necessary and are not primarily ideologically motivated. Recognising this to be so, the Socialist International urges all donor countries to resist the attempts by private and public pressure groups to deprive countries which nationalise and expropriate their own basic resources of their normal expectations of development assistance. In particular, it calls on all member parties whose governments participate in the decisions of the World Bank to ensure that there is no further delay in the resumption of Bank lending to Chile.

The Bureau appreciates that difficult issues of the level of compensation frequently arise following expropriation. But these fail to be resolved bilaterally, and through the normal processes of the law. Such problems should not be permitted to impede economic development.

At this moment in the struggle for socialism in Chile, the Socialist International extends its strongest support and good wishes for the success of the great efforts of the Radical Party to establish social justice based on respect for Human Rights and the principles of socialism in democracy.

The Socialist International congratulates the Radical Party for the outstanding contribution is has made, and continues to make, to greater understanding between the socialist parties of Europe and those of Latin America, and believes that the close links between us which have now been established on a secure foundation will give great strength to the fight to achieve socialism and democracy for all our peoples.

Nuclear Tests in the Pacific

The following is the text adopted on nuclear tests in the Pacific:

The Bureau of the Socialist International, gathered at Santiago de Chile on February 7-9, 1973, solemnly protests against the continuation of nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean.

The verified consequences of such tests have disturbed the biological balance in the marine world and together with the increase of the rate of radiation in the atmosphere threaten shortly to turn into a drama for all the countries directly affected.

Dangerous to the atmosphere, unnecessarily expensive and technologically of no real value for the countries that keep causing them, these tests have become an onslaught against the people's security and a serious threat to the future of humanity.

The Bureau of the Socialist International approves of the action taken by the Chilean, Australian and New Zealand Governments against the continuation of nuclear tests in the Pacific.

It denounces the French Government's decision which in spite of the protest by world opinion, continues with its series of tests in that part of the world.

It notes with satisfaction the decision taken by the French Socialist Party in which it committed itself in advance to put an end to these French tests and to ratify the international agreement on the ban of nuclear tests.

The Bureau of the Socialist International takes this opportunity to renew the appeal made at the Vienna Congress against the continuation of all nuclear tests and for the extension of the international agreement on the ban of nuclear tests to include also underground explosions, which have dangerously increased in the last few years.

London Bureau Plans 1973 Malta Conference

First-hand reports on the French and Irish general elections were given to a two-day meeting of the Bureau of the Socialist International held in London on 17-18 March. The meeting was attended by Bureau representatives of member parties from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Italy (both the Socialist and Social Democratic parties), Malta, Netherlands and Sweden. The chairman of the International, Dr. Bruno Pittermann, presided.

The report on the Irish general election was given by Niall Greene, Vice-Chairman of the Irish Labour Party. He said that following the electoral victory of the Fine Gael-Labour coalition on 28 February, a 15-member Cabinet had been formed in which Labour had six portfolios held by five ministers. The Labour Party Leader, Brendan Corish, had become Deputy Prime Minister and held the ministries of both social security and health. Other politically important ministries held by Labour were Industry and Commerce, by Justin Keating, and Labour, by Michael O'Leary. Niall Greene said that while the previous two periods of coalition had been unhappy experiences for the Irish Labour Party, this time they were confident that it would usher in a time of change in Ireland.

Robert Pontillon, International Secretary of the French Socialist Party, reported that the Left had gained overall by 10 per cent (36 to 46 per cent) compared with the 1968 elections, while the Gaullists had slumped from 43 to 34 per cent. Of the 176 seats won by the left-wing front, the Socialists and other non-Communists had won 103. He said that the combined Right had obtained a hundred more seats than the Left with roughly the same number of popular votes. Robert Pontillon drew the Bureau's attention to three aspects of the election results. Firstly, they marked the final end of traditional Gaullism. Secondly, the Socialist Party has emerged as the second strongest parliamentary force and also greatly strengthened organisationally in the country. Thirdly, all options were now open for the presidential elections due in 1976.

The Bureau heard a report from Karl Czernetz (Austria) on the progress of the preparatory talks in Helskinki for a European Security Conference and also on the talks in Vienna on mutual balanced force reductions (MBFR). It was subsequently decided that a session of the International's Study Group on European Security should be convened at the time of the next Bureau meeting in London at the end of June.

Other reports received by the Bureau were an account of the Chairman's recent visit to the People's Republic of China and also the official report of the British Labour Party's recent visit to North and South Vietnam.

Two important decisions taken by the Bureau related to the Dominican Republic and the next Council Conference of the Socialist International. In accordance with the decision of the Bureau meeting held in Chile that a Socialist International mission should be sent to the Dominican Republic to investigate the wave of political terror there, the Bureau decided that the mission should comprise representatives of the Belgian Socialist Party, the German Social Democratic Party and the Swedish Social Democratic Party, all three of which are presently in government. The Secretariat of the International was instructed to fix the date of the mission.

The Bureau also decided that the 1973 Council Conference of the International should take place on 2-4 November in Malta, where the Labour Party under Dom Mintoff is currently in power.

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SOCIALIST AFFAIRS

MARCH-APRIL 1973 SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION VOL. XXIII NO. 2

Bruno Pittermann: Social Democracy's Tasks
Fan Yew Teng on Malaysian Opposition
Czech Communist Coup—25 Years After
British Labour Movement's 'Great Compact'
Special Books Section

World Trend to Left Confirmed in France, Chile, Ireland, Bangladesh

The world-wide trend to the Left was maintained in four general elections held in February and March. In the fortnight from 28 February to 11 March Ireland, Chile, Bangladesh and France went to the polls. From each test the parties of the Left emerged with their position strengthened.

The general elections of Ireland (28 February), Chile (4 March), Bangladesh (7 March) and France (4 and 11 March) took place in countries as far apart economically and socially as they are geographically. It is therefore foolhardy to see in them too much of a common pattern. It is also unwise to make exaggerated claims. After all, the left-wing front did not win in France, nor did the Popular Unity in Chile; while in Ireland the Labour Party's share of the vote actually fell. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the French Left, led by the Socialist Party, severely rattled the ruling Gaullists and emerged from the elections with greatly enhanced strength. It is also true that Salvador Allende, contrary to the predictions of the world's right-wing press, improved considerably on the percentage he achieved when winning the presidency in 1970. In Ireland the Labour Party's gain of two parliamentary seats was crucial in giving the opposition coalition victory. And in Bangladesh, where Sheikh Mujib's Awami League won all but half a dozen seats, the victory of the left was total.

Major advance

In the run-up to the first round of the French elections on 4 March, the opinion polls were showing the combined Left far ahead of the Gaullists. This led to great speculation in the world's press on the possibility of a left-wing victory and also on the constitutional crisis that seemed likely to follow. President Pompidou himself added grist to this speculatory mill with his outrageous implication that he would not accept a left-wing victory.

But amid all this excitement informed observers of the French political scene did not expect the Left to win, at least not in this election. Apart from anything else, French electoral boundaries are drawn so unfairly as to give the Right a massive built-in advantage. The most that could be envisaged was that the balance of power in the new Assembly would be held by the Reformers in the centre.

As it turned out, the Gaullists and their allies did not even need the centre to retain their grip on the levers of power. The writing was on the wall after the first round, when it became clear that the Socialist Party and its Left Radical allies had recorded a slightly lower percentage vote than the Communists (20.36 against 21.25 per cent). Not only did this outcome lend weight to the 'red scare' tactics of the Right; it also inspired the Communists to refuse to withdraw in favour of the Socialists in a number of constituencies where, although the PCF man had done better than the PSF candidate in the first round, there was no chance of him attracting enough reformist votes to win in the second. So the Left went into the second round with an unrealistically high number of Communists (182) still in the lists.

Of the other 222 second-round candidates of the Left, 193 were Socialists, 25 Left Radicals and 4 PSU or *divers Gauche*. The outcome was a major advance for the left, but not a victory. Exactly 100 Socialists and Left Radicals were returned, together with 73 Communists and 2 other leftists, making a total of 175 in all out of 490. This compares with 91 left-wing deputies elected in 1968 (34 Communists and 57 under the FGDS* label) and only 84

*Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left, incorporating the Socialists, Radicals and the Convention of Republican Institutions.

This Danish Social Democratic Party pamphlet cover appears to be rather overstating the undoubted world-wide trend to the left. In fact, the title means 'Rules of the Social Democratic Party'.

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in the outgoing Assembly. In other words, the Left has gone a long way towards restoring the representation (193 seats) won in the March 1967 election, which was decimated in the June 1968 post-May Events poll.

Reformists' role

The role of the *Reformateurs* in the election was to ensure that the Right won a majority. Far from ending up with the balance between Right and Left, the Servan-Schreiber Radicals and the Lecanuet Centrists only just managed to get above the 30 seats necessary to form a group in the Assembly and will have little political weight in the period ahead. But in the first round the Reformists obtained 12.43 per cent and it was the swinging of these votes behind the Right that was crucial to the latter's success.

The actual figures of popular votes in the first round show clearly that the France of its present constitutional straitjacket is not the real France. As a bloc, the Left got over 11 million votes—over one million more than the parties of the majority, who got 9,862,741. Yet the Right got almost 100 seats more than the left. It was calculated by *Le Nouvel Observateur* that if the seats had been divided according to proportional representation, the Left would have got 221, the Reformists 59 and the 'majority' 179.

The inequity of the present system of constituency boundaries is also apparent in the comparative percentages for the first round. In an 81 per cent poll, the Left as a whole won 46.24 per cent of the vote. In 1967 the comparable figure was 41.47 per cent, and in 1968 only 36.55 per cent. In contrast, the URP received only 34.48 per cent in the first round (37.73 per cent in 1967 and 43.65 per cent in 1968). Even if one adds to the URP percentage the 'diverse majority' vote, the total is still only 41.30 per cent.

Despite these percentages, the line-up in the new Assembly as compared with the old will be as follows:

	seats	outgoing
Socialists (with Left Radicals[1]		41
PSU *et al.*[2])	102	8
Communists	73	1
Reformists[3]	34	34
URP[4]	268	15
Others	13	360
Total	490	24
		483

1. the left wing of the old Radical Party led by Robert Fabre
2. the Unified Socialist Party and other factions
3. incorporating the Servan-Shreiber Radicals and the Lecanuet Centrists
4. *Union des Républicains de Progrès*, comprising the Gaullists, Giscard d'Estaing's Independent Republicans and Duhamel's Christian Democrats

Mitterrand's achievement

The most striking feature of the March elections in France was undoubtedly the achievement of François Mitterrand in leading the Socialist Party back to electoral strength. Indeed, if one takes into reckoning the first-round votes of all the non-Communist left (Socialists, Left Radicals, the PSU and various smaller factions), Mitterrand even achieved his basic aim of placing the Communists in a minority within the left. Certainly the Socialist Party can justly claim to be the principal victor in the election, having won a higher proportion of the votes this time than the whole Federation of the Left did in either 1968 or 1967.

The effect of the elections will undoubtedly be to push the French political spectrum to the left. The Gaullist Prime Minister, Pierre Messmer, was quick to jump on the reform bandwagon. 'It is correct', he said on election night, 'that these elections demonstrate a desire on the part of a great number of voters for renovation.' Without a blush M. Messmer (one of the Gaullism's more orthodox reactionaries) promised that the URP would undertake this renewal, thus rewarding the Reformists for their support with an immediate indication that they will be ignored from now on.

But the Gaullists will not be able to ignore the massive new strength of the Left so easily. As François Mitterrand himself said of the outcome: 'Anyone who analyses the relationship of political and social forces will come to this conclusion: the post-war era is over. After 28 years dominated by problems of national and international reconstruction, France is seeking, and will soon find, a new equilibrium.'

Popular Unity's advance

The Popular Unity coalition which went into the Chilean elections on 4 March for the renewal of the Chamber of Deputies and half the Senate also comprised Socialists, Communists, Radicals and some smaller groupings. It too did well. The key figure is the 43.39 per cent which the Popular Unity parties won overall, since it shows a marked gain over the 36.9 per cent obtained by President Allende when he won the presidency in September 1970. As a bloc the Popular Unity gained six seats in the 150-member Chamber of Deputies (57 to 63) and 2 in the Senate (18 to 20). President Allende therefore has the support of 83 parliamentarians altogether. This means that the opposition is nowhere near the two-thirds majority of both houses combined needed to block the Chilean road to socialism.

Within the Popular Unity President Allende's own Socialist Party was the main gainer. It doubled its number of Deputies from 14 to 28 and increased its Senators from 5 to 7. The Communists also did well, rising from 22 to 25 in the Chamber and from 6 to 9 in the Senate. But the International's Chilean member, the Radical Party, fared less well. It lost 7 of the 12 seats it held in the Chamber before the election and also one of its three seats in the Senate.

In the 1969 elections for the Chamber the Radical Party won 25 seats. Since then there have been two splits to the right—the first before the 1970 presidential election leading to the creation of the Democratic Radical Party and the second in August 1971, producing the Radical Party of the Left (PIR). Thus the Radical Party was reduced to 12 Deputies immediately before the March elections. The two breakaway parties both fought the election within the opposition front, but neither was successful. The Democratic Radicals lost two of their four seats in the Chamber, while the PIR was decimated from nine to a single seat. In the Senate the PIR lost all three seats it was defending and is left with three, while the Democratic Radicals lost two seats and are left with none.

The two major elements in the opposition Democratic Confederation (CODE) were the Christian Democrats and the National Party. Both gained seats in the Chamber, the former increasing from 47 to 50 seats and the latter from 33 to 34. In the Senate the Christian Democrats lost one of the 11 seats being defended and will now have 19 in all, while the National Party actually increased from five to eight seats. In overall percentage terms, the CODE obtained 54.70 per cent of the votes. The remaining 1.91 per cent went either to the tiny Popular Socialist Union or in void votes. Abstention was relatively low, at 18.8 per cent.

Since Chile's is a presidential system of government, President Allende will be no more hampered by the opposition's parliamentary majority than President Nixon is by the Democratic majority in the US Congress (although if the opposition had reached two-thirds of the seats it would have been a different story). He has the added advantage that the Chilean opposition, unlike its American counterpart, is made up of two very different major parties—the orthodox conservative Nationals and the much more variegated Christian Democrats. In the period ahead observers expect the President to continue to seek support for his policies from the left-wing Christian Democrats, perhaps even opening the full-scale dialogue with them that the Communists called for last year. But it is also anticipated that if he pursues this avenue too keenly he may lay in trouble from his own party, the more revolutionary wing of which has the wind in its sails after the election victory.

