

**AKEL
18th CONGRESS**

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OPENING SPEECH OF THE 18TH CONGRESS OF AKEL

by c. Donis Christofinis

(16 November, 1995, "ELEPHTHERIA" Sports Centre)

Esteemed and dear guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear comrades.

With feelings of joy and emotion, I welcome you and I thank you for honouring with your presence the opening of the 18th Congress of AKEL.

The presence of each and every one of you, of officials compatriots of ours, of outstanding representatives of foreign parties as well as of comrades and friends, brightens our Congress and reaffirms our Party's bonds with the society of Cyprus, with parties and organizations on an international level.

Dear friends, In the five years that have elapsed since the 17th Congress, continuing with consistency its course of renewal, our Party has scored great successes. It got at the head of mass mobilizations, it organized magnificent events, it achieved important electoral victories. Not forgetting even for one moment its duties to the political and social struggles, AKEL proceeded to elaborating advanced positions on education, culture, local government, sports and the environment. We rejoiced and took pride of these successes.

In the five years that have elapsed we have, unfortunately, lost some comrades, whose loss fills us with sadness. Among them was the outstanding leader of the Party and the Peasant's Movement, Chambis Michaelides, and two members of the Central Committee of our Party, Christoforos Ioannides and Leonidas Synggeris. For these comrades and all the other veterans and younger fighters of our party and the popular movement that are no longer with us, I ask you to keep a minute of silence.

Dear Friends,

The 18th Congress of AKEL constitutes a significant landmark and starting point in the 70-years-long course of our party.

It is convened in conditions, when, worldwide, the progressive forces are overcoming the shock of the collapse of the socialist community in Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. They are re-organizing and resisting the so-called New World Order and the attack of the neo-conservative right-wing against the gains of the working people.

In the country, the situation is characterized by the deadlock of the Cyprus problem due to the intransigence exhibited by Denktash and Turkey in the tolerance of Turkey's friends. This situation, that increases the dangers of a final division, in combination with the serious mistakes, omissions as well as the government's conscious choices, both on the Cyprus problem and the internal issues, causes feelings of disappointment and discontent in our people.

In these conditions, the 18th Congress of AKEL sends out a message of hope, unity and struggle for change and for the salvation of Cyprus. A message that the division can be averted. That Cyprus and its people can be reunited in an independent, sovereign, territorially integral, federal republic without foreign troops and bases, where human rights will be safeguarded for all citizens.

AKEL, in holding its 18th Congress, promises to give hope back to our people.

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF AKEL, D. CHRISTOFIAS TO THE 18th CONGRESS OF THE PARTY

(Nicosia 16-19 November 1995)

I consider it my utmost duty, on behalf of the Central Committee of AKEL and all of its members, to welcome to our Congress the comrades and friends representing the parties from abroad that honour, with their presence, this highest forum of AKEL members. We warmly thank them for responding to our invitation. We perceive their presence here as an expression of the solidarity and bonds of friendship and comradeship that must prevail in the relationship between progressive, left, socialist and communist parties.

Honouring the Congress with their presence are the acting President, the acting President of the House of Representatives, leaders or representatives of the political parties, ministers, members of parliament, former ministers, mayors, organisation representatives, high ranking state functionaries and personalities of Cypriot life. Also present are Ambassadors and representatives of Embassies of various countries. We thank them all for their positive response to our invitation. We interpret their presence as an expression of their esteem towards AKEL and recognition of the role it plays.

With particular pleasure and respect I welcome the hundreds of veterans of the Party and the popular movement. I am certain that like us they feel happy and moved, but most importantly proud of this strong and massive Party which they created with their struggles.

I also welcome the comrades elected as delegates to the Congress. Serious and responsible work awaits us and I am convinced that we will successfully carry it out.

Finally, with love and esteem, I welcome the many comrades and friends whose presence here tonight has turned the opening ceremony of our Congress into a mass forum of the Left.

Comrades,

We are holding, from today, the 18th Congress of the Party. A Congress that I am convinced will constitute an important stage in the further upwards course of AKEL and the wider popular movement of the Left. The thousands of members, friends and supporters of the Left are following with interest the Congress deliberations. It is not however just people of the Left who are paying attention to the congress of AKEL. It is the whole of Cypriot society that will, during these 4 days of Congress, be focusing its attention and interest on us. And this is not by chance.

