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The struggle of ideas in the contemporary world

**The mechanism of Soviet
people's government •**

**The socialist state: The ideal
and reality •**

**Imperial ambitions in the
nuclear age •**

The Novosti Press Agency

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**SOCIALISM:
THEORY
AND PRACTICE**

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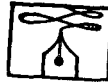
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READERS' LETTERS



Your publications are indispensable for obtaining information about the USSR. I must say that the absolute majority of Spaniards have no idea either about Marxism-Leninism or life in the Soviet Union or any other socialist country. This information is not available even in the Socialist Parties. Because of this we know nothing about the Soviet Union. Something must be done in this sphere. I mention this just to stress the need of your publications which present the USSR as it really is. They expose the deceptions capitalist propaganda is spreading about your country.

Jesus Suso R., aged 20,
electrician, Spain

Of all Novosti publications I love to read those dealing with political economy, Marxism-Leninism, socialist revolution and socialist construction; problems of disarmament, war and peace, problems concerning the developing countries and socialist solidarity.

L. Egemba, aged 21,
unemployed, Nigeria

●
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REAL SOCIALISM AND ITS CRITICS

FAR REMOVED FROM FACT

Soviet People's Rule in the Crooked Mirror of Anti-Communism

Glossy bourgeois publications, scientific studies and newspaper articles often peddle the view that government is the avocation of the chosen few, that socialism has not introduced anything new and positive in the solution of this eternal problem. Is this so? Let us turn to the facts.

THE MECHANISM OF PEOPLE'S RULE

Involvement of the popular masses in administering all the affairs of society stems from the economic and social nature of socialism. Social ownership of the means of production and distribution necessitates a government under which all power is concentrated in the hands of those who create material and spiritual values. And the exercise of power is not reduced, say, to the traditional idea of the issue of laws or maintenance of law and order. What is meant here is the daily running of all social matters, settlement of a multitude of important and less important issues with due regard for the vast diversity of the historical, national and other peculiarities and interests of the population. This is impossible to do without the active participation of millions of people.

This is why the wording of Article 2 of the Soviet Constitution of 1977 that all power in the USSR belongs to the people is not a mere phrase but an objective fact. It signifies that the drawing of ever greater numbers of people into discussing and dealing with social and state

affairs, into promoting democracy in every way is a vital necessity, an essential condition for the consolidation and development of socialist social relations.

Time has thoroughly tested the forms of government used in socialist society.

Article 2 of the Soviet Constitution specifies that the people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, their representative bodies.

Basing themselves, as a rule, on the memoirs of one-time leaders of Russian petty-bourgeois parties, bourgeois Sovietologists are trying to this day to prove that the Soviets were not created by the working people, that they were "invented" by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and opposed by Bolsheviks.

But the historical truth is that the Soviets were and remain the products of the proletarian masses themselves, of their revolutionary activity. "No party invented the Soviets... They were brought to life by the 1905 revolution," Lenin emphasized.¹

The Bolshevik Party (the earlier name of the CPSU) discerned in the Soviets, which arose spontaneously as organs of the proletariat's revolutionary activity, a great future, an embryo of the new state and its revolutionary government.

With the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution all power passed into the hands of Soviets which represented the vast majority of working people. They were called Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies and formed a coherent system of local government bodies and congresses of Soviets at all levels which they elected.

All the working population participated in the elections to the Soviets. The entire organization of their work, the system of recalling deputies and their accountability to the constituents were designed to ensure the real and constant participation of workers and peasants in the exercise of state power. In the first ten years following the 1917 revolution 19 million people were elected delegates to congresses of Soviets in the Russian Federation—an imposing figure indeed.

The 1936 Constitution abrogated the restrictions in electoral rights for the former exploiters. Government agencies were now called Soviets of Working People's Deputies and formed on the basis of universal, equal and

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 26, p. 490.

direct suffrage by secret ballot. The structure of representative bodies was modified substantially.

The 1977 Constitution introduced a new title for the bodies of power—Soviets of People's Deputies. This was not just a formal act. It denoted the changes in the social structure of Soviet society stemming from the building of mature socialism and from the final development of the state of proletarian dictatorship into a state of the whole people.

In this way the historic mission of Soviets—involvement of workers and peasants, all working people and then the entire people in their work—was furthered and codified in the Constitution.

But bourgeois ideologists are blind or pretend to be blind to this objective reality. They assert, for instance, that the new name, Soviets of People's Deputies, is but a "terminological novelty" devoid of any real meaning, because the 1977 Constitution has not brought into the Soviets any earlier unrepresented classes or groups. But what classes and groups do they mean? Perhaps, Sovietologists could name any groups of Soviet population which have no "access to the Soviets"? Such groups are simply non-existent. The ideological protagonists of capitalism would do well to turn to the class structure of Soviet society advancing towards complete social homogeneity. But, then, Sovietologists, Kremlinologists and other experts in anti-Sovietism have never exhibited any desire to seriously analyze the processes developing in Soviet society.

Lenin once called the Soviets "assemblies of working people's representatives".² This is fully applicable to the Soviets of the present time. Article 104 of the 1977 Constitution specifies that "deputies shall exercise their powers without discontinuing their regular employment or duties".

Bourgeois ideologists would have us believe that this constitutional principle of the deputy's concurrent production employment and his work in the exercise of state power, this abandonment of the lauded Western system of professional parliamentarianism "places the deputy in a dependent position". But in reality the absence of professional parliamentarians in the Soviet Union, the fact that deputies perform their duties without discontinuing their regular work is an indubitable advantage of the Soviet representative system. It enables the Soviets to correctly assess the state of affairs in the localities, to adopt balanced

² *Ibid.*, pp. 497-498.

decisions in line with the real interests and requirements of working people and to know how far a particular decision corresponds to the present conditions of social life. Their close ties with production and with the electorate help deputies raise the most pertinent questions of local and countrywide importance, to initiate the solution of pressing national-economic problems and verify the execution of laws and other decisions taken by the Soviets.

According to the Sovietologists' reasoning, the fact that deputies are guided in their activities by the interests of the state means that they have no obligations to the electorate, acting on a "free" rather than on an "imperative" mandate.

But how is it possible to speak of the Soviet deputy's "free" mandate if Article 102 of the Soviet Constitution says in so many words: "Electors give mandates to their Deputies. The appropriate Soviets of People's Deputies shall examine electors' mandates, take them into account in drafting economic and social development plans and in drawing up the budget, organize implementation of the mandates, and inform citizens about it."

Mandates are socially important assignments given to deputies by electors and approved at electoral meetings. About a million mandates are approved at electoral meetings during an election campaign, and action is taken on most of them. Thus, in 1974-1973 the Soviets fulfilled 87.4 per cent of the mandates marked for realization, in 1973-1975, 1975-1977 and 1977-1979 the figures were 90.2, 91.3 and 91.3 respectively. Of the more than four million mandates adopted by the Soviets for realization in the last decade, over 80 per cent were fulfilled. Thus the facts show that the Soviets and their deputies take constant care to meet the electors' needs and carry out their proposals and suggestions.

A no less convincing proof of the close contact between deputies and their electorate is the deputies' duty, written down in Article 107 of the Soviet Constitution, to report on their work and on that of the Soviet to their constituents and to the work collectives and public organizations that nominated them.

This is one of the fundamental principles of the Soviet representative system, giving the electors an active say in the work of their representatives and, thereby, in the work of the bodies of state authority.

Article 20 of the Law on the Status of People's Deputies in the USSR says that deputies to Supreme Soviets

shall report on their work and that of the Soviet to the constituents at least once a year and deputies to local Soviets at least twice a year. Thus, in 1981 over 3.9 million electors' meetings held in the country heard reports on the work of 2.2 million deputies.

The Soviet deputy's accountability implies his responsibility to the electors who have the right to recall him from office before the expiration of his term if he has not justified their confidence. Very few capitalist countries boast such a democratic institution.

To illustrate, since 1959 electors have recalled a total of about 8,000 deputies, including more than 100 deputies from the Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics and 12 deputies from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

It goes without saying that the discharge by the Soviets of their main mission, that of concentrating and actively expressing the will of the entire Soviet people, does not militate against but, rather, presupposes a comparison and even clashes of views, sharp criticism of shortcomings, careful analysis of the diverse interests of different social, national, professional and other groups of the population. Otherwise, it would be simply impossible to take decisions conforming to working people's interests. So when Sovietologists argue that no pluralism of views and criticism in any form are allowed in the Soviet Union, they just close their eyes to the true nature of the Soviets.

Promotion of these fundamental features specific to the Soviets is a concern of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. At its 26th Congress it stressed once again that every session of the Soviet and every sitting of its standing commission must become a council of the people in the true sense of the word, a collective quest for the most correct solutions. As the Congress pointed out, the essence of Soviet democracy, of democracy in action, lies in concern for the common work, for the development of production, in frank and principled criticism and self-criticism and in promoting the socio-political activity of every citizen.³

A UNIFIED SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

The Soviet form of people's government, unlike bourgeois parliamentarianism, is not and cannot be confined

³ See *Documents and Resolutions of the 26th Congress of the CPSU*. Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, p. 84.

to a mere expression of the will of the state. The Soviets are organized in such a way as "to vest in the people's elected representatives both legislative and executive functions".⁴ The 1977 Constitution is more consistent than the 1936 Constitution in formulating this fundamental principle of the work of Soviets. As stated in Article 93, "Soviets of People's Deputies shall direct all sectors of state, economic, and social and cultural development, either directly or through bodies instituted by them, take decisions and ensure their execution, and verify their implementation".