Bread and butter issues

The Irish elections on 28 February were a relatively straightforward affair. The Fianna Fail Prime Minister, Jack Lynch, called a snap general election and lost to a coalition of the Fine Gael and the Irish Labour Party. The new government under Fine Gael leader

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Editorial Assistant: Caroline Soper

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WESTERN EUROPE

Successful Social Democracy's Tasks

BRUNO PITTERMANN

The Chairman of the Socialist International surveys the present strength of democratic socialism in Western Europe and pinpoints some of its tasks.

The member parties of the Socialist International are the strongest political force, united in one common organisation, in European democracy. They provide the head of government in seven European countries: Belgium, Federal Germany, Denmark, Finland, Malta, Austria and Sweden; and they participate in government in Ireland, Italy and Switzerland. They form the strongest opposition party in Great Britain, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway and Holland. They are numerically the strongest faction in the Council of Europe, and will be the strongest group in the European Parliament of the EEC as soon as the British Labour Party amends its temporary abstention from participation in the proceedings of the European Parliament. As the strongest political force, the European socialists cannot and will not shirk their responsibilities for the future European community.

Their task is to alter the economic and social structure of Europe, and not to contribute to the maintenance of existing injustices and inequalities. They have the duty to strengthen democracy everywhere in Europe and, in those areas where democracy has succumbed to the tyranny of force, to give aid to democratic elements which are striving to reestablish democracy. They will have to guarantee peace and security for European nations by the maintenance of a common resistance to all imperialist attacks. They have the obligation to strive unreservedly for the respect of human rights in all the states of Europe, and not become part and parcel of the hypocrisy of European and United States reaction, which raises this demand in connection only with states led by communists whilst granting those in power in their own dictatorships in Greece, Portugal and Spain complete military, political and economic support for the suppression of their democratic citizens.

Both in origin and intent the socialist parties are working class parties, for the Socialist International was founded in 1864 on the initiative of English working men. These people recognised even at that time that the liberation of the working class from international exploitation could only be successfully achieved through international combination, and that the dangers threatening world peace could only be excluded when the workers, through their political parties, influenced the course of foreign policy. Consequently the struggle for the democratisation of capitalist monopolies in Europe must be waged in the closest collaboration with the workers' movements that are united in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Europe must not be ruled by a private-capitalist imperialism which still suppresses the self-determination of the Latin American and Canadian nations through the workings of United States capitalism.

Aware of difficulties

The parties of democratic socialism are aware of the difficulties of their task. The thoughts linked for some 200 years in Europe with the practice of national state policy have not been entirely surmounted even in the ranks of working people. Political and capitalist reaction still seeks to prevent the combination of working people, and to present fake front-page pictures of leading and led nations. Individual socialist parties have undergone different historical developments in the European national states, and have reached varying political strengths. Those stronger parties must have understanding for the difficulties of their individual brother parties, which are attributable to the line of development in their national state; only in unity will they be able to reach the common goal of a Europe of free nations and free individuals. The disunity of the conservative parties serving capitalist interest, now evident

as they try to create a common defence against the present dollar inflation engineered by the United States, should serve us as a warning example.

In the communist parties of Europe the Communist Party of the Soviet Union dictates that the national interests of the super-power of the Soviet Union should be interpreted as the common interests of the working class. The communist parties in the Warsaw Pact states have to register their public approval of this line, although even their own supporters believe as little in liberation through the Soviet system as do the communist parties in the democratic countries.

In democratic Europe the representatives of monopoly capitalism still retain the leadership in non-socialist parties, although a growing number of parties led by them recognise the falsity behind the slogan: 'We fight against communism for freedom.' They say, 'freedom for the individual' and mean thereby unlimited freedom for exploitation and manipulation by means of the Press and mass media that serve them.

Step by step

In the course of their political development the socialist parties on the continent have often entered into coalitions with non-socialist democrats. They know that they cannot thereby achieve all their aims in one go, but they have made considerable progress step by step. They organised resistance as allies in the nations overwhelmed by fascism and national socialism, and after the collapse of tyrannical rule, they worked in common to create general European organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the European Economic Community.

We socialists in no way demand that opinions should all be formed or expressed in the same mould. Our task requires the coordination of the programmes of socialist parties, which emanate from different points of departure, so that we can create a common strategy for transforming Europe into a society in which free people and nations can live together in peace with one another and the rest of the world, and in which they can settle their differences within the framework of an all-European parliamentary democracy. It behoves the socialist parties, in their common bond of solidarity, to work might and main for the reshaping of Europe, and to strengthen democracy where it is weak or indeed oppressed.

LATIN AMERICA

Left-wing Front Seeking Power in Venezuela

DEMETRIO BOERSNER

The International Secretary of the People's Electoral Movement (MEP) of Venezuela looks at the prospects of the left-wing front in this year's presidential and general elections.

In the presidential and general elections that will take place in Venezuela at the beginning of December this year, left-wing formations are grouped together within the *Nueva Fuerza* (New Force). The three wings of the New Force were originally the Democratic Republican Union (URD), the People's Electoral Movement (MEP) and the Communist Party of Venezuela. Its presidential candidate, who was elected unanimously, is Jesus Paz Galarraga, General Secretary of the MEP (which is affiliated to the Socialist International).

Jesus Paz Galarraga was elected presidential candidate by a joint congress of the three constituent parties of the New Force. The URD candidate, Jovito Villalba, refused to accept the verdict of the congress and withdrew the support of the right wing of the URD from the New Force, which, however, retains the allegiance of the URD left. The New Force therefore comprises the MEP, the Communists and the URD, together with some small independent groups. Outside the New Force, the Paz candidacy is being supported by the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR).

Attempts are being made to widen this front to include the entire Venezuelan left. The entry of two parties is particularly sought. One is the Democratic Force, which says it is social democratic, but which has been rather hesitant to join. The other party is the Movement towards Socialism (MAS), a group which broke away from the Communist Party at the end of 1970. Unfortunately, the MAS seems to have decided not to join the united front but to run its own candidate. The NF regrets this, as it thereby weakens the left. However, efforts are continuing to embrace all the leftist groups.

The New Force is working to create 'people's committees' throughout the country. These are mostly working-class and are being set up both in factories and neighbourhoods, with the purpose of giving the NF both electoral support and a permanent popular base for the future. The MEP, however, considers the NF as not simply an electoral force but a long-term strategic concept of the unity of leftist and progressive forces.

Two fundamental goals

The New Force programme points to two fundamental goals to be achieved in the coming years. Firstly there should be national liberation, which means freeing the country's development from the powerful and oppressive influences now exerted by US economic and political power. Secondly, there is the goal of building a socialist democracy. Concretely, the accomplishment of these goals means, in the event of coming to power, the nationalisation of the country's basic resources and industries; a centralist type of development planning entailing a new kind of agrarian reform, based on the creation of co-operative farms, the redistribution of material and cultural wealth and welfare through changes in taxation and the organisation of new social services.

The MEP believes that two parties represent the status quo in Venezuela: the Christian Democrats (COPEI) and the Democratic Action (AD), whose leaders at present are right-wingers and have turned their backs on the party's original social democratic programme. There is some evidence that the dominant economic interest groups, including the oil companies, are tending to support the AD more than the Christian Democrats, since the latter, even though a conservative party, has a left-wing of young Christian socialists.

It is also possible that a further candidate will be in the field, namely, the nominee of former dictator Jiminez, who is himself barred from running by a special law disqualifying people convicted of public corruption.

The MEP's attitude to Jiminez distinguishes between the leadership and his voting supporters. The leadership is reactionary and corrupt: there is no possibility of an alliance. The rank and file supporters are the discontented poor, looking for a way to protest against the existing system of exploitation and injustice. The MEP is trying to convince them that supporting a right-wing dictator will not lead to the achievement of their goals, and that they should support the leftist unity.

Support for the MAS is strong among students and intellectuals, but not among working class, whereas the MEP has fewer intellectual supporters but is strong in the trade unions. As for the MIR it is small but has support among intellectuals and workers. It used to believe in the strategy of armed struggle, but has more recently come to accept legal struggle with participation in the electoral process. The MIR attempts to activate the workers' social and economic demands, and its relationship with the MEP is good.

Trade Unions

At the August 1971 congress of the Venezuelan trade unions, COPEI and AD joined against the MEP and gained control of the movement. The MEP however, does have a majority in important unions such as the oil and metal workers. In 1973 a number of collective contracts expire and in the coming negotiations the MEP will take the initiative in presenting the most energetic and far-reaching demands, rejecting the reactionary doctrine, frequently raised by the AD labour leaders, that so-called 'social peace' should be the concern of the organised workers.

Last year the MEP presented a bill called the 'law of reversion' which obliges oil companies not to dismantle any installations, all of which in 1983 must, when concessions expire, be handed over to the Venezuelan state without any compensation. Nationalist feeling was so strong that this law was accepted almost unanimously by the Venezuelan Congress, including the status quo parties, although the latter may not be totally sincere in their determination to apply the law to its fullest extent.

There is now a divergence of opinion as to what should be done about the petroleum in the future. The Christian Democrats and the AD would like to wait until the concessions expire in 1983 and then grant service contracts to some international companies now holding concessions. The New Force parties, however, are asking for immediate nationalisation of the oil industry, to be managed as directly as possible by the state petroleum company, with contracts for technical tasks and transport and marketing being relatively short-term and granted largely to publicly-owned petroleum companies, such as those of some European countries. The government has not accepted immediate nationalisation, however, and it avoids any discussion of the subject during the elections. But the MEP will raise the matter in the election.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Is There a Future for the Opposition in Malaysia?

FAN YEW TENG

In the face of heavy handicaps, the Democratic Action Party of Malaysia is courageously pursuing the political struggle against the country's oppresive Alliance government. The party's National Organising Secretary here gives a realistic assessment of the democratic opposition's prospects in Malaysia, and sees some grounds for cautious optimism in the recent joining of opposition forces in the Kuala Lumpur Parliament.

It is always somewhat tempting to try to give a one-word answer either way to the ever-recurring question as to whether there is a future for the constitutional opposition in Malaysia. But an ability to do so has not as yet become either the luxury or the misfortune of the Malaysian opposition, for the simple reason that this important question still hangs very much in the balance, just as it has done so in the last decade and a half.

Apart from the Malayan Communist Party, which is underground and still very much in opposition and which is likely to remain so for many years to come, the present constitutional opposition consists of the Democratic Action Party (DAP), the Sarawak National Party (SNAP), the Social Justice Party (Pekemas), Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaya, Parti Marhean and the United Sabah Action Party (USAP) —the last three not being represented in Parliament, though the Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaya is represented in the Pahang and Penang State Assemblies.

Withering of opposition

The Labour Party is as good as being defunct, a direct result of the repressive measures of the Alliance government. Most of the leaders of the party at the various levels have been languishing in jail for years on end without ever being given an open trial in any court of law. A good number of its branches and divisions have been deregistered by the government over the last few years.

Parties like the Sarawak United People's Party, the Gerakan, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) and the Party Islam can hardly now be considered as genuine opposition parties since they have formed coalition governments at national and state levels with the Alliance Party. Of course they still carry on the pretence, rather amusingly if not shamelessly, that they are still very much in the opposition—a classic case of running with the hares and hunting with the hounds. The crowning irony is that they have all done it in the name of 'national interest'—a term which is by now very much over-worked as well as misused and abused.

It can therefore be seen that the number of genuine opposition parties in Malaysia has decreased considerably in the last two years. At first glance, this appears to be a rather disturbing and even pathetic situation. But after deeper consideration, it appears that it may well be a blessing in disguise in the long run if it paves the way for the transition from a multi-party system to a more healthy two- or perhaps three-party system. If it is not repressed or obliterated by the powers-that-be, such a system should help to stabilise the political develop-

ment of Malaysia.

So, in the final analysis, it appears that the future of a viable, credible and strong opposition in Malaysia depends on two main factors—one which is very much within the control of the opposition parties themselves, and the other which almost entirely depends on the tender mercies of the party or group in power. I shall come back to this later.

Alliance in a minority

In determining whether the constitutional opposition in Malaysia has any future, it is perhaps useful to look back to the 1969 and 1964 general elections to see how parties fared in electoral terms. In the 1969 general election, the Alliance managed to obtain only 47.6 per cent of the total number of votes cast, compared with 58.5 per cent in 1964—a drop of 10.9 per cent. If East Malaysia were excluded, it got only 44.9 per cent. The combined total opposition vote in 1969 improved markedly to 52.4 per cent, against the 41.5 per cent it got in 1964. This means that in terms of the total number of votes cast, the Alliance actually became a minority government. Even in terms of the total number of seats, the Alliance was four seats short of the important two-thirds majority in Parliament. It got ninety-two compared to the combined total of fifty-two of the opposition. It is significant to remember that this was the first time that the Alliance had ever lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament. It is thus abundantly clear that the trouble with the Opposition in 1964 and 1969 was not any inability to get votes, but that it was too divided both politically and ideologically.

This brings us back to the first of the two factors which I had mentioned earlier, and on which the development of a viable and credible opposition in Malaysia could depend. The pertinent question is whether the remaining opposition parties in 1973 have enough foresight and sanity to become united.

A small but significant step

Earlier this year a step was taken in the right direction. Five opposition parties from both East and West Malaysia—the DAP, the Pekemas, Parti Marhean, SNAP and USAP—succeeded in forming a non-ideological United Opposition Front. And the three of the five parties which are represented in Parliament—namely, the DAP, Pekemas and SNAP—came to an understanding to have a common opposition leader in Parliament to take care of, as a start, matters related to parliamentary procedures. Lim Kit Siang, the DAP Secretary-General, has been elected to the position for 1973, and it will rotate to leaders of the other two parties in the following two years.

This non-ideological understanding is, of course, only a small step towards opposition unity and strength, but it in nonetheless an important and necessary first step. The first specific aim of this new arrangement is to get more speaking time from the Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives). It is common knowledge that up till now opposition parties and MPs in Parliament have more often than not been rather unfairly treated by the Speaker.

This new opposition understanding, though small, is the initial first step which is realistic and pragmatic under the prevailing circumstances. It is hoped that it will eventually lead to an electoral understanding for the next general election, and beyond the general election, in the long-term perspective, perhaps to some ideological and political alignment based on some common principles or a minimum platform. Given the spirit of compromise on issues without necessarily sacrificing principles and a deep concern and belief that a strong, viable and credible opposition has a vital role to play in the nation-building process of our country, this long-term objective is not as far-fetched or impossible as some people might think. But an important first step must first be made, and made now.