In Cyprus everybody knows that a Congress of AKEL is not just the fulfilment of a constitutional obligation. A Congress of AKEL is the highest forum of that political force which voices and represents more than one-third of the people, a party with a long-standing contribution to the country, a party of principles, a political force which is serious and responsible. Consequently the people are watching, as always, with interest the resolutions of our Congress which undoubtedly will place their own mark on political and general developments.

Our Congress is convened at the end of productive, serious and responsible pre- Congress work that has lasted for many months. Work, the main characteristics of which are deep thinking, openness and free democratic dialogue. The outgoing Central Committee has, timely, approved and given to the Congress for discussion, the theses, and also its suggestion for re-examination of our position on the issue of Cyprus' accession to the European Union. These two documents were publicised and set under the judgement of not only the party members but of the whole population.

Pre-Congress work as a whole proved once again the political and ideological unity in our party; and that the members of AKEL know how to discuss and behave responsibly, respecting the democratic procedures, respecting themselves and their comrades as well as the regulations of the Party.

Regarding the organisational aspect of our work I would like to note that members' participation in the three meetings of party groups is not satisfactory. The reduced attendance indicates that we are still facing organisational problems and weaknesses, which we have no other option but to óght in order for them to be overcome.

Comrades,

The 18th Congress of AKEL is being held under entirely different international conditions than those under which the 17th Congress was held.

Today, the Soviet Union, the creation of the Great October Socialist Revolution, does not exist. In the previous Congress, evaluating the developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union we expressed our strong concern over the future of the country of the Soviets. At the same time we expressed the wish that their problems would be overcome and the aim of renewed democratic socialism would be achieved. Unfortunately, our fears and concerns were vindicated whereas our expectations were not.

The leadership of the Communist Parties in power, particularly the CPSU, having realised the necessity of democratisation and modernisation of their specific model of socialism, undertook a method of achieving this that was not methodical or planned. In the route of perestroika the foundations of socialist ideal were vitiated and undermined. Errors and omissions took place while the contradictions and conflicts that were caused led the whole exercise to failure. Foreign intervention also played an important destabilising role. Facts have proved that some of the leaders who undertook the renewal of socialism in Eastern Europe are today contributing to the course of restoring capitalism, which in certain countries is in its most primitive and inhuman form.

There were many who celebrated the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the socialist community in Europe. In these celebrations many declarations were made for the triumph of democracy, a new era, a world where justice and peace would prevail.

The celebrations at the centres of capitalism were natural and expected. At the end of the day they had managed to get rid of their opponents.

The celebrations however, in Cyprus and in countries in troubles like ours, can only be characterised as short-sighted expressions of class and ideological hatred.

We did not celebrate. Not only because the cause of socialism had suffered a major set back but also because we foresaw that the world without the Soviet Union would be even more unjust for small nations and fighting peoples.

We foresaw the dangers of imperialist monocacy. We foresaw the unaccountability of supranational monopolies and the world wide attack against working people. More so we foresaw and seriously considered the dangers for our cause, knowing that Cyprus would be deprived of the support it enjoyed from the socialist world.

The celebrations ceased soon enough as hard reality overwrote the myths of the so called triumph of democracy and the new world order that would supposedly be based on

International Law and legality. A new world is definitely being formed. It has however, nothing to do with the impressive declarations and the promising assurances.

The United States of America and their close allies impose their own new world order whose sole criterion is to serve their own geopolitical and economic interests.

Moreover, the lack of fear of an opponent causes resurrection of the inter-imperialist contradictions and competition. Not that these antagonisms had ceased in the past, but now they appear with greater intensity and in place begin to remind us of the situation at the beginning of this century. The three centres of the capitalist world - the USA, the EU headed by Germany, and Japan, are relaunching their struggles for spheres of influence. And let no one tell us that the struggle in Yugoslavia, and the existing danger for the Balkans to explode, is not related among other things to this very game of redistribution of spheres of influence.