Performing this many-sided work, the Soviets operate, firstly, as a unified system of state bodies, from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to settlement and rural Soviets, and, secondly, as a permanent and sole foundation of the entire state apparatus, local and central, from top to bottom. They set up executive-administrative bodies, people's control agencies and other subordinate organs, and form the medium and higher tiers of the legal system.⁵ The USSR Supreme Soviet appoints the Procurator-General of the USSR who heads the system of Procurator's Offices.

Consequently, the Soviets constitute a unified system of representative bodies built on the principles of democratic centralism and socialist federalism and their totality forms the nucleus of the mechanism of the state of the whole people. Under Article 2 of the Constitution, all other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

Bourgeois politology and juridical science are rather critical of this definition of the place held by the Soviets in the Soviet state and, especially, of the uniformity of the system of representative bodies. Some Sovietologists even go to the point of declaring that in general the principle of centralism, implying the binding character of decisions of higher bodies for the lower bodies, prevails in the USSR over the principle of democracy and that this "reduces to nought the rights of federative republics" and, "quite naturally, rules out all local autonomy".

What can be said to this?

For one thing, this is a deliberate distortion of the relations existing between bodies of power of the Soviet Union and Union Republics and disregard of the fact that

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 26, p. 104.

⁵ The lower tier of the legal system, people's courts, are elected directly by the population.

the 1977 Constitution still more broadly and extensively defines the powers of republican bodies. For the first time it describes in detail the mechanism of participation of republican government bodies in countrywide decision-making. Article 77 of the Constitution reads: "Union Republics take part in decision-making in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Government of the USSR, and other bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. A Union Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the USSR on its territory, and implement the decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR. In matters that come within its jurisdiction, a Union Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations subordinate to the Union."

On the other hand, bourgeois writers most zealously peddle the idea of "local self-government" in the USSR, with local government bodies enjoying autonomy and self-government in disregard of democratic centralism.

Thus, they offer us the bourgeois scheme separating the bodies of state authority from local self-government and identifying the "representation of the people or the nation" with parliament, local self-government being regarded, as Marx said, as a counter-weight to the central authority and as a mere executor of its will. The Soviets rejected from the outset this scheme dividing the lower and upper tiers of representative bodies.

In the first Soviet Constitutions the Soviets were treated as a component part of the system of people's representative bodies. Going far beyond independent decision-making on local matters (to which local self-government is usually reduced), each local Soviet took an active part in framing and implementing general national decisions.

Carrying further and amplifying this Leninist thesis about the role of local government bodies in the system of people's rule, the 1977 Constitution stipulates in its Article 146 that local Soviets of People's Deputies shall deal with all matters of local significance, implement decisions of higher bodies of state authority, guide the work of lower Soviets of People's Deputies and take part in the discussion of matters of Republican and all-Union importance.

Being an inbuilt element of the unified system of state government bodies, Soviets have long overgrown the narrow confines of local self-government. And their comeback to these positions would have been a step backwards. For the concept of "local self-government" is being discarded not only in socialist but also in the majority of capitalist countries. This is reflected in the works of many bourgeois lawyers who do not mince words in qualifying the present stage of the drive mounted by Western governments against local government bodies as a funeral toll for local self-government.

Under constant attack is also the principle of fusing legislative, administrative and control functions in the work of the Soviets. This is said to be contrary to the idea of Soviets as supreme bodies of power. By the logic of bourgeois ideologists, Soviets would be stronger if their powers were confined to the legislative function, while their vesting with the function of enacting laws and controlling their observance would allegedly weaken the Soviets. Here everything is turned upside down in the effort to revert the Soviet form of government by the people back to the principle of power division typical of bourgeois parliamentarianism. However, divorcing the legislative and executive powers of the Soviets would actually mean undermining the very essence of Soviet government.

COMPETENCE OF THE USSR SUPREME SOVIET

Under the Constitution the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is vested with very broad powers. It is empowered to adopt and amend the Constitution of the USSR, to admit new republics to the USSR and endorse the formation of new Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions, to approve state plans for economic and social development of the USSR, the Budget of the USSR and reports on their execution and to institute bodies of the USSR accountable to it.

In exercising its powers, the USSR Supreme Soviet acts as an operative legislative body. Since the adoption of the 1977 Constitution it has adopted about 40 new laws regulating a wide sphere of social relations. They were adopted after broad discussions in work collectives and in the press, as, for example, the draft law on the protection of the atmospheric air, Fundamentals of Housing Legislation of the USSR and Union Republics, etc.

At the same time, the activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet has never been confined to law-making, as the Sovietologists would have us believe. It directs the work of Soviets of People's Deputies and all state government bodies of the country. This is most vividly manifested in the discussion and approval of state plans and in the solution of other key questions of economic, social and cultural development. At its sessions the Supreme Soviet annually hears reports of the government not only about execution of the state budget but also about progress in fulfilling the USSR economic and social development plan. The Supreme Soviet exercises systematic control over particular spheres of activity of administrative bodies. In recent years, for example, on the basis of reports submitted by the Council of Ministers it has dealt with such matters as the state of and measures for better protecting the land, natural resources and bodies of water, improving the health service and public education, and developing housing construction and maintenance, etc.

This shows the absurdity of the Sovietologists' assertions that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is a non-working body and that between its sessions, which are brief at that, its deputies do absolutely nothing.

But such stories are below any criticism. Bourgeois politology tends to reduce the work of representative organs to their sessions; to it, parliamentarianism is the only acceptable and democratic system. So, when Sovietologists say that elective bodies under socialism are working bodies only when in session, they just repeat the old bourgeois parliamentary conceptions.

Since its birth the Soviet system of people's representation has not been and could not be restricted to the parliamentary forms so near and dear to capitalism. The Communist Party has seen to it that the Soviets are organized and work in such a way as to enable deputies to combine their government duties with their regular jobs. And for this it was necessary to cast off bourgeois parliamentarianism with its divorce of legislation from government.

The continuity of state guidance in the centre and the localities is ensured by the fact that deputies exercise state power without discontinuing their daily work or duties. This calls for special organizational forms of the Soviets' work whereby they carry out their activity not only at sessions but also in the intervals between them.

The most important among the bodies conducting the work of the USSR Supreme Soviet between its sessions is the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Bourgeois ideologists portray the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet as the fully independent highest body of power standing "above the Supreme Soviet". But such claims lack political or legal foundations.

The Constitution of the USSR lays down that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is the sole highest body of state authority and that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet elected from among its deputies is its permanently acting organ. It is accountable to the Supreme Soviet in its entire activity and discharges the functions of the Supreme Soviet only between its sessions.

The Sovietologists are most careful to ignore and not to comment upon one of the fundamental principles of the Soviet Constitution according to which each Soviet of People's Deputies, including the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, has the right to accept for consideration and solve any question coming within the competence of its subordinate bodies. This important principle of the Soviet representative system, formulated in the first constitutions of the country, was further amplified in the 1977 Constitution.

Exercising its constitutional powers, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet convenes sessions of the Supreme Soviet, coordinates the work of standing commissions, amends existing legislative acts when necessary, interprets laws and ratifies international treaties. A special sphere of its activity is guiding the work of the Soviets of People's Deputies, generalizing and disseminating their experience.

Discharging the control functions of the Supreme Soviet between its sessions, the Presidium supervises the work of state bodies subordinated to it, hears reports of ministries and state committees, governments of Union Republics, the People's Control Committee, the Supreme Court and the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Active between the Supreme Soviet's sessions are also the 32 standing commissions of its two chambers on which 1,140 deputies work. For example, during the five-year term of the USSR Supreme Soviet of the ninth convocation standing commissions held 233 sittings. In the course of the discussion of state plans and the budget, commissions and sub-commissions heard 892 reports of the heads of ministries, departments and other managerial bodies.

Extensive work in the Supreme Soviet, its bodies and in the localities is conducted by deputies. They check up the activity of state bodies, analyze people's inquiries, receive citizens, interpret legislation and raise questions before the highest bodies of state authority and management.

Equally active and goal-oriented is the work of the Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics, their bodies and deputies. The range of matters they deal with is exceptionally broad and wide-ranging.

PREROGATIVES OF LOCAL SOVIETS

On this question too the writings of anti-communists are at variance with the facts. There are 51,000 local Soviets in the USSR. Their prerogatives spread to the plan and budget, industry, agriculture, building, transport and communications, social and cultural development, improvement of housing and the services, fulfilment of the electors' mandates. Standing commissions of local Soviets play a prominent part in their work. Over 1.8 million deputies who are helped by nearly three million activists serve on them.

More than 1,460,000 deputies participated in the debates on items appearing on the agenda of the recently elected local Soviets. Deputies addressed over 78,000 inquiries to government bodies.

The Soviet Constitution and the Soviet state promote this activity of local Soviets in every way. Measures taken to this end are:

First, Soviets bear full responsibility for the state of affairs on the territory under their jurisdiction. They are having a greater say in local matters.

They are in charge of housing, communal and other public services and amenities within their territory. Their financial independence grows. In the last decade the local budgets have increased from 24.1 to 43.6 billion roubles, making up one-sixth of the USSR state budget. The local budgets finance 90 per cent of the total expenditure on health protection, 50 per cent on education and 99 per cent on housing construction and maintenance.

Second, local Soviets exercise a growing influence on organizations within their territory which are subordinated to higher bodies. Article 147 of the Constitution stipulates that local Soviets shall ensure the comprehensive, all-round

economic and social development of their areas; exercise control over the observance of legislation by enterprises, institutions and organizations subordinate to higher authorities and located in their area; and coordinate and supervise their activity as regards land use, nature conservation, building, employment of manpower, production of consumer goods, and social, cultural, communal and other services and amenities for the public. Local Soviets have the right to hear reports by heads of enterprises and organizations subordinated to higher authorities on these questions and issue appropriate instructions.