By-election evidence

Of course, I agree fully with some critics that it would be unrealistic and futile of opposition parties to unite merely to oppose the Alliance government. Unity out of mere anti-Alliance-ism will not and cannot long endure if there is no common ideological and political basis for such a unity. It would in fact be tantamount to a negative opposition for the sake of opposing, something which can only be opportunistic at best, and short-lived at worst. However, I am inclined towards the argument that if the different parties do not or cannot come together even for a limited objective as a small beginning, then it is quite inconceivable that they will ever find it any easier to get together on a common ideological and political basis.

A good and encouraging example of what opposition co-operation and co-ordination can achieve was given in the recent by-election in the parliamentary constituency of Kuala Kedah (vacated by the former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman). The contest was between an independent candidate, Cik Siti Noor, and Datuk Senu Abdul Rahman, the Secretary-General of UMNO. Cik Siti Noor, the daughter of Sdr. Hamid Tuah, the champion of 'land for the landless', with the support and active campaigning of the DAP, Pekemas and Parti Rakyat Sosialis, obtained 10,410 votes against Datuk Senu's 16,471 votes—nearly 40 per cent of the total number of votes cast. This was a remarkable result considering the fact that Siti Noor had only two weeks' campaigning and a shoe-string budget. It is in this light that we hope that the Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaya will decide to join the newly formed United Opposition Front. Its leader, Kassim Ahmad, has given certain arguments for not joining. We do not agree with them, though we respect the right of he and his party to differ. In short, we believe that the opposition should not forfeit their right to take full advantage of this second factor for viability and credibility—a factor which, as I have said earlier, is very much within their control and determination.

The Government's attitude

We now come to the factor which I think is quite beyond the control of the opposition parties, but which is almost entirely in the hands of the party or group presently in power. It must be remembered, obviously, that no party or group in power ever take it upon themselves as their duty or obligation to ensure that their opponents have a future. There is no such altruism in any part of the globe—whether it be in the so-called free world or in the communist countries or, still less, in the Third World of developing and under-developed countries. And Malaysia is no exception.

But this should not be interpreted to mean that those in power have the right to adopt a harshly intolerant and suppressive attitude towards the existence and role of a constitutional and lawful opposition. After all, the Rukunegara or National Ideology, which is fathered by the Alliance goverment, talks very loftily of the need for 'a democratic and liberal way of life'. It also talks of the need to abide by the rule of law, though as we all know a good number of the laws have become more and more restrictive and repressive under the Alliance government.

But we must not be surprised by all these contradictions of the Alliance government. After more than fifteen years, most of us should know that very often what they do is pretty different from what they say. The Alliance talks glibly of practising and respecting parliamentary democracy as long as their power is not threatened or jeopardised. In the last two years particularly, Alliance ministers and leaders and their propaganda machinery, Radio and Television Malaysia, have been postulating the argument that our system and style of democracy need not follow parliamentary democracy as is being practised in established countries in North America, Western Europe, Oceania and some other parts of the world. This assertion that we should not try to copy everything from others is acceptable: after all, a political system has to suit the peculiar conditions of any individual country and people. But it must not be done in such a manner that our Kuala Lumpur brand of parliamentary democracy is made into an excuse to deny or restrict basic human rights instead of being made to enlarge the areas of fundamental freedoms and civil liberties in our Malaysian national life.

Notorious features

Let us look at the more salient and the more notorious features of this Alliance-type of democracy. In the first place, it means that this is a democracy that must at all costs ensure that the Alliance wins, by hook or by crook, its two-thirds majority in Parliament. Otherwise Parliament itself can be suspended and the opposition parties will be blamed for not co-operating, and the people will be chided for not having voted as wisely and properly as the Alliance had wanted them to. Secondly, it means that the obnoxious Internal Security Act of 1961, under which people can be arbitrarily detained for years without trial, continues to be ruthlessly used against people who have the courage to fight for land for the landless, and justice for the hundreds of thousands of poor fishermen, peasants and workers in the country.

Thirdly, it means that the Industrial Relations Act of 1967 continues to emasculate the trade unions and exploit the workers, so that local capitalists and their collaborators, the foreign imperialists—the best paymasters of the Alliance regime—can continue to make huge profits and send out of Malaysia every year hundreds of millions of dollars. Fourthly, it means that the Constitutional (Amendment) Act and the Sedition (Amendment) Act both of 1971, have banned public as well as parliamentary discussion of certain issues, thereby severely limiting freedom of speech and eliminating parliamentary immunity of MPs, as well as eroding the supremacy of Parliament itself.

In the fifth place, it means that local council elections, which were suspended in 1965 during the height of confrontation with Indonesia, are now to be further suspended indefinitely. In the sixth place, it means that the Societies (Amendment) Act of 1972 can empower the Minister of Home Affairs to disallow the fraternal links of political parties, trade unions, student bodies and other groups with international movements and organisations. In the seventh place, it means that the press laws continue to require publishers and editors to apply anew at the end of each year for their publishing permits from the government—laws which are a sword of Damocles hovering over the heads of the publishers and editors, and which are evidently responsible for the uncritical, weak and pathetically sycophantic press which exists in the country today. Lastly, it means that there is a rigidly government-controlled radio and television network which carries exclusively the propaganda of the government and the ruling party—in line with their declared 'one voice only' policy.

Man-made obstacles

All these eight features of parliamentary democracy as practised by the Alliance government make up the second factor on which part of the answer to the question of the opposition's future depends. It can thus be seen quite clearly that opposition parties and politicians in Malaysia have their fair share of man-made obstacles to clear, just as their counterparts in Singapore, Indonesia, South Africa, the Philippines, South America, Portugal, Pakistan and some other countries have to face.

It is undoubtedly an uphill task that is hardly enviable, and given the complexity of the multi-racial composition of our people, the challenge is all the more compounded. However, to say this is not to enter a plea on behalf of the opposition to the power-that-be to make things easier. After all, no regime, no matter how liberal or totalitarian, owes its opposition a living. But the opposition can ask for, even insist on, fair play. It can agitate that the ruling party should not only be fair but should also be seen to be fair, playing strictly in accordance to the established rules of the game, instead of violating these rules or, worse still, always changing them to suit itself under the guise of furthering the 'national interest'.

It is evident that the Alliance government, with the host of repressive and restrictive laws it has created over the last fifteen years or so, can hardly, by any stretch of the imagination, be called democratic or be classified as liberal. It is an oppressive, autocratic and reactionary regime which tolerates no dissent, especially when it is informed, serious-minded and organised, whether it be from opposition parties, students, or workers and their trade unions. Malaysia under Alliance misrule is becoming more and more of a closed society in which the special branch of the police plays an often unseen but increasing role.

Heavy odds

Under such circumstances the prospects for a strong, viable and credible opposition in Malaysia do not appear to be very sanguine. But the heavy odds should not deter us from trying. It is quite obvious that in fighting for a more just and equal society, the opposition must struggle very hard for a comprehensive and radical democratisation of all areas of Malaysian national life. There is no guarantee that it will succeed, but that should not be an excuse not to try.

Needless to say, in a fight that needs a great deal of stamina, the future can only become more gloomy and unrealisable if the different opposition parties, groups and individuals do not have enough common sense to unite, first procedurally and electorally for the short-term, and then politically and ideologically in a longer-term overall strategy.

One final word: if the constitutional opposition fails to secure a future, it should not necessarily be construed as a victory for the reactionary Alliance party. It may very well mean that the regime will have then to contend with the forces of violence and extra-parliamentary struggle—forces which could find rapid ascendency in a vacuum left by any destroyed or irrelevant constitutional opposition. And this kind of an opposition could prove to be much harder to deal with, let alone suppress.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND COMMUNISM

Czech Communist Coup—25 Years After

February 1948, when the Czechoslovak Social Democrats were forcibly merged with the Communist Party under the shadow of the Red Army, is a date which should not be forgotten twenty-five years later. The following is the full text of a statement issued on the 25th anniversary of the coup by the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party in exile.

The Communist coup in February 1948 brought to an end the great attempt to build in Czechoslovakia a socialist society based on democratic principles. Economic planning, social security, the citizens' co-responsibility for the nation's affairs—these were essentials of the programme for the fulfilment of which, in the framework of traditional political liberties, all sections of Czechoslovak society strove after the traumatic experience of Nazi occupation and war. Thus in the February political crisis—which was to interrupt for decades this effort to create a democratic model of socialism in Czechoslovakia—there was not a conflict between two social-economic systems, socialism and capitalism, but between two political conceptions, democracy and dictatorship.

A democratic variant of socialism originated after the war in Czechoslovakia, situated as it was between the West and the East, and this constituted for the Soviet Union a too dangerous alternative to the crude Stalinist dictatorship. The elements of democracy and humanism instilled into the socialist model by Czechoslovak tradition gave the lie to the Leninist claim that the dictatorship of a party of professional revolutionaries was necessary during the transition from capitalism to socialism. The hopeful prospects of Czechoslovak democratic socialism, built up under a coalition of all political parties and with the cooperation of all sections of society, disturbed the Moscow rulers. On their instructions, and under the guidance of Soviet advisers, Czechoslovak communists fostered an atmosphere of pressure and intimidation; by the crude violation of democratic principles they seized control first of the police and, in February 1948, all power in the state.

A tragic period set in during which Czechoslovakia became a Soviet colony, suffering ruthless economic exploitation, and as gravely damaged by Beria's terror as by the incompetent decisions of communist officials usurping the right to interfere in all spheres of public and private life. While the country's foreign policy served exclusively the power designs of Soviet imperialism and its economic life staggered from crisis to crisis, the basis of the power of the communist dictatorship shrank from year to year as disillusionment drove away those who in February 1948 still supported it in the naive confidence that it would lead to a better and fairer society.

The Prague Spring of 1968 was a loud and powerful protest against what the communists had imposed on the Czechoslovak people for twenty years. It was also an admission of the utter failure of communist dictatorship, which by now had lost the support of the major part of those who had provided the basis of its power and without whom it could no longer exercise unrestricted domination over the nations of Czechoslovakia. It forcefully demonstrated the ineffectiveness of an ideology which had been imposed by threats, persecution and corruption. Not only the generation brought up in the democratic spirit of the First Republic (1918-1938), but also the generation which was born and grew up under the communist dictatorship, declared its support for the common humanist values and for the common programme of democratic socialism. The ideas of democratic socialism thus became again a way out of the crisis and gave hope to all those who were striving for the realisation of socialism in freedom and for a life of human dignity for all members of the nation.

This fact was also reflected in the courageous and spontaneous attempt to restore the free activities of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party which began at once in the first months of the Prague Spring. Twenty years of oppression and persecution, twenty years of a campaign of hatred against social democracy, which had brought imprisonment or a precarious existence to thousands of its members, had not succeeded in destroying the impact of its democratic legacy. The demand for the restoration of democratic socialism raised by all sections of Czechoslovak society not only reflected the dedication of the masses of the people to this legacy, but was at the same time designed to undo the forcible absorption of social democracy by means of which the Communist Party, soon after the February coup, sought to extort for itself a mandate to speak on behalf of all socialist-minded citizens. The attempt to restore the free activities of the Social Democratic Party in spring 1968 thus exposed the false claim of the Communist Party which for twenty years had tried to present the ban on the activities of social democrats as a voluntary fusion.

The Soviet invasion temporarily silenced the hopes which permeated the Prague Spring. The armed forces of five Warsaw Pact armies strangled the voice of the Czechoslovak people and enabled a reactionary minority of dogmatics to recapture power. Again the instruments of terror, intimidation and deprivation were brought into service against those who, in the years 1968-69, had been the spokesmen of democratic aspirations as well as those who had refused to retreat in the face of the Husak-Bilak regime. However, it has become evident that despite the new wave of persecution, a full restoration of the post-February 1948 regime is no longer possible. The fact that the democratic and humanist tradition of the nation demonstrated its irrepressible strength even after twenty years of harsh communist dictatorship, and that to the surprise of the whole world even the younger generation declared its allegiance to this tradition, is the visible signposts on the road towards a worthier future to which the Czech and Slovak nations are heading under the totalitarian surface of the dictatorship. This remains, under the disguise of apparent resignation, the content of spiritual life in Czechoslovakia today.

Moreover, there are the deeply hurt feelings of the attacked nation which have caused all its sections, irrespective of their political and ideological orientation, to close their ranks in resistance against outside interference and in an endeavour to restore full state sovereignty. While in the year 1948 the Communist Party could rely on a comparatively wide power basis formed by a section of misled workers and the extremist wing of the intellectuals, today its basis has shrunk to members of the apparatus of oppression, powerfully aided by the presence on the territory of Czechoslovakia of Soviet armed units and Soviet political police. A handful of Quislings despised by the nation and by most of the nominal members of the Communist Party, who retain their membership more because of fear than because of dedication, remain in power only thanks to these factors and cannot rely on any direct or indirect mandate from the people that would invest them with some appearance of legitimacy. The only aim of this tiny group is to keep power at any price, and that is why they place no limits on their readiness to serve the Soviet interests, irrespective of the damage they are inflicting on the Czechoslovak Republic and its citizens.

The occupation of Czechoslovakia was part and parcel of the aggressive policy of the Soviet Union. The Brezhnev doctrine, by which the occupiers try to justify their aggressive act against Czechoslovakia, constitutes today a threat also for the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, thus creating a permanent explosive situation in the heart of Europe. The proposals for the reduction of armed forces in Europe are encountering the resistance of the Soviet leaders, who are rightly afraid that the reduction in the numbers of the occupation troops, and even more so their withdrawal, would spell the end of communist rule over Czechoslovakia. As long as this state of affairs persists, the yearning of the European nations for real security cannot be fulfilled. That is why, at the coming all-European conference, the democratic states would gravely endanger their own security and the democratic principles on which they are based if they do not devote the greatest attention to such an obvious violation of security and sovereignty as the Soviet invasion and continuing occupation of Czechoslovakia. That is why the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Central and Eastern Europe and the restoration of respect for the Charter of Human Rights must remain, also in this area, the principal aim of all those who cherish the cause of the security of the European countries. It is in this spirit that the preparations for the all-European conference should be approached.

While the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party in Exile appeals in this way for the solidarity of the free world with Czechoslovakia, it at the same time expresses deep gratitude to all the undaunted freedom fighters in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union who openly and at the price of heavy personal sacrifice have expressed their condemnation of the aggressive action of their own governments against Czechoslovakia. The unity of the internal forces in their resistance against oppression from without and within, together with these manifestations of solidarity by our brave friends, gives hope, even twenty-five years after the Prague February coup, for the final victory of democracy.

DOCUMENT

British Labour Movement Signs 'Great Compact'

Through 1972 a liaison committee of the British Labour Party (both National Executive Committee and Parliamentary Labour Party) and the Trades Union Congress held regular meetings to discuss the future strategy of the British labour movement. On 28 February it published its conclusions in a document entitled 'Economic Policy and the Cost of Living'. At its presentation Labour Party leader Harold Wilson referred to the agreement as a 'great compact'. The full text follows below.