The monocarcy of the USA and the underlying fight to redistribute these spheres of influence are not the only characteristics of this new world order. There is the domineering guidance of the UN by the USA and its close allies. There is the creation of new areas of tension and hotbeds of confrontation on the planet. There is the revival of nationalism-chauvinism and racism. There is the worrying spread of religious fanaticism. The gap between rich North and hungry South is constantly widening and could potentially constitute the cause of a new destructive explosion of world dimensions. The planet is facing serious ecological and environmental problems that bear dangers for the very existence of life on earth.

In the metropolis of capitalism and the economically developed countries with the relatively high standard of living those live under the poverty line keep increasing. The neo-conservative attack of big capital reduces social allowances, diminishes the welfare state, undermines the gains of the working people and lowers their standard of living. The various «grand scale» programmes fail to confront the problem of unemployment. Crime increases, the drugs plague is spreading, functional illiteracy is flourishing. Capitalism imposes standards and a pace of life that humiliates the human being, deprives it of viability and turns it into a mindless pawn of an inhuman system. And bourgeois democracy itself is distorted by economic interests.

It is not us who are painting the picture of the planet in dark colours. It is the reality of today's world that is dark and sad. And it is easily perceived by those who glance at it without the distorting lenses that are imposed on us by the mechanisms of consciousness formation of the mass media.

The cause of this reality is born out by the unjust and exploitative nature of capitalism for which the highest law is the quest for profit. Consequently its essence remains the same and it will continue to give birth to contradictions and conflicts. It will continue to reproduce the class struggle even though the various apologists of capitalism theoretically abolish and exorcise it.

Socialism in Europe no longer exists. The idea, however, of democratic and humane socialism, is constantly reborn, not because some unrepentant romantics insist on it, but because life itself brings it back, again and again, in the front stage as an answer to the deadlocks of today's world.

This is why AKEL, as the Party of the people, the Party of the workers, insists and will continue to insist on socialism as its ultimate, high and noble aim.

The fall of existing socialism has been a terrible experience and a serious setback to the universal cause of social justice and peace. We are absolutely certain that this is a temporary setback. The world cannot be turned backwards. Progress of the development of human society does not end. The end of the Soviet Union does not mean the end of socialism, as some believed or hoped.

The Left today, in its wider sense, is regrouping its forces. I believe that the period of retreat is over. The Left is coming back with demands to the forefront of history. It projects its own alternative solutions. It lays claim to an increased say and to play a greater role. It claims and wins the trust of popular masses, in certain countries and with a speed that no one would expect. This is true in the ex-socialist countries, where the worst anti-communism prevailed after the change. Nonetheless the people who experienced the advantages of socialism, the people who experienced the evils brought to them by the restoration of capitalism, are liberating themselves from anti-communism, and support the parties of the left with their votes.

The new parties are not revivals of the old ones. After all, this is not what we wish. Nor do we wish to proceed towards a reconstitution of the socialist community exactly as we knew it before. Nobody knows what forms the renewed socialist and communist forces will take in the future. One thing is certain - the 21st century will be the century of renewed socialism. The future belongs to renewed socialism.

And in our perception, renewal and modernisation means the preservation of basic principles and the formation of new concepts consistent with the facts of contemporary life. This is why we, as AKEL, despite the changes we have adopted to our ideological and political approach, insist on declaring that for us, the heritage of Marx, Engels and Lenin and the communist movement of the 20th century is a precious source of knowledge, experience, consideration, theoretical thinking and revolutionary action towards which we will always refer, and which we will always utilise constructively, and not, in any way, dogmatically.

Going back to the so-called new world order and the role of the Left today, we believe that the primary duty of the progressive socialist and communist forces is to resist this new order and its consequences. For the struggle against the new world order to have any prospect of success the renewal and modernisation of the Left is not enough. It is also necessary to renew the links and co-ordinate the actions of the left forces on a regional and wider level. The multifaceted international progressive movement of today, with the variety of ideological and other approaches and searches, we believe, is not a reason for isolation within the national frontiers of each country. On the contrary, respecting each other's autonomy and independence, recognising and respecting our possible ideological differences, we can co-operate, set common targets and co-ordinate actions for achieving them.