Third, democratic forms are being steadily promoted in the work of local Soviets and their deputies and increasing control is exercised by representative bodies over administrative bodies.

All these lines in improving the work of local Soviets signify consistent enhancement of their role above all as bodies of state authority whose activity goes far beyond the routine work performed by bourgeois local government bodies.

Today even the opponents of the Soviet system are forced to admit that the Soviets really represent the interests of all strata of society, that they have the broadest powers. But in the next breath they argue that election to the Soviets of the great number of workers, peasants and other working people employed in production does not contribute to the competent treatment of complex questions of state and public life, because in the era of the technological revolution in the forefront are not elective bodies but professional managers, scientists and various specialists.

What, then, is their alternative? Elitarianism, concentration of all levers of power in the hands of an ever smaller number of people having command over millions of people. This concept, covering up the omnipotence of monopoly tycoons in the West, is in no way acceptable for socialist society built on the principles of collectivism and equality of working people.

Moreover, as socialism keeps advancing and the living and cultural standards of the people rise, more and more ample are the possibilities for drawing working people into management and administration, for raising the role of their representative bodies which are called upon to take a more active part in solving questions of social and state life.

This by no means detracts from the important part which specialists in different fields of knowledge and professional managers play in Soviet society.

Modern scientific and technical progress, the sharply increased complexity of social and economic life, the need of efficient treatment of diverse questions of economic and cultural development require a ramified and flexible state apparatus.

But for this apparatus to really serve the interests of the people, it must be replenished from the working people and be their inseparable component constantly controlled by working people and their representative bodies.

And this is how matters stand in the Soviet Union. Thus, over 80 per cent of the chairmen of the Councils of Ministers of republics, executive committees of territorial and regional Soviets and 70 per cent of the ministers and chairmen of state committees of the USSR began their careers as rank and file workers and collective farmers. More than a half of the directors of leading industrial enterprises in the country came up from the machine and bench.

So, when anti-communists claim that the Soviet government system is the heir of the tsarist officialdom that governed Russia since the 14th century, it would do them no harm, now and again, to look at the monopoly apparatus which they praise so much. Then they would surely see the published results of the poll conducted among 576 presidents and directors of capitalist corporations. Though it was conducted in six European countries (Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium and Holland), its findings are typical of all European capitalist states: from 70 to 85 per cent of the company presidents come from the big bourgeoisie and are owners of industrial enterprises.

* * *

The practice of the Soviet people's rule shows graphically how far removed from the truth are the anti-Sovieters' fabrications.

From the book *Developed Socialism and the Crisis of Sovietology*, Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 1982 (in Russian) *

THE SOCIALIST STATE: THEORY AND PRACTICE

I think that the state created in your country does not correspond to the image visualized by Marx and Lenin. What do I mean by that? First, Communists are in principle against violence but you applied it in your country (the dictatorship of the proletariat and disbandment of political parties). Second, Communists advocate the withering away of the state but the state continues to exist. Third, Communists support peace but the USSR maintains a strong army. So, reality is at variance with the ideal.

Rosa Maria Martins, a student, Portugal.

Dear Miss Martins,
Here journalist Gennady KOPYAKOV replies to your letter.

I am afraid, Miss Martins, your view is first of all the result of lack of truthful information about the Marxist-Leninist concept of the state and about our country, and if the truth is important to you, let us sort things out.

I would like to call your attention to the fact that Marxists have never treated an ideal from a subjectivist viewpoint or indulged in wishful thinking. To them ideals are their vital long-term aims and principles which they ultimately deduce

from the objective law-governed tendencies of social development. I suppose you agree that a considerable historical distance lies between the proclamation of an ideal and its realization. It would be wrong to compare the ideals of socialism and communism in their final forms which have reached the highest level of development, with the present, largely uncompleted stage, and declare that the Soviet state "does not correspond to the image visualized by Marx and Lenin".

We shall now deal with your arguments. Your first thesis is the use of violence in our country. You refer to the

dictatorship of the proletariat and the "disbandment" of political parties. Let's make it clear that Marxism does not deny violence, especially in the epochs of social revolutions. At the same time, it repudiates views ascribing to violence a decisive role in history. Marxism is for conscious use of violence by the proletariat in its revolutionary struggle for socialism when it is dictated by particular conditions.

History furnishes convincing examples showing that the dominant classes do not relinquish their privileges of their own accord but use all available means, including wholesale terror, against the oppressed classes. The resistance of the outgoing classes compels the proletariat to use retaliatory violence, including armed struggle.

It's true that a dictatorship of the proletariat was established in our country after the victorious October revolution of 1917. The idea of such dictatorship did not arise of itself but due to the need for the working people with all their organization and will to oppose the centuries-old dictatorship of the exploiting classes, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The political power of working people, no matter what you call it, is the only realistic way of standing up against the smoothly working oppressive dictatorship, and toppling it. Such is the historical truth following from the realistic idea of the

ways of carrying out social transformations and from the practice of millions.

What, then, is the dictatorship of the proletariat? It is the power of the working class relying on a broad alliance of urban and rural, mental and manual workers. Karl Marx said: "Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*" Marx and Engels also wrote that "the aim of society is the downfall of all privileged classes, the submission of those classes to the dictatorship of the proletarians."

To prevent the influence of the old hostile elements on the Soviet bodies of state authority all persons living on unearned incomes were deprived of electoral rights by the Constitution of 1918. Their number did not exceed 2-3 per cent of the total population, while the remaining 98 per cent, i.e., an absolute majority, were enabled for the first time ever to govern the country through the Soviets—the new bodies of state power.

What was inevitable in the specific conditions of Russia is not at all a general law of the development of proletarian dictatorship. This was convincingly confirmed by the experience of the European socialist countries where the dictatorship of

the proletariat was exercised in less drastic forms and without depriving a part of the population (exploiters) of electoral rights, since the bourgeoisie did not offer very stiff resistance to the people's democratic rule.

However, the main task of working class power is constructive—building the socialist economy, nationalizing industry, collectivizing agriculture, abolishing society's division into hostile classes and accomplishing a cultural revolution.

When the building of socialism is completed, the state of proletarian dictatorship develops into a state of the whole people, into a political organization of the entire nation, with the working class playing the leading role. The deep changes wrought in the social structure of Soviet society and the disappearance of exploitation lead to the dying away of the function of coercion and suppression of the exploiting classes' hostile activity. The economic-organizational and cultural-educational functions come into their own.

Now let us make another historical digression and ascertain how the one-party system evolved in the Soviet Union and whether other parties were "disbanded".

The development of class struggle in our country certainly led to the formation of a one-party system. But Communists never regarded a one-party system as inevitable.

Prior to the socialist revolu-

tion in 1917 there were several political parties in Russia. Some of them openly backed tsarism; others pursued a reformist policy. It was only the Communist Party, the spokesman of the working class, that set the aim that met the interests of the majority of the people—a fundamental revolutionary transformation of society by abolishing economic, social and political inequality.

The party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries that branched away from the Socialist-Revolutionary party because of substantial differences in their political views was quite an influential political force. Left Socialist-Revolutionaries expressed the interests of a part of the peasantry and also urban middle strata. Far from refusing to act jointly Communists deemed it necessary to enter into an alliance with them.

As before the 1917 revolution, Communists were for cooperation with all left forces during the establishment of the socialist state. Thus, the first Soviet government headed by V. I. Lenin included seven of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. They held the posts of people's commissars (ministers) of agriculture, justice, post office and telegraph, municipal and local administration and state property.

The same can be said of the highest body of state authority, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, elected at the Second All-Russia Congress of

Soviets on November 9, 1917. Along with Bolsheviks it included representatives from four other parties: Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Internationalist Social-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionary Maximalists and Ukrainian Socialists. According to the alignment of forces at the Congress of Soviets the Communists had an absolute majority—62 seats, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 29 seats, and delegates of the other three parties, ten seats. By all the rules of democratic procedure, the Communists could have formed a one-party government, but they did not do so.

And here is one more example. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee elected in January 1918 by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets included 160 Communists, 125 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, seven Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, seven Socialist-Revolutionary Maximalists, two Internationalist Social-Democrats, two Mensheviks and three Anarchist Communists. Having an overwhelming majority of votes at the Congresses, the Communists thus gained the indisputable right to form a one-party cabinet. But again they thought it advisable to share seats in the government with representatives of the second largest group of delegates—the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries—although they realized that the latter were shilly-shally allies in carrying through the programme of socialist transformations and could

defect to the camp of counter-revolution at a crack of a whip. And confirmation of this came very soon: in March 1918 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries withdrew from the coalition government and in July started an armed revolt against Soviet power in Moscow. This and other revolts that followed undermined the real opportunity of forming a bloc between Communists and petty-bourgeois parties.

As you see, the parties were not "disbanded" but disintegrated, for they lost their ties with the people, were left without their social base and their actions put them beyond the pale of law. The "Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were defeated not by reprisals", Left Socialist-Revolutionary leader Maria Spiridonova truthfully conceded, "but by their policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, and the mass of the people turned their backs on them." Thus these historical events left no other choice for the Communists but to assume full responsibility for the country's destinies.

A one-party political system is not an inalienable feature of socialist society. Take, for instance, the existing socialist countries. Each of them is building the new society in conformity with its own specific conditions. Accordingly, multi-party systems developed in Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Poland and Czechoslovakia within the national

front uniting in each country democratic parties and public organizations supporting the building of socialism. On the other hand, a one-party system operates in Yugoslavia, Mongolia, Romania and Hungary.