1. The present inflation has been induced and encouraged by deliberate Government policies. For its policies have not only led to higher rents, house prices, fares and food; they have also led to a series of confrontations with the trade union movement—against the harsh background of record levels of unemployment. In addition, large-scale under-capacity working in manufacturing industry has led to increased costs. But this is not all. The Government has also chosen to redistribute income and wealth, on a massive scale, to the most privileged sections of the community—those benefiting most from investment income and capital gains, or reductions in corporation tax and estate duty. Yet at the same time it has proceeded to introduce new and increased social charges right across the board, including dearer school meals, and much higher charges for prescriptions and dental and ophthalmic services.

2. In the two and a half years to the end of last year, food prices rose by 25 per cent, rents by 29 per cent, rates by 30 per cent, fares by 42 per cent, and house prices by more than half. This is the record of this Government on prices—that is, on the precise issue which more than any other brought it to office. The Government forced up rents, for example; it abandoned the cheap food policy; it presided over a huge drop in council house building—down by some 50,000 a year since 1970; and it deliberately pared down the subsidies given for commuter fares.

3. Time and time again, the Labour movement has urged the Government to change its course. For the Government's policies have steadily undermined the possibilities of cooperation in our economic life. The Government refused to listen. Instead, it seems to have equated what it describes as its electoral mandate with a freedom to ride roughshod over the interests of great sections of the community. Certainly, it was quite unprecedented for a Government in this country to introduce legislation intended to transform the entire legal framework of one of the greatest institutions in our society—the trade union movement—without any attempt at serious discussion of the principles. The fact is that we are still living with the legacy of these serious and damaging mistakes and a lack of confidence, which is affecting not only the trade union side of industry but also the attitudes of management towards investment.

4. This lack of confidence, moreover, is reflected in the serious state of the economy today. Despite the substantial increase in consumer spending during 1972 and the large increase in profits, manufacturing investment is now known to have fallen by no less than 10 per cent—in real terms—between 1971 and 1972. By choosing to stimulate the economy through an unplanned and unbalanced consumer boom, the Government has brought about a deterioration in our balance of payments, as imports have swept in to meet the demand, while goods which should have been exported have been diverted to the home market. The balance of payments surplus left by the Labour Government has been wiped out, and the trade deficit is growing at an alarming rate. This prospect can only serve to further deflate industrial confidence in our prospects for growth. Yet unless we can increase the level of our investment, our prospects

for maintaining adequate growth in the long-term must look decidedly grim.

5. Trade unionists are as concerned to keep down the cost of living as anyone else. They do not need to be told that what matters is real wages, not paper ones. But the problem of inflation can be properly considered only within the context of a coherent economic and social strategy—one designed both to overcome the nation's grave economic problems, and to provide the basis for cooperation between the trade unions and the Government. It must be a strategy which takes full account of the one irrefutable fact which has been so clearly highlighted by the freeze—namely that wages and salaries are very far indeed from being the only factor affecting prices. It has not been the farm worker, for example, who has been responsible for rising food prices nor has he shared in the higher farm profits which have resulted. Likewise it has not been workpeople and their families who have been responsible for rising rents. And it is surely time it was properly understood that in the composition of consumer prices as a whole, wages and salaries account for only 40 per cent—with profits, rent and other trading income accounting for 25 per cent, and imports and taxes on expenditure each accounting for between 15 and 20 per cent. Moreover, the level of wages and salaries in Britain is no more than about average for industrial countries—and their rate of increase for the last decade has been below the average.

An alternative strategy

6. The key to any alternative strategy to fight inflation is direct statutory action on prices—and, above all, direct action on the prices of those items that loom largest in the budgets of workpeople, such as food, housing and rents. *Food prices* must be controlled; and the next Labour Government will create the machinery to make this possible, providing subsidies where necessary to curb increases in the price of food. Special measures will be taken to deal with increases in the prices of important basic foods, such as milk, bread, sugar, meat and potatoes, including where required the creation of new special purchasing agencies to intervene in the market.

7. But controls on food prices will be only one part of a wide-ranging and permanent system of *price controls.* Such a system will need, first, to cover the main items in the family budget and affect the various levels of activity, from manufacturing to retailing. But second, the system will be flexible, with the powers available to it capable of being used selectively. And inevitably, in deciding to permit or refuse particular price increases or whether or not to order price reductions, the system will have to concern itself deeply with profits, profit margins and productivity. In this way, the next Labour Government will prevent the erosion of real wages—and thus influence the whole climate of collective bargaining.

8. There must be a new approach to *housing and rents.* The next Labour Government will repeal the 1972 Housing Finance Acts. Council tenants will be given a better deal—both on rents and on security—and be given, too, very much more say in the management of their estates. For private rented tenants the aim will be the municipalisation of privately rented property—with, in the shorter term, much greater security of tenure being given to tenants in furnished accommodation. In addition, the Labour Government, while continuing its previous policy of helping those who so wish to buy their own house on mortgage, will end the scandal whereby the richer the person and the more expensive the house the greater is the tax relief. Surtax payers will no longer be eligible for relief at the higher tax rate and all relief on mortgages to purchase a *second* house will be abolished.

9. Far more houses must be built each year. The Government will aim to exceed the total of 400,000 new homes completed in the last full year of the Labour Government. The emphasis will be on homes for those most in need, and for those on lower incomes—with the subsidies to the public sector at least matching the £300 million plus a year which is now given in tax relief to the owner occupier. And all of this will be underpinned by the public ownership of all the *land* required.

10. A new approach is needed, too, on *transport.* Far more of our traffic must be concentrated onto *public* transport. And in addition to the provision of adequate subsidies to help contain increases in fares, the next Labour Government will carry out experiments in free public transport within our major conurbations.

11. A Labour Government will reverse the regressive social and taxation policies of the present Government, and aim for a large-scale *redistribution of income and wealth.* At present, one-tenth of British adults own between them three-quarters of the nation's private wealth—whilst 1 per cent of adults own about half of all ordinary share capital. (This excludes the holdings of pension and insurance funds, and investment and unit trusts, which together account for about a third of total share capital; though even these funds are owned disproportionately by the higher income groups.) This distribution must be changed. The numerous tax concessions given to the rich by this Government will be reversed; and new taxes on wealth, and also on gratuitous transfers of wealth, will be introduced. The system of direct taxation will also be made very much more progressive, with the tax threshold being regularly raised as necessary to maintain the real value of the personal allowances.

12. These tax reforms must be supported by a deliberate Government decision to channel resources into social services. *Social charges* will be phased out as quickly as possible—and prescription charges will be the first to go. For pensions, our immediate commitment is £10 per week for single retirement pensioners and £16 a week for married couples—and the basic pension would be updated each year in relation to average earnings, not just to the cost of living. The Labour Government will help to meet the cost of these urgent social requirements not only by tax changes but also by measures to cut back the level of defence spending to that of our European allies.

Investment, employment and economic growth

13. Underpinning all of these policies, however, must be agreed policies on investment, employment and economic growth. And the objective must be to get faster growth in both national output and in output per man. For as we have emphasised above, wages and salaries in Britain have *not* increased faster than the average for industrial countries. What *has* increased faster is wage costs *per unit of output—a* direct result of the small rise of output in Britain.

14. Both output and output per man depend very substantially, of course, on the quality and effective management of capital equipment, as well as on up-to-date working methods. Yet Britain's capital equipment in many industries is rapidly falling behind the standard of our competitors. Fundamental to the British economic problem, therefore, is the problem of *investment* and, more generally, the problem of the control and the disposition of capital. The expansion of investment and the control of capital will thus be one of the central tasks of the next Labour Government. And this will mean the development of new public enterprise and effective public supervision of the investment policy of large private corporations. For it is these big firms which now dominate the growth sectors of the economy—to the extent, indeed, that no less than half of the nation's manufacturing output is already accounted for by the leading 100 companies, with this degree of concentration growing year by year.

15. In the past year both company and personal saving have been increasing, as is indicated by the improved liquidity position of companies and the high proportion of personal income which is being saved. Despite this, however, this productive investment has declined in real terms while there has been uncontrolled flow of funds into the property market. New measures of control will be needed to channel funds into productive investment. In addition, the next Labour Government will need to assert the right to control capital movements overseas—whether in Europe or elsewhere. Already in the first three-quarters of 1972 UK private investment overseas totalled £970 million—30 per cent higher, that is, than in the whole of 1971. But in these same nine months inward investment totalled only £450 million—well down on the 1971 figure, which had been inflated by the boom in North Sea oil equipment. Moreover, the poor prospects of our balance of payments are, as is well known, being further worsened by the terms of entry into the EEC. All that the Government suggest at this point in terms of increasing Britain's inadequate receipts from the Community Budget is a development of regional policy, which would be at the expense of the highly successful approach through the Regional Employment Premium, introduced by the Labour Government, which must be retained.

16. This highlights the need for a new approach on regional policy. The next Labour Government will, therefore, work closely with the trade union movement on an agreed programme to promote regional development— a programme spearheaded by effective manpower subsidies, a massive expansion in training and retraining, and investment funds for industry linked to greater accountability. And all of this will be backed by a policy of planned growth—allowing the economy to expand fast enough to keep unemployment down to a minimum level required for job changing and retraining.

Industrial democracy and economic democracy

17. A new approach is needed also towards much greater democratic control in all aspects of our national life and towards greater public accountability for decision-making in the economic field. In the control of capital and the distribution of wealth there will be more economic democracy, and the growing range of functions of the trade union movement will bring about a great extension of industrial democracy. The collective bargaining process is the essential means whereby the most important factors affecting the livelihood of workpeople can be extended to include joint control over investment and closure decisions.

18, In some respects, as was pointed out by the Donovan Commission, the extension of collective bargaining to deal with questions of industrial efficiency must entail the further movement of bargaining in many industries from national to plant level. But equally there has to be a development of common lines of action at national level and, indeed, at international level in dealing with the great international corporations.

19. This is one of the most complex fields of our national life, and this is the fundamental reason why policy in this field can only be based on agreement and not on compulsion, though there is great scope for seeking to reach recommendations through tripartite machinery along the lines of the National Economic Development Council (NEDC). But in the field of collective bargaining, such recommendations can only be incorporated in collective agreements voluntarily reached by the process of negotiation.

20. In an earlier agreed statement published in July 1972 the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, the General Council of the TUC and the Parliamentary Labour Party outlined the provisions which would be included in the next Labour Government's legislation to repeal the Industrial Relations Act. They believe that the approach set out in this statement on Economic Policy and the Cost of Living will further engender the strong feeling of mutual confidence which alone will make it possible to reach the wide-ranging agreement which is necessary to control inflation and achieve sustained growth in the standard of living. Whilst the Liaison Committee will further review this subject in the coming months, it will of course be impossible to specify what will be the precise economic circumstances in which the next Labour Government will take office. Nevertheless, it will be the first task of that Labour Government on taking office, and having due regard to the circumstances at that time, to conclude with the TUC, on the basis of the understandings being reached on the Liaison Committee, a wide-ranging agreement on the policies to be pursued in all these aspects of our economic life and to discuss with them the order of priorities of their fulfilment.

MULTINATIONALS

International Trade Union Movement Agrees on Action

A firm basis for the elaboration and application of an effective international trade union strategy for meeting the challenge posed to workers of the world by the continued growth in power and influence of huge multinational companies has now been agreed between representatives of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, a number of international trade secretariats and regional organisations. This agreement was reached at the first meeting of the joint ICFTU/ITS Working Party on Multinational Companies, which took place in Brussels on 26-27 February.

Future activities will be conducted on the understanding that relations between such companies and trade unions are the responsibility at the international level primarily of the trade secretariats, while those between governments and the companies (as well as multinational company matters in the intergovernmental organistions) are the responsibility primarily of the ICFTU. There will, of course, also be close co-operation between both sides of the movement in all these matters.

It was recognised that a great amount of research and preparatory work is still required for building up an adequate countervailing force to defend the interests of the workers in both industrialised and developing countries against the growing concentration of international capital. It was therefore agreed that all available resources in the trade union research

field should be mobilised and study groups set up for detailed examination of the following problems: the impact of multinational companies on developing countries, both economically and politically; repercussions of multinational company developments on the employment situation; the social effects of incentives used to attract foreign investment; the legal aspects of trade union action across frontiers; and the elements which the trade unions would wish to see incorporated in an international code of conduct for multinational companies. Dissatisfaction was expressed at the slow tempo with which this matter is being handled by the International Labour Office and it was agreed that the ICFTU should support the demand of the Workers' Group in the ILO for the inclusion of the question on the agenda of the earliest possible ILO conference.

The meeting was attended by representatives of ICFTU affiliates from the following countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland and Tunisia; and by representatives of the international trade secretariats for building and wood workers, clerical workers, metal workers, petroleum workers, plantation workers and postal and telegraph workers. Observers were present from the European Trade Union Confederation, the European Metalworkers Federation, the International Graphical Federation and the Socialist International Research Council. The meeting was chaired by the ICFTU General Secretary, Otto Kersten, who was accompanied by the Secretary of the Working Party, John Riddell.

FROM THE SOCIALIST PRESS

A Third Concept

LUCIANO CAFAGNA

The Common Programme of the French Left has generated a growing debate within socialist parties in many countries, not least in Italy, where there is some similarity of political conditions. One of the most controversial assessments has come from the Italian Socialist Luciano Cafagna in the pages of the Italian Socialist Party's quarterly research review Il Segnalatore. *We publish a full translation below, as a contribution to a debate to which the strong advance of the French Left in the March elections is likely to give further stimulus.*

The common programme agreed upon in France between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party may be judged from two different points of view, corresponding to two distinct hypotheses: as a programme aimed at stabilising a platform which will attract the largest possible consensus for overturning the present electoral majority in France in the near future; or simply as a programme intended to open the way for a long-term unifying process that will offer a permanent and prolonged answer to the opposition from the left. In reality, this programme corresponds in fact to neither of these prospects: it is a third concept. But the interest it can arouse, over and beyond the immediate and specifically French tactical contingencies, is linked with its ability to provide an answer either to the problem of forming a new left-wing majority in an industrially developed capitalist country, with a tradition of democratic representation, or indeed to the problem of revising the ideology of the socialist left in the framework of a long-term recovery, involving as it does either acquiring a majoritarian consensus or the prospect of government that will not be a mere 'exercise' within the existing structure, but a real 'socialist' alternative.

