheless excel in debunking the myth of the post-revolutionary 'liberal' Kádár regime which has become 'the pet of the Western press'. Kádár's liberal reforms were only possible after years of terror and repression had broken the workers' spirit and cowed the population into submission. They were then 'bought off' by an Eastern version of 'repressive tolerance', and the reversion to a traditional pattern of oppression. The Kádárist 'social compromise' is a lie, and the regime though consolidated is still not legitimised. The demands placed by the Hungarian revolution on the East European agenda — for political liberties, social autonomy, self-management and national independence — are as real today as ever before.

Bill Lomax



Jan Kavan & Zdena Tomin, ed., *Voices from Prague — Czechoslovakia, Human Rights and the Peace Movement*, END/Palach Press, £1.50

A second edition has been published of this collection of various contributions by Charter 77 which demonstrate the degree of affinity felt by a number of the Czechoslovak activists with members of the Western peace movement. Jaroslav Sabata's long letter to EP Thompson is a particularly valuable essay.

Andrew Csepel

Ferenc Koszegi and E.P. Thompson, *The New Hungarian Peace Movement*, END/Merlin Pamphlets, 90p.

Two essays by Koszegi on the composition, formation and aims of the new peace movement and the setting up of the 'Peace Group for Dialogue' describe the various cells which sprang up in the schools and universities and the need to grasp this enthusiasm by the creation of a new independent movement. Tragically, since this pamphlet was written, Dialogue has been formally suspended and Koszegi has departed from the movement.

Thompson's essay has its differences with Koszegi's. He argues that the world is now dominated by a militarism which has transcended social systems, dragging respective parts of the globe and their peripheries into hostile and escalating opposition whose likely outcome is nuclear annihilation.

Andrew Philpot

Soviet Political Psychiatry, Published by the International Association on the Political Use of Psychiatry, c/o Christine Shaw, 17 Norland Sq., London W11, £2.

This is an excellent pamphlet containing much useful information. As the title indicates it is written from the viewpoint of psychiatry and its abuse in the Soviet Union. It does not attempt any analysis of the political and social situation in the Soviet Union, but this is not important as there is now a wealth of such information and analyses in numerous publications.

Its strength lies in the depth of understanding of the psychiatric issues involved, and the detailed and honest way in which the workings of the Soviet psychiatric machine is exposed. The major part of the pamphlet contains an account of the career and subsequent fate of the oppositionist psychiatrist, Dr Anatoly Koryagin, whose bravery in supporting, amongst others, Alexei Nikitin, earned him 7 years in a labour camp and 5 years in exile.

Case studies include Klebanov and Nikitin, Anatoly Lupinos, Alexandra Shatravka and others. A number of very useful addresses and a further reading list conclude this excellent pamphlet.

John Cunningham

János Kenedi, *Do It Yourself: Hungary's Hidden Economy*, Pluto Press, £2.95.

György Dalos, *1985: A Sequel to George Orwell's 1984*, Pluto Press, £2.95

Two satirical novels from the pens of two representative but very different figures of Hungary's cultural opposition — János Kenedi a former hippy aesthete, and György Dalos a former Maoist poet.

When Kenedi's novel first appeared many commentators interpreted it too literally, failing to see it as an essentially Voltaire-ian parody on Hungary's unofficially tolerated black-market economy.

Self-parody also lies at the heart of Dalos' 'sequel' to Orwell's *1984*, in which a group of dissident intellectuals are encouraged by the secret police to found a critical paper called TLS which deflects opposition away from any more radical or truly revolutionary developments.

Bill Lomax