Thus, the socialist one-party system wherever it has evolved historically is not something imposed. Born in the course of concrete historical development, it is firmly rooted in the social reality. It is connected with the specific features of the historical past, the social relations, the social structure, and with changes in social awareness. In other words, political forms of power by the working class and its allies may differ in each particular case. But their essence is the same everywhere—socialist.

Now a few words about the withering away of the state. To begin with, the classics of Marxism-Leninism were very cautious in their forecasts of the withering away of the state. To them it was clear that the transition from capitalism to communism would cover a long historical epoch, that the new society would develop as it matured from one stage to the next. Marx and Lenin pointed out that the state would die only after reaching the highest phase of communism, when there were prerequisites for this.

It should be borne in mind that in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism the socialist state, now a body of

power of the working majority, i.e., an organization of the masses themselves, was freed of the defect typical of all previous types of state—it ceased to be an instrument of domination by the exploiting minority. Having in mind this new quality, this new democratic substance of the socialist state, Lenin defined it not as a state “in the proper sense of the word” but as a “transitional state” that “will also wither away”.

The victory of socialism brought about new substantial changes in the tasks and functions of the state. As we have already said, with the abolition of exploiting classes and the consolidation of socialism, no social groups remained in Soviet society which would be interested in the restoration of capitalism and against which class coercion would have therefore to be applied. The alliance of friendly classes and strata—workers, peasants, intellectuals—grew stronger and all working people came closer to each other socially, politically and ideologically. The socialist state as an instrument of political domination by the working class began to turn into an instrument expressing the will and protecting the interests of all classes and social groups, of the whole people.

This new qualitative advance in the development of the socialist state marked the transformation of proletarian democracy, i.e., a democracy for the proletariat and its allies, into a

socialist democracy for the whole people.

As the socialist state improves and develops, millions of Soviet people take an ever more active part in the work of the bodies of government and people's control, in the management of production and distribution, in shaping social and cultural policies and in administering justice. In a word, with the development of socialist democracy our state is gradually turning into communist public self-government.

Public self-government is not developing parallel to the state but is arising from the entire system of state and public organizations, not through the mechanical disintegration of the state and dissolution of its apparatus but, mainly, through the extension of the democratic foundations of the state in the process of the gradual nearing and merging of the socialist forms of state organization and public activity.

Analysing the economic prerequisites for the withering away of the state, Lenin said: “The state will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: ‘From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs’, i.e., when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour has become so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability.*”

For the state to wither away completely it is necessary to fully obliterate all class distinctions, erase distinctions between town and country life, between mental and manual labour, and achieve a high level of consciousness and culture among all members of society.

The state will continue to exist until the complete triumph of communism also for external reasons. The state cannot, naturally, be allowed to die while the imperialists continue their aggressive policy and subversive activity against the socialist countries. In these conditions any weakening of the role of the state is out of the question. Experience shows that whenever the enemies of socialism were able for a time to destabilize the working people's state, serious damage was caused to the building of the new society. This is why the Communist Party of the Soviet Union strives to strengthen the socialist state of the whole people in every way.

All the above said shows that the realities of our society have not diverged from the ideal—the Soviet socialist state is developing in the direction foreseen by the founders of Marxism-Leninism. The building of developed socialist society in the USSR and the formation of the world's first state of the whole people mark a consecutive stage in the advance to communism.

Lastly, you are mistaken, Miss Martins, when you see a

contradiction between the Communists' struggle for peace and the maintenance of a strong army in our country. Yes, we stand for peace. The first decree our state adopted immediately after the Great October Socialist Revolution was the Decree on Peace. It called upon "all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace", i.e., a peace without annexations or indemnities.

How did the West react to these proposals?

Fourteen states began an armed intervention to destroy the young Soviet Republic. The forces of internal and external counter-revolution joined efforts to take away the working people's gains. The overthrown exploiting classes unleashed a civil war. To defend the people's gains the Soviet state was compelled to create regular armed forces—the Red Army.

The imperialists did not abandon their plans of destroying the Soviet state. In June 1941, Nazi Germany invaded the USSR without a declaration of war. Could the Soviet Union have won the 1941-1945 war if it had not had an army? Of course, not.

As you see, the Soviet state was compelled to create its armed forces to counter the actions of imperialism and internal enemies. Today, the mission of the Soviet Armed Forces is to reliably safeguard the

people's peaceful creative labour. Building up its fighting capability, our army ensures the security of all mankind and supports the peoples' struggle against the imperialist export of counter-revolution.

The imperialists are forever threatening the USSR. Thus, the USA is intimidating us with a "crusade". In relation to the USSR and other socialist countries the USA acts from the positions of strength. It is not Soviet military bases that encircle the USA but the other way round (there are 386 US military bases close to our frontiers). Understandably, in reply to the military preparations of the USA and other NATO countries, the Soviet state was forced to take the necessary measures to strengthen its defences. A parity of military forces was reached between the USSR and the USA. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries do not seek military superiority over other states, but neither shall we allow the balance of forces to be upset, something the USA is so eager to do. If the cold winds of war are again blowing over our planet, the blame lies on the imperialists, just as in the past.

Many other facts could be given to support my arguments. But I believe that the above is sufficient to help you find the correct answers to your questions.

SOCIALIST ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND ITS BOURGEOIS CRITICS

by Oleg LABETSKY,
Alexander RYBAKOV

Western Sovietologists evince an ever greater interest in questions of the theory and practice of socialist economic integration. They try to distort the basic principles of integration and undermine the socialist countries' political and ideological unity.

THE OBJECTIVE NECESSITY OF INTEGRATION

The striving to misrepresent the process of realization of the principles of socialist internationalism in the course of integration is seen in the bourgeois criticism, with its various accents, of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The evolution of the bourgeois concept—"of the CMEA's artificial and forced character" is one case in point. Until the 1970s the main accent was placed on

the interpretation of the CMEA as an allegedly Soviet invention aimed at fully subordinating the European socialist countries. The USSR's activity within the CMEA was referred to as "economic imperialism" towards the countries which had allegedly gained nothing from having entered this organization.

The CMEA's history disproves such biased interpretations. Its setting up in 1949 was vitally important to the social-

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ist states in Central and South-East Europe which were economically blockaded by imperialism. The CMEA strengthened these countries' economies. The Soviet Union fulfilling its international duty rendered them great economic and technical assistance. The establishment of close cooperation between the USSR and the people's democracies, as these countries were called at that time, was of paramount importance in their struggle against the interference in their internal affairs of imperialism which attempted to isolate them internationally. Without this cooperation it would have been impossible, in a very short period, to restore the warravaged economies and create sectors in the CMEA countries which are key to modern industrial development.

In the early 1970s bourgeois researchers, who could not disregard the fact of the CMEA's viability, modified the concept now placing the accent on the socialist countries' desire to remain within this organization but change some forms of their participation. This thesis rested on the premise that, faced with the CMEA's disintegration following the 1968 Czechoslovak crisis, the Soviet Union had, by way of a concession, to make its policy not so "tough". The Sovietologists considered the adoption of the Comprehensive Programme of Socialist Economic Integration one such concession. They interpreted the Programme as an accidental

time-serving document, as a clever tactical stroke.

In fact, however, this was a document freely and consciously adopted which defined the joint aims of the fraternal countries' long-term economic policy. The consensus of the CMEA member countries during its elaboration was not prompted by time-serving considerations but by the objective need of integration as a qualitatively new stage in cooperation which developed in accordance with the principles of socialist internationalism. Some Western specialists had to admit the importance of the jointly worked out Comprehensive Programme for the "further economic and political unification of the socialist countries".

Another thesis about the CMEA being a "closed" organization has no substance to it either. First, it is quite evident that the coincidence of the key interests of the CMEA and other socialist countries in socio-economic and socio-political development makes the prospect of the latter joining in the integration quite real as is obvious from the entry of Cuba and Vietnam in it. This tendency was confirmed by the CMEA countries' cooperation with Yugoslavia, based on an agreement, and the participation of Laos and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in some CMEA's bodies as observers. Second, socialist integration, enhancing the member countries' economic growth, thus expands the possibilities

for developing their economic relations with other socialist, capitalist and developing countries. Being an open but not an autarchic international organization the CMEA concluded cooperation agreements with Finland, Iraq and Mexico and maintains contacts with 61 international economic, scientific and technical organizations.

COMBINATION OF NATIONAL AND COMMON INTERESTS

Bourgeois critics denying or misinterpreting the principles of socialist internationalism in the CMEA member countries' relations say that their economic integration is allegedly unable to assure the combination of national interests and the community's common interests.

Meanwhile, it is precisely the principle of combining national with international interests which is the motive power in the development of the CMEA member countries' socialist integration.

Opposing national to international interests in the socialist economic integration shows the inability of its critics to see the dialectics of this combination where the basic national interests are pursued on the basis of the community's common interests and successful socialist construction in each member country. At the same time in specific forms of cooperation the international need for strengthening the world socialist system, for closer economic and

political unity is refracted through the prism of national requirements. This means that the member countries' joint integration measures should not contradict the interests of any of them and that each country satisfies its foreign economic needs with regard for strengthening the community as a whole. This makes it possible despite the bourgeois economists' assertions, to elaborate a common policy in case of a partial, temporary non-coincidence of national interests with international ones.

Special stress in the concepts misinterpreting the CMEA's legal character is placed on opposing the sovereignty of member countries to socialist integration. Bourgeois ideologists declare that its deepening is inevitably associated with the limitation, "curtailment" of the sovereignty of the participating states because of the supposedly predominating position of the USSR. However, the facts are quite different.