Why bother to make this distinction which, at the outset, may well seem inconsistent? Because we need to have as our point of departure the presupposition that a socialist majority can henceforth not be formed in a society of the western European model unless the problem of the majority consensus is settled in such a way as to guarantee continuity *after* eventual electoral success. Societies of this model reject the prospect of some act by sleight of hand whereby, having achieved the electoral victory of a coalition which is merely one of protest, people proceed on the very morrow to engage in a struggle where the tensions are so acute that they can only be governed and controlled by means of a later face-about of an authoritarian nature. In the state of things as they obtain at present, a guarantee against an act of this kind has only been offered by social democratic bodies which could be considered as substantially homogeneous, and which came forward with programmes, albeit of an advanced kind, that only had a minimum impact on pre-existing economic structures. A strategy based on profound structural changes, and truly forged to resist the the storm of a negative 'backlash' that such changes would provoke, has not as yet been the object of reflection on the part of the left.

However, the prospect of an immediate socialist majority may be a realistic one (in the immediate term) only if it is based on a programme that embraces *sine die* examples of a structural change in the economy. The French 'common programme' does not have this characteristic: it propounds a top-heavy series of nationalisations. As far as can be foreseen, and this does not require much imagination, such a financial and industrial earthquake, with the consequent deterioration in the conditions of living, would be but the curtain-raiser to civil war. The French electorate cannot line up in a majority behind such a programme. And its protagonists cannot be in ignorance of this fact.

The programme accordingly describes a profoundly modified economic structure which, linked to a broad institutional revision, does indeed include an alternative framework to the existing system (under whichever label one cares to put the alternative described above). But the choice of such a drastic imposition could correspond with a political finality far removed from the immediate aims to effect a new unity of the socialist forces in France so as to overcome past divisions and the motivations that caused them, and to launch a socialist idea throughout the country that would be capable of putting into motion again that which had come to a halt, even if it meant looking ahead beyond the near future. In such a case the idealist effort of providing the image of an alternative society would doubtless be a choice adapted to rousing fresh interest in respect of the unitarian process, and it would be presented as an event with more than mere summary implications.

But even in this direction the common programme is deeply misleading. It avoids grappling with the problems created by a way of life imposed by full acceptance of capitalist industrialisation; it skates away from any fundamental choice bearing on the dominant characteristics of the desired socialist society; and it passes over in diplomatic silence the value to be assigned to those existing models of society which claim to be supporters of socialism.

The common programme, therefore, appears to be neither a platform for an electoral somersault nor the elaboration of a principle or a new idealistic prospect. We have said it is a third concept. It is a tactical agreement, of a substantially subaltern nature, to avoid a dispersion of votes, which, though they may be of little import in presidential elections, have some useful part to play in parliamentary elections within the orbit of the French electoral system, where there is no guarantee of proportional representation and where splintered political forces are punished and set at a disadvantage. This is the reason behind the imposition that has clearly dominated the minds of the protagonists of the programme: they were not concerned with finding a broad denominator that could gather in the majority of the electorate; nor in launching an idealist force that would move the very being of the French left. Their limited preoccupation was to seek to justify, in their own sphere of electoral influence, the very idea of an agreement, since this had divided their ranks and had occasioned a long ideological polemic.

With the common programme signed and sealed in their hand, the Communists can now demonstrate that the Socialists, despite their timid reservation in favour of self-management, have begun to set out on the road of collective appropriation of the means of production, interpreted as the main road for the 'democratisation' and socialisation of the economy. And the Socialists can display the Communist signature beneath a declaration of legal respect for electoral verdicts. In other words, as regards both parties, the two fundamental motives of the ancient (and hoary) ideological quarrel was suppressed, which led one side to accuse the other of petty reformism, and vice versa the one to accuse the other of aspiring to irreversible power.

The mental scheme imposed by the French Communists on the economic part of the programme confirms their terrible doctrinaire stagnation. This is an 'aftermath of war' dating from the time of the Third International, when 'transitional programmes' were imposed on the basis of premises which have today been objectively defeated or explicitly refuted. Thus, for example, the vision once held has been abolished of nationalisations as a platform on which, by isolating the most restricted interest, it would be possible to assemble the broadest of consensus. Today this is a most abstract of visions, and for two reasons. Firstly, the overwhelming majority who think about it bring indifference rather than enthusiasm to a consideration of the private or public nature of the complex of undertakings of a certain size. Secondly, the consensus of the intermediate strata necessary to form a majority is built or rather is not built round a complex evaluation of the balances and imbalances that specific structural modifications will bring into existence. Instead, at least in words, the Communists themselves have refuted the implication—of Leninist origin—of a positive break in the vicious circle of growing tensions whereby, by dint of the class struggle, 'more advanced' solutions are imposed willy nilly, leading to the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. If the French Communists have really and truly decided to swallow the pill of a legal party, they cannot wish to descend rapidly into a situation where the left would be thrust in a short space of time into a minority position.

If, for the Communists, the suggestion of such an imposition can be considered as simply a survival of their ambiguity or as a process of a revision which is but half-way complete, the matter is much graver for the Socialists, and takes on the certain appearance of irresponsibility and light-heartedness. The latter are losing credibility. For the small change of minor tactical advantages they are trading sums that call for a coherent programmatic imposition, and they do not even have the alibi and excuse of the existence of the chains of a doctrinaire tradition. (These as such have an air of respectability even if they are no longer acceptable.) It behoves the latter to be legalitarian none the less, and not for some abstract reason of principle, but simply because nobody has yet verified whether a strategy of radical social change, allowing though it may for a transition that is democratically governed and controlled, does not lead to usurpative operations by despots and bureaucracies or to a return by reactionaries. They would be better served, in the prospect of a long opposition, to rely on what they have tried to do so far (extracting strength from the symbiosis of the study and conduct of daily struggles), and to concentrate their efforts in forcing the Communists themselves towards this type of revision. This may or may not lead to positive results, but it is the necessary clarification.

Towards Socialism

PIERRE RIMBERT

Writing in L'OURS, *the monthly publication of the* Office Universitaire de Recherche Socialiste, *which is closely associated with the French Socialist Party, Pierre Rimbert looks at some differing ideas on how the transition to socialism is to be achieved.*

In his recent book *L'Alternative*[1] Roger Garaudy, who has become decidedly more verbose since being freed from the Stalinist iron collar, asked himself this question and he has tried to answer it. It certainly is a question that is worth pausing over, since capitalism has exhausted its possibilities of life, while socialism is becoming an ever more urgent need.

Garaudy begins by rejecting reformism as a means of proceeding to socialism. But the definition he bestows on reformism does not correspond to reality. He says in fact:

> Reformism is a conception whereby it becomes feasible to effect a radical change through the simple development of capitalism without any intervention aimed at subverting the very principle of this system (p. 74).

Such a definition does not correspond with reformism but rather with fatalism, for it is not possible to qualify in other terms a conception which holds that the mere development of capitalism will automatically entail its transformation without any need for intervention.

The two reformisms

There are in point of fact two kinds of reformism. There is the kind which, rejecting any transformation of society, is merely concerned with improving the lot of working people within the framework of capitalist society. This is the case with American trade unionism. This is the case in France with those reformers who seek more social equality without, however, touching the system. Then there is the reformism which considers that it is possible to transform the capitalist system in a radical fashion by structural reforms, and this by implication

[1] Published by Robert Laffont.

must mean that the aim is to 'subvert', that is to say, overthrow the very principle of the system.

It is this latter kind of reformism which is predominant in social democracy, and where a debate has been opened just on this question. Writing in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, organ of the Austrian Socialist Party, Manfred Scheuch said on 9 April last year:

> The reform of society seems the only possible way to the democratic socialists in those highly developed societies where the rules of parliamentary democracy are established.

But socialists are not the only ones to want reforms. There are reformers in Austria. Moreover, the Austrian Socialists deem it necessary to make clear that 'the social democratic parties must be differentiated from the conservative parties by introducing reforms that change, rather than merely improve, the system'. Another Austrian Socialist, Karl Czernetz, writes for his part:

> The strategic aims of democratic socialism must be to combine the day to day battle for reform with the attempt to put into practice reforms that radically alter the structure of the system. . .

And Christian Broda, Austrian Minister of Justice, recalls: 'People are always making distinctions between reforms that change the system and reforms within the system.'[2]

A reformism of change

Accordingly it is necessary to distinguish the reformism which, within the framework of the capitalist system, seeks only to improve the lot of the workers by a better distribution of wealth, from the reformism which wishes to transform capitalist society by means of structural reforms that are equivalent to breaches in the system.[3]

The first kind of reformism has clearly no intention of proceeding to socialism and should consequently be ignored. The second kind, on the other hand, considers reforms as a transitional road to socialism. If Garaudy rejects this reform of change, he is in the wrong, for it is not possible to affirm *a priori* whether one can or cannot radically transform capitalism solely by means of structural reforms. We can however claim, on the basis of those already carried out in numerous countries, that structural reforms call into question the very existence of the capitalist system and prepare its transformation.

Rejecting reformism as a transitional road to socialism, Garaudy likewise rejects the Soviet road of generalised state control, which, he asserts, has resulted in 'power monopolised by a techno-bureaucracy' (p. 31). Well then, what road *does* he want? Before replying to this question he defines the goal to be reached, which is that of socialism based on self-management (*autogestion*). 'Self-Management,' he says, 'is another way of naming socialism, which cannot be created *for* the people but on the contrary only becomes socialism when it is made *by* the people' (p. 35).

The majority revolution

This means that revolution must 'pertain to the majority', that is to say, it must be 'consciously willed by the majority of the nation' (p. 173).

Let us note in passing that a revolution consciously willed by the majority of the nation may well be achieved through structural reforms, and it is more than probable that such reforms will be progressively effected. The speed of this progression will depend on the economic and social development of society and on the social consciousness of the working class. Since this development is bound to vary from sector to sector, one branch of economic activity may be ripe for collectivisation and another not.

A revolution consciously willed by the majority of the nation is therefore necessarily a revolution effected by reforms. And this is all the more so the case since Garaudy considers that such a revolution 'is not intrinsically linked to violence' (p. 173).

Before telling us *how* the revolution will be effected, Garaudy tells us *who* will be the instrument.

The working-class on its own? No! It is losing speed both in numbers and in influence. The working-class must therefore ally itself with other social strata. Which? The traditional middle classes, that is to say self-employed workers? No! They are in process of disappearing and are attached to an archaic form of property.

There remain what he calls the new middle classes, that is to say intellectuals and technicians. It is with these social strata that the working-class must ally itself in order to make the revolution. So he launches the idea of the creation of an historic bloc composed of the working-class and the new middle classes, which, made up of wage-earners like the working-class, are not attached to the private ownership of the means of production and have an interest in abolishing the wage system. So the historic block will make the revolution.

Very good. And how will it do it? *Not* 'by storming the Bastille or an assault on the Winter Palace, as is taught today by the supporters of revolution out of the barrel of a gun' (p. 198). Which means, *not* by insurrection. Neither by parliamentary means. How then?

The national strike

Garaudy maintains that the main action on behalf of revolution must take place in the area where the worker has real power, that is to say the power 'to block the production of an enterprise or the services of an administration or the functioning of a laboratory, and, if he can succeed in coordinating his efforts with other units of labour and other categories of workers, the power to run the enterprises, the universities, the administrations, the services, the research centres according to norms and standards other than those prescribed by the hierarchy of employers or by the state-controlled bureaucracy, and these norms will be slanted towards what we have defined as self-management. This is the way of the national strike' (p. 199).

In other words workers must take action at their place of work by means of the 'national strike'.

'If a national strike is to succeed', Garaudy proceeds, 'the historic bloc must be conscious of itself and of its role and in each enterprise or work unit the conditions must have been created for mobilising the personal initiative of each individual. The manual worker or the intellectual must not rest content with delegating his powers to a leader, but must consider himself as personally responsible for the running of the workers' council which will be . . . the motive element in the strike and which will become after the strike the responsible instrument for self-management.' (pp. 199-200)

We now see how Garaudy conceives the transition to socialism: 1. creation of workers' councils; 2. national strike; 3. self-management (*autogestion*).

Let us examine these three stages a little more closely.

The Workers' Councils

What do these workers' councils consist of? Garaudy does not tell us. But as he considers that they must 'structure the working class and the historic bloc at the place of work' (p. 200), I think that the workers' councils must be elected by the workers themselves. If that is the case, then these workers' councils exist already: they are the works councils which are in fact elected by the workers themselves. Why create further committees?

Garaudy is not immune from this mania that drawing room revolutionaries have of inventing organisms by shrugging off those that exist. For if in enterprises, where a works council elected by all the workers already exists, one proceeds to create a workers' council likewise elected by all the workers, where will the difference lie?

Garaudy sets up the workers' councils in opposition to the trade unions and the parties. This is understandable as parties and trade unions are on the outside of an enterprise, and each represents a different tendency. But the works councils represent all the personnel and embody the unity of workers by hand and brain, and they exist within the enterprise. Why therefore bother with workers' councils?

Instead of calling upon workers to struggle for the creation of workers' councils, would it not be simpler and more easily grasped by them if they were to be asked to struggle for the extension of the powers already held by the works councils? To develop working class consciousness means making them understand that they possess an instrument for power which it is up to them to perfect. It means making them understand that works councils are not just defence organs for their professional claims but organs for running and controlling the enterprises. It seems to me that such an objective is more realistic than the creation of workers' councils which will only lead workers to ask what they consist of and what purpose they serve, whereas they know what works councils are and what their purpose is. This invention of workers' councils seems to me all the more absurd as the tasks Garaudy assigns to them are virtually the same as those now possessed by works councils.

A defensive weapon

Garaudy considers the national strike to be the second stage. Why the strike? Does Garaudy not know that the strike weapon is essentially one of defence and not of attack? To move on to socialism means going into the attack, not into defence. To call a national strike means suspending all activity. This is understandable when one is claiming something and is seeking a means of forcing the employers or the government to give in. But moving on to socialism does not mean asking something from the employers or the government: it means organising activity on new bases. This organisation on new bases cannot very well be carried out if all activity is stopped, for then there will be no transport, no telephone, no post, no electricity and no production of any kind. In 1936 and again in 1968 workers went on strike throughout the country because they had no other objectives than those of seeing that their claims were met in full: holidays with pay, collective bargaining, the 40-hour week in 1936, and first and foremost pay rises in 1968 and the right to trade unions in all undertakings. But if, over and beyond their claims, workers wish to proceed to socialism, then they must take over the running of the enterprises and not paralyse them by strike action.

The risks of imagination

As regards workers' control, which forms his third stage, Garaudy envisages arriving there in the following manner:

> Once the national strike is under way, the movement must structure itself very speedily on a national scale so that a federation of workers' councils and work units can take general decisions (p. 219).