Socialist countries were setting up the CMEA in the belief that relations between the states could develop only if the members have sovereign equal rights. This equality is assured by international legal norms. The provision of the Comprehensive Programme to the effect that the CMEA and other international economic organizations of the socialist countries "must not be supranational bodies" means that, at the present stage of the development of the socialist

community, economic integration bears an interstate character. That is why it is natural for the CMEA, in contrast to the EEC to adopt its documents in the form of recommendations and resolutions provided the member countries concerned state their full agreement. The decisions and recommendations do not apply to countries declaring that they are not interested in the undertakings discussed and their non-participation in no way influences their cooperation in other spheres of production. Such an approach guarantees the observance of all partner countries' national interests.

One cannot agree with the bourgeois ideologists' statement about the "predominating position of the USSR in the CMEA". The Soviet Union supplies fraternal countries with raw materials under long-term agreements and plans, in a number of cases at prices lower than the world's, and very often restricting its own needs in order to raise the level of economic development of these countries and the community in general. Simultaneously the Soviet machinery and equipment export to other socialist countries is growing, as well as the USSR's participation in constructing enterprises and other economic projects in these countries.

The desire to misinterpret the content and results of the operation of the democratic principle of mutual benefit the socialist states follow in their

international practice and present it only from the commercial aspect is typical of the bourgeois authors.

The principle of mutual benefit closely interlaced with mutual assistance does not deny the community of the CMEA member countries' international economic interests, on the contrary, it is made an indispensable condition of socialist integration. It is not a unilateral search for profit but a system really giving equal advantages to all participants through their international specialization and cooperation in production—such is the socialist countries' approach to the problem of economic cooperation effectiveness.

Speaking about the impossibility of coordinating the CMEA countries' national state interests the bourgeois ideologists usually refer to the differences in their economic development levels. Meanwhile the consistent accomplishment of the complex multi-aspect task of eliminating these differences is one of the most vivid examples of the principles of socialist internationalism being realized in practice. Thus, at the time of the CMEA's formation the correlation between the highest and the lowest levels of national income per capita in the European socialist countries was 3.2:1 and industrial production—5:1; at present the ratio is 1.4:1 and 1.7:1 respectively. Hence the history of the socialist countries' cooperation convincingly proves that the

very levelling up of the economies was made possible within the system of new type interstate relations, with the establishment of socialist production relations.

The socialist community countries are progressing in such a way that those economically less developed advance at higher rates than the economically more developed ones. That is why the difference in the economic development levels, for example, between the GDR and its other CMEA partners, is reducing. This, of course, does not mean that the GDR's interests suffer damage. The people's high living standard in that country is to a great extent due to the mutually beneficial relations with other socialist states whose share in its trade is 66.1 per cent, (the USSR accounts for 56.7 per cent) and the share of the capitalist and developing countries is 28.5 and 5.4 per cent respectively.

WHAT IS BEHIND "REORIENTATION"?

Bourgeois economists admit a certain narrowing of the gap in the CMEA member countries' economic development levels. Nevertheless, in their opinion, the "re-orientation" of the CMEA countries' economic development on the advanced Common Market countries must be a prerequisite for the further progress in this field.

Here, bourgeois authors confuse two qualitatively different concepts—the expansion of eco-

nomie ties and re-orientation. Obviously, the latter as it is understood in the West (i.e. the one-sided orientation of a socialist country on capitalist partners) would contradict the idea of integration which is the association of a group of countries of the same type, of their economic and political structures. Re-orientation of a socialist country on the West, with curtailed participation of this country in the international socialist division of labour, causes damage to its economic and political development. At the same time, mutually beneficial expansion of the socialist countries' economic, scientific and technical contacts with the capitalist countries or their economic groupings is very important. In the integration process the CMEA countries without departing from the principles of socialist internationalism are able to use the advantages of the world division of labour more effectively. That explains why economic relations between the countries with different social systems are expanding.

Neither the USSR nor the other CMEA countries consider these ties as a phenomenon dangerous for the socialist community and its political and ideological unity. The expansion of economic ties with the CMEA countries equally meets the interests of the West European capitalist countries.

For this reason one cannot agree with those Western economists who consider the social-

ist countries' desire to establish relations with the Common Market as a "concession of Moscow" allegedly fearing an "uncontrolled development of bilateral ties". Normalization of CMEA-EEC trade relations is of course a long process and it is difficult now to define its specific content. However, no matter in what forms cooperation between the two organizations and its member countries proceeds the content of this process will be determined by the socialist countries' national interests. Such an approach to the formulation of the CMEA member countries' coordinated economic policy rules out any pressure or concessions. It agrees with the principles of socialist internationalism as by using the advantages of the international division of labour it strengthens the fraternal countries' international economic base.

* * *

To sum up. Despite the bourgeois falsifications, the sphere of operation of the principles of socialist internationalism widens as the CMEA countries' economic integration proceeds.

First, as the practice of long-term task-oriented cooperation programmes shows the solution of an ever increasing number of economic problems is being transferred from the national to international level, thus more widely demonstrating the advantages of socialism.

Second, the material base of integration, the forms of specialization and cooperation reflecting the objective process of internationalization of the productive forces and production relations, promote the formation and satisfaction of international economic interests.

Third, the joint planning activity makes it possible to systematically and consciously shape the future socialist community immune to centrifugal tendencies and see the ways and means of combining each country's economic interests with those of the community as a whole.

Fourth, participation in coordinating and solving the major problems of the community's economic policy, based on full equality, can only strengthen the national sovereignty of each fraternal country.

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MODERN CAPITALISM

IMPERIAL AMBITIONS IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

by Alexander YAKOVLEV

The central element of the present strategy of the US ruling oligarchy is the stake on confrontation with the Soviet Union, on winning a nuclear war. The US Administration has inflamed the international situation to the extreme, believing short-sightedly that this best serves the interests of monopoly capital on a global and regional scale.

THE BRINKMANSHIP POLICY

The placing of US nuclear missiles in Western Europe is an irresponsible step furthering the escalation of tensions in the world. The provision of a nuclear missile base for Reagan's programme of a crusade against socialist countries can be qualified as nothing but adventurism and lunacy with unpredictable consequences. A massive propaganda campaign conducted over many years, unabashed political and economic pressure, "arm twisting" on the diplomatic scene, demagoguery and downright deception of the peoples and governments of allied states have borne their bitter fruit. The Reagan Administration has managed to force some West European countries into accepting on their territory first-strike weapons targeted on the USSR and its allies. All the indications are that the scope and potential consequences of this act are being gradually realized in Western Europe.

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The US leaders have clearly cast away their political, psychological and behavioral inhibitions in international affairs. Bellicosity and hysteria have prevailed in the US relations with other countries. It looks that the US foreign policy planners are unaware that objective international realities as expressed in hard facts do not forgive actions clashing with the dictates of life. No amount of emotions and verbal exhortations, to which the present US leaders are given so much, can spirit away these realities.

In the postwar period Washington's hegemonistic ambitions have undergone many tactical changes but its strategy remained the same. In the first postwar years the US rulers, confident of their military superiority, relying on their economic might and taking advantage of the devastation of Europe and Japan, went all-out in their fancy for imperial splendour, the sweet dream nurtured for many years by the US economic moguls. The first salvo of the cold war was fired by Churchill in his ill-famed Fulton speech in March 1946. A year later, on March 12, 1947, the cold war was officially formalized in Truman's message to Congress. The President applied "shock therapy" by instigating fear of the USSR, in order to pave the way to the US military, political and economic expansion. Since then this has become a standard ploy. Truman's message still serves as a sort of foreign policy catechism, especially that part of it which lays claim to world hegemony.

In 1948, the NSC-68 directive identified the Soviet Union as Enemy No. 1 and set the aim of drawing the USSR into an arms race to wear it out economically. Throughout the postwar period American politologists have been busy amplifying the theme. The same directive envisaged organization of long-term clandestine subversive actions and the waging of psychological warfare. As for relations with the USSR and negotiations on vital international issues, they were conceived merely as a means for compelling the Soviet Union to "retreat" by using military, economic, diplomatic, political and propaganda pressure.

Nuclear blackmail became the focus of the US military strategy. In point of fact, all postwar US Presidents threatened to use nuclear weapons. Concrete plans for a nuclear attack on the USSR were drawn up under Truman and Eisenhower. The present US Administration has added little of its own to the foreign policy doctrine evolved by the US ruling elite under Truman and his successors. At that time too, communism was declared to be the source of all troubles for the West and the existence of the Soviet Union

a threat to the US "national interests". Militarism and bellicose chauvinism of the Reagan Administration are the logical projection of the American imperialist strategy the road to which was paved over many years. Its attitudes to world affairs remain essentially unchanged, varying only in tactics, while their strategic substance is, as before, the course for establishing a world empire through a nuclear war.

Moreover, each president draws on the ideas and recommendations proposed by the economic and military-political elites. Few people deny today that the foreign policy, just as all state affairs in the United States, are dictated and controlled by big business. Practically all key posts having to do with the formulation and implementation of the US strategic line on the world scene are occupied by members of the industrial-financial oligarchy. These forces finance various centres, institutions and groups specializing in theoretical, political and economic appraisals of the international situation and making recommendations for government agencies. Analysis of these conclusions and recommendations shows that they always conform to the interests of the ruling plutocracy and are translated into US practical actions on the international scene.

In particular, the US dominant class had long nurtured the ideas of departing from international detente and reversing the positive shifts attained in the first half of the 1970s in Soviet-American relations and in East-West relations. Shortly after the completion of the Helsinki all-European conference and the signing of the Final Act (1975), the New York Council on Foreign Relations, one of the most influential organizations of the US industrial and financial elite, undertook to estimate how far the policy of detente, equal cooperation and disarmament corresponded to the US "national interests". Its conclusion was that it was necessary to resume confrontation and hostility towards the USSR. The purpose of the resulting meetings and seminars was to prove the desirability of "dampening" contacts with the USSR, "toughening" Soviet-American relations, "strengthening NATO" and laying emphasis on new military programmes.

The theme of the struggle for "human rights" outside the United States was offered as a cover-up for the switch-over to confrontation. Simultaneously, the human rights campaign was to divert public attention from the degradation of American society itself revealed most glaringly in the Watergate affair and in the US army brutalities in

Vietnam. "Defence of human rights" also served as a pretext for interference in the internal affairs of socialist countries. After the intensive propaganda campaign and the fabrication of "facts" and "arguments" the "human rights" thesis figured as a basic plank in the election strategy of James Carter and became the official signboard of the psychological warfare.

The cynicism of this campaign leapt to the eye, as did the aim of its promoters: firstly, to cover up the flagrant violations of human rights in the United States and, secondly, to gradually create an atmosphere of hostility and distrust in relations with the Soviet Union and poison the detente atmosphere which did not suit the US ruling oligarchy. Indicatively, once this aim was achieved, the succeeding Reagan Administration drastically narrowed the scope of the "human rights" campaign. Reagan said he did not care about these rights as far as "friendly" countries were concerned, i.e., those ruled by pro-American fascist dictatorships and juntas.

Even at the height of the detente process US bourgeois politology never ceased evolving various concepts justifying different varieties of war, thus undermining the chances for creating an international atmosphere of confidence. A great number of discussions were held on the subject of variants in the use of military force; three were chosen—war as such, threat of war and deterrence. The possible involvement of the USA in a strategic and local nuclear wars was probed from different angles. The advocates of war spared no effort to vindicate the "first" strike, which, by the reasoning of military-political theoreticians, might be pre-emptive against an enemy already prepared to attack and preventive, i.e., unprovoked by the other side.

The widespread concepts of a limited strategic war ("counterforce") and local nuclear wars were all dubbed as "flexible response". The latter was dished out as a means of averting a universal conflict but actually served as a cover for the aggressor's possible arbitrary action. As for the deterrence theory, now in vogue, it likewise rested on the idea of the possible use of nuclear weapons. The deterrence concept is actually a variant of the brinkmanship policy. The American politologists give very wide interpretations of deterrence from the notorious "containment" of the 1950s to the US latest interventionist ventures. Significantly, in the period of detente, too, all the word-building on the subject of war proceeded from a conflict and

not from a peaceful settlement of arising issues. The programmatic conceptual base for Reagan's political decisions was thus prepared. He adopted the recommendations and brought them to the point of attempts to achieve a practical possibility of the first nuclear strike and US victory in a nuclear conflict, thus carrying the militarist psychosis to ominous dimensions.

TACTICS VARY, STRATEGY REMAINS THE SAME

Why did the US ruling circles agree to change the relations between the states of the two systems to those known as detente, why did they somewhat moderate their confrontation attitudes to world issues and put greater emphasis on cooperation? There are many reasons for this, both internal and external, among them the military defeat in Vietnam, the first in the US history. The gloomy light of the abortive intervention stole the lustre from Washington's imperial ambitions, which now "lost weight" leading to a certain erosion of the Messianic doctrine of American supremacy in the world. More vocal were now those realistically-minded people in American society who always had doubts about the hegemonistic course on the world scene as being in the national interests of the United States. Isolationist tendencies intensified.

Further. The American ruling oligarchy was somewhat sobered up by the military-strategic parity which the Soviet Union reached with the USA. From now on it could not destroy the Soviet Union without itself facing destruction. World politics changed their course and assumed a different character. And definite circles in the USA must have heard the funeral toll for the nuclear blackmail policy.

Retreat seemed inevitable. The new situation called for a new tactic, although the long-standing dogmas of Washington's foreign-policy philosophy militated against any shifts which did not lead to its world hegemony. Nor was it possible to close eyes to the growing prestige of the Soviet foreign policy of peace. Its constructive spirit was a serious impediment to US ventures.

Steps were taken to clear the decks for cooperation, for settling disagreements through negotiation, for building confidence. The world breathed easier, fear gave way to hope. But the constructive measures which came about through detente were not taken by the American leaders all too willingly. Beneath them lay a shaky ground of re-

servations and at times they were accompanied by actions which were clearly at variance with the accords reached. In the view of the potent right forces in the United States detente always was a "still-born idea", a non-viable conception. It was depicted as a concession to the Soviet Union, as an "approval", not in the US favour, of objective revolutionary and progressive changes in the world. US propaganda harped on the idea of "disillusionment" with detente, its discordance with the United States' "national interests".

This is indeed the sad truth. While the reduction of tension and of the threat of war is in the interests of all peoples of the planet, including the American people, for the ruling economic, military and political elite of the United States this process spells the loss of profits from military contracts, difficulties for its rapacious policy in the developing countries, and undermines the cult of force so beloved by the US powers-that-be.

One more reason that impelled the US oligarchy to break with the policy of constructive development of Soviet-American relations was the new favourable developments brought about by detente in European affairs. The US apostles of confrontation and war began to fear the centrifugal tendency in NATO, the expansion of the Soviet Union's trade and economic contacts with West European countries making them more independent of their American partner. Add to this the tottering pre-eminence of the United States on the world markets, where the US monopolies felt less and less comfortable facing tough competition from West European and Japanese firms, and you will realize why the American plutocracy suddenly re-energized the economic, political, military and propaganda machine to confrontation, the arms race and build-up of an atmosphere of fear.

Washington spends more on military needs than its allies. Thus, in the USA, per 100 dollars of output 46 dollars are spent on military purposes, in the FRG 18 dollars and in Japan 3.7 dollars. This affects the US competitive power in the sphere of non-military production. So if the allies were made to spend more on armaments, the US monopolies would be better off in competitive struggle.

But it was not so easy to kill detente. This policy had mounting support worldwide and this frightened the US ruling elite. From 1977 onwards, obeying the orders of their masters, the Western media began to play up the thesis about a "new war threat" from the USSR. Dozens of gene-

rously financed committees appeared which were impressing on the Western populations that the "free world" would not survive if it did not funnel new billions into armaments. As for the numerous Soviet proposals for strengthening peace and detente, for disarmament, they were simply ignored. The "free" press kept silent on that. The "enemy" stereotype was revived. Following a strident intimidation campaign, the session of the NATO Council which met in Washington in May 1978 (a cynical challenge to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament meeting at the same time in New York), adopted a long-term programme for armaments build-up and a 3 per cent annual increase in military spending by NATO countries.

However, at that time it was not yet so easy to marry the course for tension, the policy of sabre-rattling and nuclear threats to the peace phrase-mongering which American presidents are so good at. All the more massive therefore was the propaganda of the thesis about the "Soviet threat", the imminent "first strike" by the USSR, about "Soviet preparations for a chemical and bacteriological war", etc. All this was false through and through, but it did the trick, covering up military preparations in the United States. The situation in 1978-1979 was in a way reminiscent of the situation that obtained after the war when, under President Truman, the US ruling circles unleashed the cold war in order to justify militarization and preparation for a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union.

There is much talk in the United States that the complications in the world, which supposedly compelled that country to launch the arms race, began with Afghanistan. This is a downright lie, just one more ploy to deceive the public, giving the impression that prior to December 1979 the US rulers were in a state of peace-loving and romantic pacifism.

Let us see what happened that year. In February General Haig, NATO's supreme allied commander in Europe who assumed the post of Secretary of State in Reagan's cabinet, anticipated changes in the US policy and insisted on the deployment of new weapons systems by the NATO countries spearheaded against the Warsaw Treaty. Haig said that such policy implies "a struggle to the end". At about the same time at their secret meeting in Guadeloupe the heads of four powers (the USA, Britain, West Germany and France) took the decision to deploy medium-range missiles in Europe. In March came the announce-

ment of forthcoming military exercises imitating "nuclear war". Simultaneously a brainwashing campaign was started to prove the "need" to build new nuclear submarines in the USA. In May the mass media opened intensive discussions on the use of outer space for delivering the first nuclear strike. In summer, the mass media jointly with the super-hawk politicians mounted a massive attack on the SALT-2 treaty, which was then buried, to the delight of the military-industrial complex. Events then snowballed. In September, President Carter told a press conference about his decision on deploying a system of new mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles MX. He asked Congress to increase the military budget by five more per cent. The Soviet proposals on negotiating the reduction of medium-range missiles in Europe were ignored. The NATO countries were wooed into accepting the plan for the instalment of new American missiles on the European continent. The official decision came in the middle of December 1979. Throughout the year the US built up its military might in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Lastly, on December 12, 1979, the American President called for raising defence expenditures within the next five years up to 200 billion dollars and developing a wide range of new types of weapons.

In the West, they prefer to forget all this. They talk about Afghanistan, Poland and other things, interlarding their insinuations with perorations about the "noble mission" of the United States in "defending" democracy or, putting it straight, in extending the American totalitarian regime to the whole world, if possible. The apostles of "American liberty" are not embarrassed with the piratical wars waged by the United States, genocide against the Indians, racism, persecution of trade unions and many other "boons" of the American way of life.

To discredit and block detente the US leaders began to present increasingly provocative ultimatums and demands. They insisted on changes in the Soviet internal laws and in its social system in the direction approved by the USA, and on the discontinuation of Soviet support to national liberation movements.