But how can this national structurisation be effected if everything is paralysed by the national strike? This question is all the more pertinent since this federation of workers' councils will have as a 'first step' to socialise the 'major means of production, transport, credit and information, and carry through the legalisation and generalisation of self-management in enterprises and national undertakings' (p. 219). These are tasks which cannot be realised if the national strike paralyses everything.

When one wishes to trace the path of transition to socialism, one inevitably runs the risk of being engulfed by one's fantasy. Garaudy has not escaped this danger. He has imagined workers' councils and the national strike. However, it is necessary to try to envisage how to proceed to socialism. And to avoid being engulfed by fantasy, one must have as one's point of departure what exists already and what represents, even if those who use it are not conscious of it, the embryo of new power. Works councils certainly do exist. To launch the slogan of a federation of works councils seems more valid than a federation of non-existent councils. It is not necessary to have a national strike to achieve that. But we must help the workers to realise that their works councils must not serve as defence organs for their professional demands: they have their trade unions and their staff delegates for that. They must understand that the works councils are the organs for the running of the enterprise. And a federation of works councils, joined by the university committees and the communes, could very well form the new power that would run and control society.

20 YEARS AGO

On 25 April 1953 Socialist International Information *(as* SOCIALIST AFFAIRS *then was) published summaries of speeches on the international situation made by delegates at the Council Conference held in Paris on 11-13 April. Among them was a speech by Erich Ollenhauer, then Chairman of the German Social Democratic Party, from which the following is an extract.*

In trying to assess the present situation and define our own attitude, we should keep two points in mind:

1. We should not consider all Soviet proposals and actions with unshakable distrust.
2. If further moves are made in the direction of a detente, we on our part should—without further delay—present demands regarding a comprehensive peace settlement such as we envisage it.

In my view we must expect that in the near future the Soviet Union will propose an international conference to discuss certain problems, and the first conference may well be followed by a number of further meetings. Whatever the intentions and plans Soviet Russia may pursue with these conferences, it seems vital that the governments of the democracies, and in particular the socialist parties, should already today start preparing themselves for these events. For if the Soviet Union suggests such conferences they will take place; nobody in the West will be able to reject them.

Our most urgent task is, therefore, to define the immediate peace aims which should be discussed at these conferences. . . . In my opinion, the restoration of German unity must have high priority on the agenda because of its far-reaching importance.

[2] Quotations from SOCIALIST AFFAIRS, May 1972.

[3] *See* Georges Lefranc, *Le Socialisme réformiste*, in the *Que sais-je?* collection published by *Presses universitaires de France*.

Socialist Aid Strategy

Judith Hart: Aid and Liberation. Victor Gollancz, London, pp. 288, £3.80.

In this book, I think her first, Judith Hart gives a most comprehensive picture of development aid since the end of the war. What makes the book particularly valuable is that she includes a chapter (38 pages long) on the subject of 'Aid and Socialism' which is the most poignant description of a socialist concept of development policies I have ever read. Although, of course, as a former Minister of Development in the British Labour Government, much emphasis is given on what Great Britain from a socialist point of view could and should do in this field, the book can be regarded as a general guide for socialists everywhere. Her conclusions are worth quoting: 'We should not see aid policies and trade policies as alternatives, but as complementary in a drive to give much more help to the Third World. We must help as much as we can, where we can.'

The amount of statistical data, most of it is up to date, is vast. And what makes the theoretical part of the book so lively is that she has chosen countries like India and Chile as her major examples. But it is above all her clear and well-founded description of the work and philosophies of the various international development agencies like EPTA, the Special Fund of the UN and UNDP which makes her book compulsory reading for anyone active or interested in the field of international development aid. The index, the tables (23 altogether) make this book a standard work which should not be missing in the library of any socialist.

What I personally find most fascinating, of course, is her description of the struggle of socialists in Chile against multinational corporations, particularly to introduce comprehensive land reform. I had the pleasure of being present in Santiago when Judith Hart presented a copy of the book to the President of Chile, Salvador Allende, and I could see what great esteem the Chilean President has for the author. As a matter of fact I think Judith Hart today is the best known and most respected western European socialist in Chile and she has undoubtedly, in writing this book, created a much better understanding abroad of the specific problems of the Popular Unity Government of Chile in overcoming what one must regard as almost unsurmountable problems, problems which can certainly not be solved without massive assistance from abroad and particularly by governments of social democratic parties.

I am sure the book will be a best seller in its field and will certainly be used as one of the basic documents in any future discussion within the framework of the Socialist International on development aid and development policies, particularly by the World Plan Council of the International, which is chaired by Nobel Prize winner Jan Tinbergen and in which Judith Hart represents the British Labour Party.

One more reason to hope that the British Labour Party will return to power soon is the fact that a development expert with socialist convictions of the calibre of Judith Hart will be a member again of the government of Great Britain.

Hans Janitschek

Prague's False Spring

Galia Golan: Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia—the Dubcek Era 1968-1969. Cambridge University Press, 327 pp, £5.80.

'Did the Prague Reformers go too far to provoke Soviet anger?' To this and many similar questions often asked by students of the Prague Spring, Miss Golan's study offers a wealth of information from which they can deduce the answers. The most illuminating chapter, on the censorship, shows how freedom of expression, the first and most conspicuous achievement of the reformers, could not, in the conditions of escalating demand, be accepted as a substitute for freedom of association, as many Prague theorists claimed. When the authorities issued an instruction to editorial boards to refrain from publishing statements about the former Social Democratic Party, which was demanding reinstatement, there were courageous journalists who simply disregarded it, and even supported the attempt. As Miss Golan reports, 'Pressures for this came from below with such things as a letter to the youth daily on 29 March claiming that the 1948 merger had been accomplished without members of the Social Democratic Party having been consulted. In early June a preparatory committee was set up for the re-institution of the Party and the basis laid for the subsequent formation of some 120 to 300 branches.'

Thus the knowledge of the attempt was not, and could not be, suppressed, and became one of the issues which caused remarkable differences of opinion among the reformers themselves. Miss Golan describes a whole range of attitudes taken by the progressive leaders and the Reformers to this crucial subject of freedom of association generally, and of the Social Democratic Party in particular, including those who 'dismissed the idea of political parties as a purely bourgeois phenomenon and an anomaly for a socialist society' (Eduard Goldstücker, now in exile) or as an effort 'to dredge up old and outdated bourgeois democratic orders' (Cestmir Cisar). There were the centrists, who emphasised the new role of the reformed Communist Party with internal democracy greatly restored and anxious to retain its leading role by persuasion and not by compulsion. There were also those who regarded the monopoly of the Communist Party as a temporary arrangement and to whom—it is not without interest to note today—Gustav Husak belonged, and who 'recognised that the Western communist parties accepted the idea of other parties', but who 'opposed the idea of an opposition party, for the present, arguing that opposition could be expressed within the existing institutions'. There were those who, apart from radical critics outside the Communist Party, came to accept pluralism, such as the veteran Slovak Communist, Zora Jesenka, who argued that 'there was nothing incompatible with socialism "about the existence of real political parties" in the National Front'. And finally there were 'letters to the editors of various journals reflecting a decided interest in an opposition party as a guarantee against "deformations and excesses"', or even that 'only a two-party or a multiparty system could provide for the genuine political representation of all the people since four-fifths of the population were not members of the Communist Party and therefore not genuinely represented politically'.

With equally systematic and meticulous care, Miss Golan reviews the progress of the Economic Reform accepted in principle by the party, but frustrated in its execution; the revelations concerning the purge trials of 1949-54, rightly describing the review of the trials as the issue 'which had opened destalinization in Czechoslovakia in 1963'; the sporadic deviations from the basically pro-Soviet foreign policy on specific problems such as the Middle East, Biafra, or relations with Germany, supplemented during 1968 by the emphasis on the 'Czechoslovak way to Socialism' and on national sovereignty, and culminating in bitter polemics with the Soviet Union and its satellites; and finally the invasion, and the trends in occupied Czechoslovakia until the downfall of Alexander Dubcek.

Remaining throughout the study a meticulous research worker rather than a commentator, the writer refrains from passing judgment on what was the final impulse that prompted the Soviet leaders to send in the troops, (a question which probably will not be fully answered until the Soviet archives are opened). She exposes the official Soviet explanation, stressing that 'it was the democratic nature and content of the Czechoslovak experiment, rather than some fabricated "internal" danger of neutralism or pro-Western tendencies which precipitated the invasion.'

She concludes: 'It was in this context that the Soviets elucidated their concept of limited sovereignty: the right of the socialist "camp" to determine what constitutes a danger of Communism even within other socialist nations. While this may be a purely arbitrary concept designed ultimately to preserve the Soviet Empire, it conveys an important lesson for reform efforts within the context of communism. There are certain tenets so intricately threaded to the Soviet concept of rule that even non-nationalistic pro-Russian loyally socialist movements cannot infringe upon them. There is every reason to conclude that the Reform regime in Czechoslovakia believed it could realise its programme within the context of communism and alliance with Moscow. It was Moscow, not Prague, which said — perhaps proved — the contrary.'

Vilem Bernard

SPD and the Jews

Donald L. Niewyk: Socialist, Anti-Semite and Jew. German Social Democracy Confronts the Problem of Anti-Semitism, 1918-33. Louisiana State University Press, pp. 254, $8.95.

Social democrats were in the main responsible for shaping and promoting West Germany's post-war reparations to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution —not without at first meeting with considerable opposition. Also, they took an early initiative in establishing friendly relations with Israel. In this they resumed their pre-1933 attitude towards the Jews. Their consistent opposition to antisemitism and their defence of the Jews' rights between 1918 and 1933 is well documented in this book by Professor Niewyk.

This book, backed by thorough research, is a scholarly contribution to the history of antisemitism in Germany. Short summaries at the end of each chapter will be found useful by the reader. There is an extensive bibliography.

The author reminds us of facts still too often overlooked. Antisemitism, though shamefully existent for a very long time, remained of relatively minor importance, even in the first years after the First World War, until a combination of circumstances, economic and others, gave it a chance by enabling Hitler to lead an antisemitic mass movement to power.

The social democrats are shown to have been consistent opponents of this doctrine. There were some exceptions, but, as the author stresses, amazingly few considering how the poison affected other strata of the population. Of special interest is the analysis of the socialist arguments, which appealed particularly to the workers. They saw in antisemitism—as indeed in National Socialism too—a reactionary device to divert attention from the failures of capitalism, to undermine the democratic Republic and fight the labour movement. After 1927, it is true, psychological explanations for the growing acceptance of this irrational creed came more to the fore, without the 'plot theory' being abandoned.

The danger inherent in the 'plot theory' was fully realised only much later. It minimized the long-term threat for the Jews, encouraging the belief that, even for the Nazis, anti-Jew hatred was essentially a tactic, not a fundamental aim one day to be executed by the 'final solution' of genocide.

Of course, as the author points out, the refusal to face the prospect of mass-extermination of the Jewish population was very general inside and outside Germany, and even beyond 1933.

The Nazis always claimed that the SPD was controlled by Jews and exploited any scandal which involved Jewish members of the SPD to support this claim. After 1929, when the SPD began to feel some effects of this denunciation, there was a certain reluctance to associate too openly with Jewish organisations, and this actually seemed in the interest of both sides. On some occasions there was opposition to endorsing a Jewish candidate and these tactical considerations were heeded. But the author found no evidence of any real discrimination against Jews by the Social Democrats.

Mary Saran

Re-writing the Gospel

Norbert Leser: Die Odyssee des Marxismus. Auf dem Weg zum Sozialismus. Molden Publishers, Vienna, 431 pp., DM 32.

Norbert Leser, Professor of Political Science at the new University of Salzburg, is a prolific writer of immense erudition. Being at the same time an ardent supporter of democratic socialism and a severe critic of socialist theories and practices, he has stirred many controversies in his native Austria, and he is doing so again with his latest book which condemns marxist thinking as eternally vacillating between revolutionarism and historical determinism (depicting the final victory of socialism as inevitable). As in his previous book *Zwischen Reformismus und Bolschewismus* (1968), the 'Austromarxist' school of thinking and Otto Bauer, its most important ideologist, are Leser's main target; but he includes in his criticism now even Karl Kautsky, who sharply disagreed with Bauer on the latter's evaluation of the phenomenon of bolshevism.

Not restricting himself to an attempt to re-write the gospel of democratic socialism in terms which show Leser as a kind of 'Austrian Crosland' (comparisons of this kind are naturally never entirely correct), the author castigates German and Austrian social democracy for their inability to prevent the temporary triumph of fascism—though he denies it, one cannot help feeling sometimes that he is here often influenced by the comparatively easy wisdom of hindsight. Whether one agrees with the author or not—and he expresses in his book so many opinions on many things that hardly anybody

can agree or disagree *in toto*—Leser's attempts to analyse, for example, psychoanalysis or existentialism from a socialist point of view break new ground and should lead to further thinking.

Leser sees his aim in 'developing a theory which guarantees and makes sure the delayed supply of the unity of theory and practice which marxism only announced and pretended to deliver but never provided even in model form'. After all the harsh words he has to say about marxism, Leser's ceterum censeo about it sounds, however, somehow differently: 'Marxism might remain controversial, it might even land on the heap of ruins of world and intellectual history, yet the elements of marxism will not stop serving as affirmation of possibilities and as a warning against dangers, in both cases of historical dimensions.' The book is no easy reading, but the patient reader is richly rewarded and, even when disagreeing, deeply impressed by the author's apparent sincerity in the search for truth and a new outlook.

J. W. Bruegel

Apocalyptic Tocsin

Wolfgang Abendroth: A Short History of the European Working Class. New Left Books, London, 204 pp, £2.50.

This book, which the blurb claims disingenuously to be 'the first study to give an outline history of the working-class movement as a whole', was first published in German in 1965 and is here brought up to the end of 1971 with a postscript which concludes: 'In Europe the prospect of a heightened class struggle can only mean that the workers will either allow themselves to become the victims of a new period of capitalist readjustment or that they will again rediscover the historic mission of their class: the sounding of a revolutionary tocsin which will summon all the oppressed and the exploited to overthrow the regime of capitalist private property in Europe, the continent that gave it birth.' West Germany's celebrated left-wing seer leads up to this point with a stimulating survey of a century of working-class politics, although many in the mainstream of socialist and labour parties will feel that to see the undoubted trend to the left in industrialised countries in recent years as 'a revolutionary tocsin' is unnecessarily apocalyptic and possibly counter-productive.

AJD

Too Much Sociology

Vivian Vale: Labour in American Politics. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 172 pp, £2.50.