These obviously unacceptable, patently hopeless absurd demands were transformed by verbal manipulation into allegations that the policy of detente and normalization of relations with the Soviet Union did not justify the American hopes, that it was to the advantage of the Soviet Union alone, that detente eroded the United States' resolve in the

use of military force, weakened discipline among its partners, especially in the NATO bloc, strengthened the national independence of many countries and other countries' determination to fight for it, and consolidated the developing countries' trend to avoid a frankly pro-American orientation. So there must be a turn to a policy that would meet Washington's expectations.

"AND THE WIND RETURNETH AGAIN ACCORDING TO HIS CIRCUITS"

The shift towards a frantic arms race and war has become a fact. The present American Administration is trying to revive the imperialist ideas of the 1920s about isolating the USSR and surrounding it with a circle of hostile states and, now, also nuclear bases, to put the language of blackmail and threats back into usage. It has legalized the international provocations of the CIA and its other "dirty affairs" departments and relapsed into the old "crusade" disease. The US President has broken nearly all records earlier achieved with the Soviet Union and has suspended talks on the most vital problems of international life. He is prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of war, while bringing nothing to the altar of peace.

Back in use are the stereotype methods of propaganda covering up the nuclear lunacy in Europe. Having declared a "crusade" against socialism as a social system, set out to create within this framework a material base for nuclear blackmail of the Soviet Union and having thwarted both the possibilities for reaching accord at the talks on medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and the talks themselves, Washington has put on another propaganda show. In vogue this time are all sorts of "regret" and "disappointment". Having changed the hawks' harsh screeching for doves' cooing overnight the White House is holding forth with indescribable hypocrisy that it is prepared to sit and wait in Geneva for the Soviet Union to resume the talks, which, incidentally, were broken by the USA. All this is nothing but pretence and falsehood.

Today the quick-on-the-draw and indiscriminately shooting cowboy is not only a "hero" to be emulated, but also a political symbol. The trouble is that the US leaders have gone back to "simple solutions of complex problems" in the belief that force alone can assure "national interests". The trouble for that country is also the fact that its governing elite cannot accommodate itself to the changed balance of forces in the world which rules out the US do-

minance in it. The stake put on military force as a means of attaining world hegemony testifies only to the recklessness and short-sightedness of the present American politicians, to their dangerously hidebound way of thinking.

There can be no escape in a snake's hole. Equally it is absurd to think that security can be found in the arms race. The price of militarism has always been war. The naive notion of the US leaders that the Soviet Union can be cornered by the arms race and bullied into submission can only be explained by blissful ignorance or a childish faith in miracles. As for the plans for world domination, they will inevitably end in shattered hopes and bitter awakening to the reality.

The world public has the right to demand that the United States face world realities and respect the international community, its opinion, and laws and norms of international behaviour. The current militaristic and chauvinistic course of the United States calls for heightened vigilance. The task is to step up the struggle against the hovering menace, against the US war threat. Profit madness, infatuation with the dollar and the Messianic ravings about world dominance must not be allowed to triumph over human life.

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IN THE PILLORY

The United States is Responsible for the Arms Race

by Alexander KOKOREV

Imperialist circles, the US military-industrial complex and NATO's brass hats are eager to block and reverse the positive processes developing in the world. Their main stake is on the arms race, which poses a grave threat to peace. The article below tells about the arms race escalation.

TWISTS OF THE "LETHAL SPIRAL"

The first round of the arms race (1945-1953) began in August 1945, when the two militarily uncalled-for atomic blasts, which incinerated the Japanese towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, heralded the emergence of the most deadly weapons in the history of mankind. Washington started a race to build up its nuclear forces that was supposed to provide the material base for a still more aggressive and tough course in relation to the Soviet Union, which the US

military-political leadership had turned from an ally in the anti-Hitler coalition into Enemy No. 1. The "Pax Americana" slogan advanced in the 1950s directly associated US hegemonism with militarism and anti-communism.

The "strategy of containment through intimidation" became the theoretical foundation of the United States' foreign policy. Its fathers openly proclaimed "containment", "rolling communism back" by armed force as their main task.

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The memorandum adopted by the National Security Council under Truman, Directive NSC-68 (1950), for a long time epitomized the philosophy of the "containment" policy representing the quintessence of anti-Sovietism. American politologists today continue to employ the ideas and theses of this memorandum in which one can find the thesis about the "Soviet military threat", about the first nuclear strike against the USSR, the recommendations to conduct the arms race with the aim of "wearing out the Soviet Union economically" and gaining military superiority over it, and many other ideas to which the American strategists come back again and again.

The NSC-68 memorandum with its plan of a war against the USSR (in order to put an end to communism once and for all) called for the most vigorous efforts to retain US monopoly positions or at least to gain considerable superiority in nuclear weapons. The build-up of the US nuclear capabilities, begun under Truman, was carried on by the succeeding US administrations. In the early 1950s President Eisenhower in a memorandum to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles cynically said that the American leadership might be compelled in definite circumstances to consider the question whether its duty before the coming generations was to launch a war at the most opportune moment. In 1955 the Pentagon demanded

the doubling of the number of strategic bombers (at that time the main vehicles delivering nuclear weapons to the target).

The USA persistently adhered to the first nuclear strike doctrine, which actually signified its readiness to let loose a thermonuclear catastrophe. This has keynoted the development of the US military doctrine since the onset of the nuclear age. In pursuit of this doctrine, nuclear delivery vehicles were made more and more sophisticated and multiplied. Military exercises were held with the use of the latest weaponry.

The Soviet Union did not start making nuclear weapons until it became clear, that fascist Germany had attempted to create such weapons and that the USA was secretly developing them. The United States tested the A-bomb in 1945. The USSR obtained its nuclear weapons in 1949. And it is not its fault, of course, that the nuclear genie was let out of the bottle. From the very start the USSR proposed banning and ceasing the production of nuclear weapons. The USA refused to do this. On the contrary, it escalated the arms race. The Soviet proposals on banning the use of nuclear energy for military purposes were rejected by the USA. In the face of the overhanging menace the Soviet Union was forced to reinforce its defences. This was so at the first stage of the arms race and in the subsequent years.

The *second round* of the arms race may be conditionally related to the adoption of the "massive retaliation" strategy by the USA. This period almost fully coincided with Eisenhower's presidency (1953-1961). The United States continued to base its strategy on "nuclear superiority", although the Soviet Union's creation of its own nuclear weapons introduced certain adjustments into the plans of the US strategists.

The US doctrine of "massive retaliation" virtually proclaimed its readiness and ability to strike a sudden blow at the Soviet Union (chiefly at its big cities and industrial centres). This was the preparation for a total and global war against the USSR and other socialist countries in which the strategic air force was to play the main role. A big boost was given to the so-called base strategy of encircling the USSR with a system of military bases.

The United States was building up its strategic air force invoking its supposed lag behind the USSR in strategic bombers. A veritable armada of new strategic bombers was formed. It was only then that the American public discovered that the number of bombers possessed by the Soviet Union was deliberately overstated 3 or 4 times!

The *third round* of the arms race, as of the evolution of the US military-technological doctrine, was connected with the

strategy of "flexible response"¹ which originated in 1961, when John Kennedy took office. In keeping with this doctrine, the United States continued to force the build-up of nuclear-missile armaments. When John Kennedy became President he knew that the US Navy had two Polaris submarines with ballistic missiles and that another 12 such submarines were in the process of construction. Yet he immediately gave the order to add five more submarines to this number and asked Congress for appropriations on the building of additional ten missile-carrying submarines.

Former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara admitted at the end of the 1960s: "Our current numerical superiority over the Soviet Union is both greater than we had originally planned and more than we require... Our strategic offensive forces are immense: 1,000 Minuteman missile launchers, carefully protected below ground; 41 Polaris submarines, carrying 656 missile launchers, with most of them hidden beneath the seas at all times; and about 600 long-range bombers, approximately 40 per cent of which are kept always in a high state of alert. Our alert forces alone carry more than 2,200 weapons, each averaging more

¹ It was "flexible" because it envisaged the preparation and waging of any wars—world and local, nuclear and conventional, big and small. At the end of 1967 the entire NATO strategy became "flexible".

than the explosive equivalent of one megaton of TNT. Four hundred of these delivered on the Soviet Union would be sufficient to destroy over one-third of its population and one-half of its industry. All these flexible and highly reliable forces are equipped with devices that ensure their penetration of Soviet defenses."²

At the beginning of the 1960s there was talk about the US lag, this time in the number of missiles. Under this pretext the United States went ahead with the mass deployment of ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles and after more than 1,000 of them were installed, it had to be conceded that the "Soviet missile threat" was magnified 15-20-fold! Then, as is known, came the United States' "lag" in anti-missile defence, and so on and so forth. And each time it turned out that there was no lag.

US forward-based nuclear weapons too were continuously perfected. After the outdated Thor and Jupiter medium-range missiles were withdrawn from Europe in 1963 (being deployed there since 1959), the USA shipped its latest aircraft to Europe: A-6A bombers in 1963, F-4 fighter bombers in 1966 and F-111 bombers at the end of the 1960s. FB-111 bombers were created to support this group. In December 1962 the US President took a decision to supply NATO with 64 Polaris ballistic

missiles (aboard four submarines) which were replaced by Poseidon missiles in 1971. Even after the signing in August 1963 of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, the United States moved quickly to perfect its nuclear arsenal, carrying out numerous underground tests. From 1963 to 1970, as estimated by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the USA conducted 240 underground nuclear tests compared with 85 tests by the Soviet Union. Of the 25 new large weapons systems which appeared by the early 1970s, 23 were first activated by the United States. These included the atomic and hydrogen bomb, nuclear missile submarines, MIRV missiles, etc.

Faced with the US hectic activity in developing ever new types of nuclear and other weapons, the Soviet Union was forced to take the requisite counter-measures in order to liquidate American military superiority and ensure its own security.

The *fourth round* of the arms race falls on the 1970s. It was highlighted by the rough military-strategic parity reached by the Soviet Union with the United States and by international detente. In the autumn of 1970 the London International Institute for Strategic Studies put on record the approximate balance between the USA and the USSR. This was also con-

firmed by President Nixon in his address to Congress on February 25, 1971.

The changes which took place in Washington's military-political concepts in the early 1970s were in a way the result of the attempts by a section of the US ruling circles to accommodate themselves to the changing alignment of forces in the world. If under President Truman (1945-1953) the USA all but openly paraded as the world's atomic dictator, under Nixon (1969-1974) it was forced to enunciate the slogan "from confrontation to negotiation" and under Carter (1977-1980) had even to admit that the "psychological dividends" from the military might with its nuclear component were very limited. The attainment by the USSR of strategic parity with the United States had a sobering effect on the American militarists.

Sober-minded people who realized that the prevailing balance of forces rendered the stake on nuclear war tantamount to suicide took the upper hand in the US government. True, this did not mean that imperialism had ceased to be aggressive or shed its hopes to regain the lost positions.

In the second half of the 1970s the situation began to change. Detente was more and more vehemently attacked by the right forces in the USA. This campaign gathered momentum in 1975. Conservative moods began to prevail on the

US political scene and, finally, led to a reversal in the US foreign policy at the turn of the 1970s.

The line for aggravating international relations was starkly revealed in the new round of the arms race launched by US imperialism, which was out to change the strategic equilibrium in its favour. The farther the US ruling circles drifted away from the detente policy, the more clearly the militaristic substance of the US foreign-policy doctrine was revealed, and its inseparable link with the arms race. In the 1970s the powers that be in the US did not sit back and wait, as American propaganda assures us trying to put the blame for the arms race on the Soviet Union.

The 1960s and 1970s were a boom time for the construction of nuclear capable submarines, ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads for them.

In 1970 the United States launched the construction of Minuteman-3 intercontinental ballistic missiles carrying not one warhead as the Minuteman-1 and Minuteman-2, but three MIRVs. Gradually the number of such missiles was brought up to 550 units. Warhead yield was increased and Minuteman-3 missiles were equipped with remote control re-targeting systems. Work has been going on since 1972 on the MX ground-based intercontinental ballistic missile. In 1975 the B-1 modern heavy bomber was created. In 1981

² *Look*, September 3, 1968.

the Ohio type nuclear submarine was launched. Every day an average of three nuclear explosive charges were supplied to the US armed forces in the 1970s. From 1970 to 1980, their number on US strategic delivery vehicles increased from 5,100 to 10,000, much faster growth than in the USSR. If before 1969 the American strategists' main aim was to achieve decisive quantitative superiority in nuclear delivery vehicles (by building up a large strategic air force in the 1950s and stationing substantial numbers of intercontinental ballistic and nuclear submarine-based ballistic missiles in the 1960s), under Nixon the drive for military superiority over the Soviet Union was largely associated with the transfer of the arms race into a qualitatively new channel.

In 1968 the United States carried out the first operational test of the Minuteman-3 missile equipped with MIRVs. Two years later Poseidon-C3 missiles were test-fired from a nuclear weapon-carrying submarine. From the very beginning the Soviet Union proposed to the United States to stop equipping missiles with MIRVs on a mutual basis. Had this proposal been accepted at the time, there would have been no Soviet SS-20 medium-range missiles.

The USA, and not the USSR, has initiated the development of new weapons systems. It put nuclear weapons into service in the mid-1940s (in August 1945); the Soviet

Union developed such weapons at the end of the 1940s; intercontinental strategic bombers and atomic submarines were made by the USA in the mid-50s and by the Soviet Union at the end of the decade; MIRVs were made in the USA at the end of the sixties and in the Soviet Union in the mid-70s; neutron weapons were introduced in the USA at the turn of the 1970s (the Soviet Union has no such systems).

In the 1970s one more aspect of the US-pursued arms race became particularly evident: its use for pressurizing partners in the talks on the limitation of armaments and on disarmament. American strategists have tried again and again, by getting ahead of the Soviet Union in the development and deployment of new systems of weapons, to achieve superiority and, on its basis, to secure a "position of strength" for themselves at the talks, exploiting this superiority as a "bargaining trump card". Now it is clear that the right forces in the USA made massive attacks on the SALT-2 Treaty signed by the USSR and the USA precisely because it recorded the parity of the strategic potentials of the sides.

The *fifth round* of the arms race began at the close of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. The United States plunged into it without having even completed the previous round. Coming to office in early 1977, the Carter Administra-

tion set out to destroy the foundation on which the process of reduction of strategic armaments began, i.e., the principle of parity and equal security of the sides. The course was set for a large-scale and long-term build-up of the US military potential. The five-year military programme announced by Carter on December 12, 1979, called for a steep increase of appropriations for armaments. Specifically, it envisaged the following: "modernization" of strategic weaponry; strengthening of the US forces in NATO and in the Pacific as efforts taken jointly with US partners; creation of the Rapid Deployment Force for operations in areas not covered by NATO, etc. NATO Long-Term Defence Programme up to the end of the century was drawn up. This turn in the US foreign policy was aimed at changing the balance of forces drastically in favour of the United States and at achieving military superiority. The new round of the arms race led to a dangerous exacerbation of the international situation. This was, in fact, a throwback to the "containment" policy pressed forward in forms and by methods proposed in the NSC-68 memorandum.

Resuscitating the "containment" policy on a new foundation, the American strategists complement it with new elements, stepping up the rearmament of US NATO allies, encouraging Japan's militarization, attempting to attain supe-

riority over the Soviet Union (this is often promoted in disguised form, such as creating a "reserve of strength", for instance).

Having strategic superiority over the Western world supported by its nuclear potential, the US leaders seek to make political capital on it, in particular trying to redress the decline of its political and economic weight among its allies. As for the military-technological aspect, the US strategic potential is being advanced in terms of quality and quantity: a new generation of nuclear delivery vehicles is being deployed (intercontinental ballistic missiles, sea-based ballistic missiles, qualitatively new strategic bombers, long-range cruise missiles), the invulnerability of US offensive strategic weapons and their flexibility is being enhanced, etc.

The United States' course for obtaining the "position of strength" and securing its dominant influence in international affairs was bound to affect the arms limitation talks conducted in the 1970s. After the signing of the SALT-2 Treaty in Vienna in summer 1979, the process of strategic arms limitation under way during detente was blocked by the US militarist circles. Postponement of the ratification of the SALT-2 Treaty under the Reagan Administration actually turned into a boycott of this major Soviet-American accord. Yet it was indeed the biggest step ever

in restraining the arms race which opened the way to SALT-3, to a reduction in strategic offensive armaments.

At the turn of the 1970s US imperialism undertook militaristic preparations on a particularly wide scale and mounted an all-out offensive on socialism, bringing into play the arms race, economic "sanctions" and ideological pressure.

In the early 1980s the United States started building up its world's most powerful arsenal of chemical weapons and launched the production of binary chemical weapons which were supplied to the US army. In 1981, Reagan took a decision on the full-scale manufacture of neutron weapons. The US Administration is now trying to get them stationed in Western Europe. Outer space too is becoming an arena of war preparations. The Space Command was instituted in the USA on September 1, 1982 to deal with cosmic war preparations. The respective systems of weapons are being developed at an accelerated pace. Projects are under way for developing and putting missile and laser weapons into outer space, including re-usable Shuttle spaceships.

Western Europe is more and more becoming a major target of US hegemonism. The US ruling circles want to tie it more firmly to their global policy, to the anti-Soviet campaign and, at the same time, to make their NATO allies shoulder a part of the arms race burden. The Uni-

ted States has already begun deploying new types of medium-range missiles in some West European countries to disrupt the established balance of forces on the European continent. The USA intends to site about 600 new medium-range nuclear missiles there (Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles).

Europe is not the only continent involved. Many hundreds of US carriers aimed at the Soviet territory are concentrated along the entire perimeter of the Soviet Union. In recent years the US military potential has been sharply increased in the Indian Ocean where the US multi-purpose military base on Diego Garcia has become the central link in the American military infrastructure in the Indian Ocean.

The Soviet Union and fraternal socialist countries cannot allow the Washington strategists to reach the coveted superiority. The Soviet Union has the required potential to thwart imperialism's aggressive plans. As CPSU Central Committee General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko said at the February 1984 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee: "We do not need any military superiority. We do not intend to dictate our will to others. But we will not let the military equilibrium that has been achieved be upset."

An objective appraisal of the present relationship of military forces of the Warsaw

Treaty and NATO leads to the conclusion: there is an approximate parity based on the equal security of the sides in strategic nuclear armaments, in medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe and in conventional armaments. The Soviet approach is clear: to seek, by taking joint coordinated efforts, a lowering of the military confrontation levels. The USSR's clear and constructive stand is dictated by its good will and a desire to find a way out of the present situation. The Soviet Union's peaceful initiatives are directed at preventing a nuclear war. They pave the way for reduc-

ing the arsenals of mass destruction weapons and lessening international tension. In the postwar period the Soviet Union has made over 100 peace proposals. In the last 15 years alone about 30 multilateral and bilateral treaties and agreements in the field of disarmament have been concluded on the Soviet Union's initiative. On the other hand, the US policy is patently non-constructive, indicating its unwillingness to search jointly with the USSR for a really mutually acceptable base on which to reach accord.

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