George Fischer (Ed): The Revival of American Socialism. Oxford University Press, 330 pp, £4.75.

For those perplexed by the paradox that the country of the most advanced capitalism has failed to produce a mass countervailing party of the left, Vivian Vale's short book will provide many of the answers, from the unsuitability of the 'American environment' to the 'voluntarism' of the founder of the American labour movement, Samuel Gompers. The writer is unfortunate in beginning with the assertion that the 'British and American labour federations . . . send representatives to collaborate side by side in the International Confederation of Free Trade unions'. But generally his comparative approach is productive, particularly when it turns up many of the American antecedents of the labour policies pursued by the British Conservative Government in its first two years of office. He also brings out clearly the importance of Roosevelt's New Deal in conditioning the political approach of American labour. For those who wonder whether a European-style democratic socialist party will ever gain mass support in the United States, *The Revival of American Socialism* shows how distant this aim still is. In this selection of papers from the Socialist Scholars' Conference, the aware social democracy of such as Irving Howe jostles uneasily with the 'permanent revolution' of such as Ernest Mandel. Most of the contributions are of high intellectual quality. But the European socialist reader may find in them too much analytical sociology and not enough consideration of what exactly is to be done.

AJD

Multinational Unionism

Charles Levinson: International Trade Unionism, George Allen & Unwin, London, 402 pp., £4.75.

Following his influential *Capital, Inflation and the Multinationals,* in which the besetting evil of inflation is traced to the operations of the international giants, the General Secretary of the International Federation of Chemical and General Workers' Unions here broadens his perspective to the overall requirements of a trade union strategy in the face of the increasing internationalisation of big business. The book has wide ranging chapters on industrial democracy, asset formation by trade unions, and technological unemployment. But its core is once more the trade union response to multinational companies. The aim, he writes, must be 'full collective bargaining with multinational corporations' ideally involving 'a single master agreement'. He envisages getting to this through three stages: firstly, coordinated international assistance to a single union in dispute with a multinational (now a reality in fields like motor-car production); secondly, multiple negotiations with a company in several countries at the same time (which the ICF is currently pioneering through the creation of 'world councils' for particular companies); and thirdly, the decisive stage of completely integrated negotiations around common demands. The goal, as Levinson admits, is a long way off. But trade unionists are fortunate in having such a capable guide to chart the path they must follow.

AJD

Chilean Labour's Role

Alan Angell: Politics and the Labour Movement in Chile. Published for the Royal Institute of International Affairs by Oxford University Press, 289 pp, £5.

J. Ann Zammit (Ed.): The Chilean Road to Socialism. University of Sussex, England, 465 pp, £2.50 (paper).

Of these two additions to the spate of books about Allende's Chile, the former is the more valuable because it concentrates on, and elucidates, a particular aspect of Chilean politics, namely, the crucial role of the trade unions in the political struggle. The core of the book is an examination of how the highly disciplined Communists, the revolutionary Socialists, the reformist Radicals and the militant Christian Democratic Party have competed for the allegiance of the Chilean labour movement, which has in consequence been able to exert considerable political influence. European social democrats will be particularly interested in the chapter on the evolution of the Radical Party, whose traditional strength has been in the white-collar unions. *The Chilean Road to Socialism* is a massive compendium of the proceedings of a 'round table' organised jointly in March 1972 by the Chilean National Planning Office and Sussex University's Institute of Development Studies. The gathering was doubtless 'unique', as its organisers claim, but the participants probably got more out of it than readers of this book will. More rigorous editing could have pruned out some of the routine official speechifying and also the inexplicable hundred pages on Hungary, Cuba, Tanzania and Yugoslavia.

AJD

Diffuse collection

Revolution in the Middle East and other case studies. Edited by P. J. Vatikiotis, Allen & Unwin.

This is a collection of seven essays by well-known specialists on various aspects of revolution in the Middle East. Also included are three essays on revolution in Eastern Europe, Latin America and China respectively. Although individually interesting the collection is marred by the complete absence of any overall comparative framework. Despite the inclusion of the three essays on revolution outside the Middle East very little attempt is made to consider whether revolution in the Middle East is similar to, or significantly different from, revolution elsewhere. The overall impression is of a diffuse collection of essays hastily and somewhat precariously grouped around a common theme.

Robin Theobald

Blow by blow account

Eric Heffer: The Class Struggle In Parliament. A Socialist View of Industrial Relations. Victor Gollancz, London, 350 pp, £3.90.

Perhaps the most crucial chapter in the history of the last British Labour Government was the attempt, unsuccessful as it turned out, to impose a legal framework on industrial relations. This book provides a blow by blow account of the thwarting of this attempt, written by one of the party's leading left-wing MPs. Eric Heffer was prominent in the campaign against Barbara Castle's *In Place of Strife*, and when the Conservative Government introduced its own Industrial Relations Bill, he was a natural choice as a front-bench Labour spokesman against it. The difference in the second campaign was that it failed, although the Act has subsequently proved to be virtually unworkable. This book tells the inside story of both campaigns in a lively fashion and should be read not only by all students of industrial relations but also by anyone interested in power relations within political parties.

AJD

Books received

Titles may be reviewed in a subsequent issue.

Anthony Arblaster and Steven Lukes (Ed.): The Good Society—a Book of Readings. Methuen, London, 436 pp, £1.50 (paperback).

Campbell Balfour: Industrial Relations in the Common Market. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 132 pp, £2.

A. H. Birch: Representation. Macmillan, London, 149 pp, £0.95 (paperback).

Robin Blackburn (Ed.): Ideology in Social Science. Fontana paperback, London, 382 pp, £0.75.

Frank Blackaby (Ed.): An Incomes Policy for Britain. Heinemann, London, 250 pp, £4.

Wilfred Brown: The Earnings Conflict. Proposals for tackling the emerging crisis of industrial relations, unemployment and wage inflation. Heinemann, London, 128 pp, £1.90.

Wlodzimierz Brus: The Market in a Socialist Economy. Routledge & Kegal Paul, London, 199 pp, £2.50.

L. G. Churchward: The Soviet Intelligentsia. An essay on the social structure and roles of the Soviet intellectuals during the 1960s. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 204 pp, £3.25.

David Coombes: State Enterprise—Business or Politics? PEP, George Allen & Unwin, London, 244 pp, £3.30.

Isaac Deutscher: Marxism in Our Time. Jonathan Cape, London, 312 pp, £2.95.

Allan Fels: The British Prices and Incomes Board. Cambridge University Press, 298 pp, £1.60 (paperback).

Marc Ferro: The Russian Revolution of February 1917. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 478 pp, £4.95.

Giuseppe Fiori: Antonio Gramsci—Life of a Revolutionary. New Left Books, London, 304 pp, £2.75.

Paul Froelich: Rosa Luxemburg—Ideas in Action. Pluto Press, London, 329 pp, £1.50 (paperback).

Stan Gooch: Total Man—Towards an Evolutionary Theory of Personality. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 552 pp, £4.50.

Hans Guenter (Ed.): Transnational Industrial Relations. Proceedings of a symposium held at Geneva by the International Institute for Labour Studies. Macmillan, London, 480 pp, £7.

Louis J. Halle: The Ideological Imagination. Chatto & Windus, London, 174 pp, £2.50.

José Harris: Unemployment and Politics. A Study in English Social Policy 1886-1914. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 411 pp, £7.50.

Nigel Harris: Competition and the Corporate Society. British Conservatives, the State and Industry, 1954-1964. Methuen, London, 384 pp, £3.75.

Roy Jenkins: What Matters Now. Fontana Paperback, London, 122 pp, £0.30.

Lionel Kochan (Ed.): The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917. 2nd edition. Oxford University Press, 377 pp, £3.50.

Robert Looker (Ed.): Rosa Luxemburg—Selected Political Writings. Jonathan Cape, London, 309 pp, £3.50 (hardback), £1.50 (paperback).

Rosa Luxemburg & Nikolai Bukharin: Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital. Ed. Kenneth Tarbuck. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 289 pp, £4.

Herbert Marcuse: Counter-Revolution and Revolt. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 138 pp, £2.

Karl Marx: The Cologne Communist Trial. Lawrence & Wishart, London, 298 pp, £3.

Mervyn Matthews: Class and Society in Soviet Russia. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 366 pp, £3.50.

Richard Mayne: The Europeans—Who are we? Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 206 pp, £2.

W. E. J. McCarthy (Ed.): Trade Unions. Penguin, London, 416 pp, £0.60 (paperback).

Geoffrey McDermott: Leader Lost. A Biography of Hugh Gaitskell. Leslie Frewin, London, 292 pp, £3.15.

Roger Morgan: West European Politics since 1945. The Shaping of the European Community. Batsford, London, 243 pp, £1.40 (paperback).

Andreas G. Papandreou: Paternalistic Capitalism. Oxford University Press, 190 pp, £2.75.

Alberto Pozzolini: Antonio Gramsci—an introduction to his thought. Pluto Press, London, 158 pp, £0.90 (paperback).

Rita Cruise O'Brien: White Society in Black Africa—the French of Senegal. Faber & Faber, London, 320 pp, £3.50.

Eugene Schulkind (Ed.): The Paris Commune—the View from the Left. Jonathan Cape, London, 308 pp, £3.50 (hardback), £1.50 (paperback).

Thomas Stark: The Distribution of Personal Income in the United Kingdom 1949-1963. Cambridge University Press, 192 pp, £4.60.

Leon Trotsky: On Lenin—Notes towards a Biography. Harrap, London, 204 pp, £1 (paperback).

Patrick Gordon Walker: The Cabinet. Jonathan Cape, London, 208 pp, £2.95.

Michael Waller: The Language of Communism — a commentary. The Bodley Head, London, 183 pp, £2.

Dick Wilson: The Future of Singapore. Oxford University Press, 120 pp, £1.30 (paperback).

Marcia Williams: Inside Number 10. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 385 pp, £3.95.

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE SWISS SOCIAL Democratic Party lost its position as the strongest party in the canton of Aargau in elections on 18 March. Women were voting for the first time. The party's representation fell from 57 to 46 seats. The Christian Democrats got 54, a gain of seven. Schwarzenbach's anti-immigrant National Action, campaigning for the first time in the canton, won 10 of the 200 seats.

IN THE FIRST STATE election since last December's federal poll, the Australian Labour Party was returned to power in South Australia on 10 March. The ALP increased its share of the votes by about 2 per cent. Eighteen-year-olds were voting for the first time in the state. At federal level the Labour Government has successfully put through the Australian Parliament a bill giving the vote to 18-year-olds in federal elections.

HERBERT WEHNER, strategist of the German Social Democratic Party, announced on 16 March that for health reasons he will not continue as Deputy Chairman of the party beyond the SPD Congress to be held in Hanover on 10-14 April. Herr Wehner, one of the drafters of the 1959 Bad Godesberg Programme and architect of the 1966 'grand coalition' with the Christian Democrats, will continue as SPD Leader in the Bundestag.

REPORTS

BELGIUM

Linguistic conditioning

The Eyskens government, which fell in November 1972, was composed of Social Christians and Socialists. After 65 days the Socialist Edmond Leburton succeeded in forming a cabinet which includes the Liberals. The new government [see SOCIALIST AFFAIRS, No. 1, 1973] counts 15 Social Christians, 13 Socialists and 8 Liberals. It has a comfortable majority in both chambers, of which the lower is composed as follows: Social Christians 67, Socialists 61, Liberals 34, French-speaking Front and the Walloon Union 35, Volksunie (Flemish national party) 10, Communists 5.

The above list of six parties might lead one to think that there was a clear demarcation of political geography. The reality is more complex and unstable. In point of fact, the Social Christians have now separated into two fractions, according to linguistic affiliation: 47 deputies belong to the Flemish region, 20 to the French-speaking region. As for the Liberals, they are split into three groups: Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels.

I scarcely need to recall that Belgium (with 9.6 million inhabitants) has 56 per cent Flemish, 32 per cent French-speaking people, followed by a further 11 per cent who are domiciled in Brussels and who can be considered bi-lingual. To these must be added the 60,000 Belgians who speak German.

Linguistic problems have strongly conditioned Belgian politics over recent years, and to them can be traced the revision of the constitution which terminated the unitary regime, without however introducing a federal system. A halt was made at 'regionalism', which is tantamount to a half-way house between the two. By this term can be understood:

(1) Broad cultural autonomy between the linguistic communities;

(2) A growth and extension of regional powers in economic matters.

It is a simple task to outline the scheme, but quite difficult to put into practice. The oppositions of languages and cultures soon assume a character imbued with passion that overrides class and party oppositions. It is a question now of:

(1) Establishing a clear dividing line between what remains 'national' and what becomes 'regional';

(2) Henceforth regulating economic, fiscal and social terms and conditions, as well as the distribution of powers;

(3) Definitely fixing the limits of the regions, that is to say, tracing internal frontiers.

This last-mentioned task—which is of vital importance—is particularly arduous, especially having regard to the fact that Brussels, the capital of the country (with one million inhabitants), is situated right in the middle of the Flemish region and has a 75 per cent majority of French-speaking people, who are officially designated as bi-lingual.

The nature of the jig-saw puzzle being what it is, governmental crises are easier to provoke than to solve. The last crisis was provoked by the 'irredentism' of a pocket of 4,300 inhabitants dwelling on the fringe of the Low Countries and not far from the German border—Les Fourons. The people there are of Flemish origin although some have Walloon connections. Foreigners should kindly refrain from smiling at these problems!

Many other important problems arise in this country of ours with its host of particularisms, since several international organisations have their headquarters here: the Common Market, NATO, SHAPE. . . . But these problems are often relegated to a secondary level. The Belgian Socialist Party (PSB) tirelessly strives to draw political attention—and competition—to questions like the standard of living, employment, purchasing power, monetary stability, planning, collective undertakings; but these efforts have come up against local chauvinist inclinations, and the party is not always able to carry the day.

However, speaking objectively and generally, our party has great chances of making progress. Not only because it has remained the most united, but because a new socialist generation is in process of winning its spurs in responsible positions.

The General Council of the Belgian Socialist Party devoted its recent session to external policy. It unanimously approved, in agreement with the PSB Bureau, a number of resolutions brought before it by the signatory of the present note.

The three essential themes were: Europe, East-West relations and the Third World. I drew my inspiration in particular from a certain fund of ideas that came to the forefront at the conference of socialist party leaders held in Paris in January 1973. With regard to Europe, particular mention was made of the fact that the Common Market of big business, backed by its industrialists and bankers, has more than one stage to go on the road before it can be transformed into a Europe without frontiers enjoying economic democracy.

The Council signified its agreement on a series of actions that would need to be taken to achieve this kind of Europe, based on the cooperation of socialist parties and trade unions.

Victor Larock

JAPAN

Opposition front?

In the season of the annual conferences of the Japan Socialist Party and the Democratic Socialist Party, moves are once again afoot to bring the four parties of the Japanese opposition into some sort of alliance against the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. In the last general election in December 1972 the Socialists gained 31 seats to reach 118 out of 491, while the Communists shot up from 14 to 38. Although the other two opposition parties, the DSP and the Buddhist-inspired Komeito, both lost seats heavily, the four opposition parties as a bloc now control 204 of the 491 seats in the House of Representatives. They are thus well-placed to mount an offensive against the LDP in the forthcoming Tokyo elections and then to challenge the government's upper house majority in 1974.

The moment appears to be propitious in that the standing of Prime Minister Tanaka has slumped dramatically in recent months. If the opposition can obtain a majority in the upper house next year, Tanaka would need a two-thirds majority in the lower house to force through legislation referrred back to it—and this is a majority he has not got.

Following the JSP conference in February, the general secretaries of the four parties met in early March to discuss the new proposal for a joint front. The talks were reported to have gone well and will continue. At some stage they are likely to run into the traditional hostility of the Democratic Socialists (who split from the JSP in 1959) to the idea of an opposition front including the Communists. However, the DSP will be in a weaker bargaining position this time following its electoral setback in December. Realising this, the DSP was scheduled to make strenuous efforts at its mid-April conference to restore the party's public image by emphasising its commitment to welfare state politics.

Another obstacle to the creation of an opposition front is the increasingly bitter struggle being waged at local level and in the trade unions between the JSP and the revivified Communists, who look to Peking and Moscow respectively for their ideological inspiration. The two parties are seeking to obtain a joint majority in the July election for the Tokyo Municipal Assembly (at present the JSP has 20 and the Communists 18 of the 126 seats). At the same time both parties realise that the leadership of the anti-LDP front is likely to go to the side that emerges with the most seats from this election.

AJD

BRUSSELS

EEC Socialist Bureau Plans Ninth Congress

The 9th Congress of the EEC Socialist Parties will take place in Bonn on 26-27 April. This was decided at a meeting of the Bureau of the Socialist Parties of the European Community held in Brussels on 2 February. It had been originally envisaged that a conference on social policy would be held in April. The February meeting decided that this should be upgraded to the 9th Congress and should not be confined in its deliberations to social policy questions only.

It was the first meeting of the Bureau following the enlargement of the Common Market. The Chairman, Lucien Radoux, extended a welcome to the representatives of the Danish Social Democratic Party and the Irish Labour Party, who were attending the Bureau for the first time. The Danish party was represented by the Minister for Foreign Economic Affairs, Ivar Noergaard and the SDP General Secretary Ejnar Hovgaard-Christiansen. The Irish representatives were Conor Cruise O'Brien (then Labour's foreign Spokesman) and Justin Keating (then EEC Spokesman). The British Labour Party was not represented at the meeting.

The first part of the meeting was attended by two of the socialist members of the EEC Commission, Henri Simonet and Altiero Spinelli. They described the various responsibilities of the socialist Commissioners and outlined the future work of the Commission. Altiero Spinelli said that in 1973 the Commission would be drawing up action programmes for the second stage of economic and monetary union, for social policy, industrial policy, regional policy, environment policy and energy policy. He said that in the coming years there would be considerable discussion on the future development of the institutions of the European Community, and that as part of the proposals for the second stage of economic and monetary union the Commission had to prepare a report on the transfer of some powers from national parliaments to the Community's institutions, including the European Parliament. The Commission also had to draft a report to be submitted in three year's time on the various institutional changes needed to move towards the European union envisaged for 1980. He stated that it was important that the socialist parties should give their opinion on this question.

The Bureau agreed with a proposal by the Secretary, Manfred Michel, that a working party should be established to study the problems of economic growth, to cover both environmental problems and problems in connection with the EEC's policy of economic and monetary union.

The Bureau also noted the imminent publication of a joint edition of European socialist journals. It was reported that nine publications with a total circulation of 65,000 were participating. It was also noted that a second joint edition was being considered for later this year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

IN BRITAIN THE 'Democratic Labour' candidate, Dick Taverne, won the by-election at Lincoln on 1 March by a large majority. Taverne had been disowned by his local party largely because of his support for British entry of the EEC on the Conservative Government's terms. He chose to resign from both his seat and the Labour Party and to fight a by-election under different colours. Other Labour pro-Marketeers, notably Roy Jenkins, subsequently disclaimed any interest in the notion of a 'third force' in British politics. In two other by-elections on the same day, Labour retained the seats at Chester-le-Street and Dundee, with greatly reduced majorities. The Tories fared badly in all three contests.

(Continued from page 27)
Liam Cosgrave took office on 14 March. It comprises ten Fine Gael ministers and five Labour. Labour leader Brendan Corish is Deputy Prime Minister as well as having the portfolios of health and social security. The other four Labour ministers are Justin Keating (Industry and Commerce), Michael O'Leary (Labour), James Tully (Local Government) and Conor Cruise O'Brien (Posts and Telegraph).

In the election the Labour Party won 19 seats, a gain of two. Fine Gael gained four (54 from 50). This was enough to give the coalition victory over Fianna Fail, which slipped from 71 to 69. The state of the sides is Fine Gael-Labour 73, Fianna Fail 69, with two independents, one of whom is expected to support the coalition. Compared with the last elections in 1969, the Labour Party's share of the vote slipped from 17 to 15 per cent. The party was able to gain seats, however, thanks to an electoral arrangement with Fine Gael in Ireland's multi-member constituences.

As well as contracting to support one another's candidates with preference votes, the coalition parties also published a pre-election policy statement which stressed bread and butter domestic issues. Housing, prices, unemployment and the need for educational reform were all emphasised, and the launching of this programme enabled the coalition to retain the initiative throughout the campaign. The programme also promised the introduction of workers' participation in nationalised industries and an attempt to end discrimination against women. The Northern Ireland question played little part in the campaign, the extreme Republican parties receiving only a handful of votes.

Mujib's vote of confidence

The Bangladesh electorate gave Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his Awami League a massive vote of confidence in the elections held on 7 March. The Awami League has won all but half a dozen of the 300 seats in the Assembly, totally vanquishing all the opposition elements. In the ill-starred elections of 1970, which had produced the war which in turn had led to the creation of Bangladesh, the Awami League had won 167 of the 169 East Pakistan seats. Sheikh Mujib's latest triumph is of equal proportions, with the Awami League winning 73 per cent of the votes.

AJD

Santiago Bureau Meeting Backs Allende

The Bureau of the Socialist International held an Extraordinary Meeting in Santiago on 7-9 February at the invitation of its Chilean member, the Radical Party. It was the first meeting of the Bureau to be held in Latin America and the first ever to be convened in the Third World. Thirty-three representatives of sixteen parties affiliated to the International attended. The Chairman of the Socialist International, Dr Bruno Pittermann, presided.

Representatives of member parties in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden were present, as were guests from parties in Ireland, Portugal and Venezuela.

Two statements were adopted by the meeting, one on the Latin American situation and the other on nuclear testing in the Pacific. The former reaffirmed the International's support for the Popular Unity government of President Allende, in which the Radical Party plays a leading role, and stated that the International was 'aware that the process of development requires that the principal resources of any country must be nationally owned and not continue to be a source of profit for private companies and corporations in rich countries'. The latter strongly protested against the continuation of French nuclear tests in the Pacific. The full texts of the statements are published below.

The Santiago Bureau meeting also decided that the International should set up a Standing Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean charged with the task of working out an action programme for Latin America. This Standing Committee will set up a sub-committee to deal specifically with the question of torture in Brazil, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic.

In the case of the Dominican Republic, the Bureau considered as a matter of urgency the wave of arrests of members of the Revolutionary Party in that country. A proposal by the Dutch and Scandinavian parties that the International should send a mission to the Dominican Republic to investigate the situation was adopted unanimously. The Bureau also instructed the General Secretary of the International, Hans Janitschek, to send a telegram to the Dominican President protesting strongly against the persecution of the Dominican Revolutionary Party.

The Bureau was addressed by members of the Chilean Popular Unity, including José Toha, Minister of Defence and Acting Foreign Minister, and Rafael Agustin Gumucio of the left-wing Christian Democrats, who is President of the Federal Organisation of the Popular Unity. The President of the Radical Party, Senator Anselmo Sule, opened the meeting with a major political speech.

On the third day of the meeting, the Chilean President, Salvador Allende, met delegates for political discussions, and later entertained them to a lunch at the Moneda Palace.

Other business on the agenda of the meeting included a report by the General Secretary that the Socialist International had been granted consultative status as a non-governmental organisation by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. The Bureau also instructed the General Secretary to send a message to the Irish Labour Party wishing it well in the general election to be held on 28 February.

In the course of its proceedings the Bureau paid its respects to the memory of the former International Secretary of the Chilean Radical Party and former Deputy Foreign Minister in the Popular Unity Government, Alcides Leal, who died in 1971; the General Secretary delivered a short tribute, recalling Alcides Leal's close contacts with the Socialist International.

Statement on Latin America

The following is the full text of the statement on Latin America adopted by the Santiago Bureau meeting:

The Bureau of the Socialist International has warmly appreciated the opportunity provided for it by the Radical Party of Chile to reach a deeper understanding of the present circumstances of Chile, and of the achievements of the Government of Chile, in which it plays such a vital role. It reaffirms the resolution of the Helsinki Council Conference, as endorsed by the Vienna Congress of the Socialist International, which said:

a) The Socialist International strongly condemns the oppression and social, economic and political dependence that still exist in the majority of the Latin American countries, and recognises the imperative necessity of radically improving the conditions at present existing in the continent aiming at the creation of systems inspired by the principles of Socialism and Democracy.

b) The Socialist International expresses its concern at the existence in that area of military regimes which govern their peoples with repressive, anti-popular and anti-democratic measures. The Socialist International also condemns foreign interference in the internal affairs of the Latin American countries by North American capitalist and other imperialist interests.

c) The Socialist International expresses its permanent support for the member parties of Latin America which are committed to the building of Socialism, to obtaining effective independence and autonomy for their countries, to preserving freedoms and improving democracy. The Socialist International congratulates those popular parties and movements which are developing programmes based on respect for human rights and the principles of Socialism and Democracy.

d) The Socialist International recognises the aspirations of the popular movements of that region—inspired by the foregoing principles—to adopt political strategies which permit them to establish democracy and achieve power in order to work for Socialism in their countries, and recognises also that the characteristics, conditions and particular necessities require solutions appropriate to the needs of Latin America.

e) As such an appropriate solution, the Socialist International supports the Radical Party of Chile and the Government of Popular Unity, led by Dr Salvador Allende, in its successful efforts to work for Socialism within the framework of democracy.

The Bureau of the Socialist International has considered the nature of the serious economic, social and political problems confronting the developing countries of Latin America, which gravely impede their efforts to benefit their peoples. In particular, it has studied the ways in which its member parties in the developed world may make a greater contribution to assist the struggle of its member parties in Latin America to establish socialism and democracy in peace.

It notes with deep concern that the processes of economic and social development are frustrated by the increasing burden of debt servicing and repayment. It further notes the relationship between this problem and that of the serious worsening of the terms of world trade in relation to basic commodities and key exports. The burden of debt has increased, but earnings from exports, despite the increase in their volume, have not. So acute is the crisis of debt in these adverse circumstances that the Socialist International urgently draws attention to the resolution of the Vienna Congress which called upon its members to reschedule, and, where necessary, to waive outstanding debt, both bilateral and multilateral.

On this question, having carefully considered the particular problems which confront the Government of Chile, the Socialist International deeply regrets that the recent Paris talks on the re-scheduling of Chilean debts by the donor countries concerned have not led to a more generous conclusion, and calls upon all those of its European member parties whose governments are involved to insist that a further rescheduling, both bilateral and multilateral, is achieved.

The Socialist International recognises the responsibility of the rich countries of the world in matters of trade with the Third World. Recalling their failure to make effective progress at the last meeting of UNCTAD in Santiago in 1972 and, at the same time their ability to make effective arrangements to protect their own trading interests, it reaffirms the resolution of the Vienna Congress of the Socialist International, which called upon member parties and the trade union movement to use their political power and influence:

to comply with the recommendations of the elimination of import impediments to products from developing countries and on commodity agreements made in the report Towards Accelerated Development *and urged by the developing countries at UNCTAD III; and to give positive financial encouragement to Third World exports;*

to ensure that this objective is fully realised in the trading arrangements of any regional institution of which they are members, particularly and urgently in relation to schemes for generalised preferences.

In the light of its further consideration of these questions in the context of Latin America, the Socialist International now urges that in coming trade negotiations between the European Economic Community and the United States, the interests of the developing countries must be given priority and must be secured; and strongly recommends the enlargement of non-reciprocal tariff preferences by all industrialised countries for the benefit of the countries of the Third World.

It regards this as a question of immediate urgency, if the efforts to build socialism in Chile are not to be impeded. In the longer term, it urges that aid should not be tied; that the need of softer terms for future development assistance be fully recognised; and calls for a study of how best a multilateral fund could be set up to provide special development assistance to meet the servicing of past debts necessarily incurred by the countries of the Third World.

On the general question of development assistance, the Socialist International reaffirms its conclusion, reached at the Vienna Congress, that private foreign investment is not relevant to international targets for the Second Development Decade; and is very clearly aware of the role which it has played and still plays in extending the influence of economic imperialism. It believes that member parties from the industrialised countries must intensify their efforts to achieve substantial increase in the scale of official assistance.

Its examination of the needs of the peoples of the developing countries of Latin America has clearly revealed the urgency of bringing about structural and institutional changes if economic advance is to benefit the people. It therefore urges that more financial and technical assistance should be offered by the industrialised countries to assist in these fundamental processes of development. It has in mind projects involving education and land reform.

The Socialist International gives all its support to those member parties and other political movements which are struggling for the establishment of land reform in their respective countries, recognising that land reform is not only a legitimate socialist aspiration but an economic and scientific necessity.

The two guiding principles for Latin American Agrarian Reform should be: that the land must satisfy the basic needs of the population of each country in terms of agricultural products and that the land should be owned by those who work it. It requests its member parties, therefore, to urge the offer of substantial assistance to the transformation of the agrarian structure.

There is a further important area of economic policy in the countries of Latin America, most recently evidenced in Chile, which directly involves the industrialised donor countries also. We are aware that the process of development requires that the principal resources of any country must be nationally owned, and not continue to be a source of profit for private companies and corporations in the rich countries. We are aware that, as a consequence, acts of expropriation within the framework of law are