AKEL undertook in the past and will continue to undertake initiatives for renewal of the bonds, the co-operation and the co-ordination of actions.

I have already referred to principles that, despite the changes, must be preserved to guide us. To us, one such principle is that of internationalism and international solidarity. In the left progressive parties and movements, the peoples who fight against exploitation, for social progress and for national independence, will always enjoy our support and solidarity. And, within our capacity, this solidarity will be practical as well. No ideological or other differences will obstruct the fulfilment of our internationalist duty.

The struggle for international peace and security will be one of our priorities. In this framework, we have condemned and will continue to condemn the resuming of nuclear tests by France and will continue to struggle for their ban.

I consider it my duty, from the rostrum of the 18th Congress to express again AKEL's solidarity.

- towards the people of Cuba and the Communist Party of Cuba who fight for the lifting of the unjust and inhuman American embargo,

- towards the people of Palestine with our wish to speedily create their own independent state,

- towards the people of Serbia to rebuff the NATO intervention and for peace in the suffering of former Yugoslavia.
- towards the people of South Africa in building a new life.
- towards the Kurdish people that struggles for its inalienable rights.

Comrades,

One of the main tasks of this Congress is to review and evaluate the activity of the Party during the last five years, the policies we pursued and our intervention in all aspects of Cypriot life. We are deeply convinced, based on facts, that our evaluation cannot but be positive. We are reviewing five years of intensive, rich and creative action. Five years that confirmed that AKEL is the most renewed contemporary, serious and responsible party in this country. A party that can function both when it supported the government as well as in opposition.

The opinion polls conducted at times, invariably show our Party as the leading party with regards to issues of renewal and modernisation. And not by coincidence. Nor just because younger comrades have been elected to the leading bodies and posts. It is due mainly to our party's fresh language which, without abandoning our roots, without disturbing AKEL's fixed pro-popular policy, proceeds in the adoption of new approaches that give this policy new dimensions. As an example of this qualitative renewal we can mention the very serious work carried out by the various specialised bureaux and sections of the Central Committee. Work which is based on a great number of comrades and friends who have the relevant scientific and other qualifications. Work which allowed the party in general to work out comprehensive and concrete policies on a series of issues and to undertake respective initiatives for promoting them. I have in mind our policy and initiatives on issues of the economy, education, environment, civilisation, sports and the local authorities.

All these in combination, of course, with its policy as a whole, establish AKEL not only as a renewed and contemporary party but as a serious and responsible political force which does not only talk politics but aspires to a creative intervention in all aspects of Cypriot society.

In the five years that have elapsed we have strengthened the relationship of the party with the working people and the people in general. AKEL constitutes a national political force in the sense that, on the major issues concerning the country and the future of Cyprus, it follows a policy serving what we call national interest. At the same time, our party maintains and will continue to maintain its character as the party of the working people. A party that expresses and serves the interest of the working people in the wider sense of the term. A party that defends their rights.

Faced with the neo-conservative attack of the right wing government and big capital, as demonstrated by the policy of the OEB (federation of employers and industrialists), we stood by the side of the working people, without compromise or hesitation. We defended with them, along with the trade union movement, achievements which had been attained after hard and long struggles. We defended and will continue to defend the COLA, the right of unionisation and collective agreements, the right to strike, the right of the working people for greater participation in the distribution and redistribution of national income produced in our country by their own hands and brains.

AKEL draws its strength from its relation and contact with the people. At difficult times, such as the years that the party was troubled by the action of the fraction, what saved AKEL was exactly these unbreakable links, the love and trust of the working people, our continuous contact with the people.

The party as a whole and its individual cadres do not remember the people only at

election times. Nor do we reach to the people just for elections or following the suggestions of public relations bureaux. We are with the people on a daily basis because this is our mission and the meaning of our existence - to be part of the people's problems and worries. Our daily concern is to promote the solution of problems which burden social groups, and also personal problems as well, where people are being ignored and troubled by authorities, or where justice is not done, lack of meritocracy and where discrimination takes place for political and ideological reasons. Phenomena of which a great number unfortunately exist and have become a rule of life during the years of the right-wing administration.

As members of AKEL it is our duty to upgrade even more our relations and contacts with the people. And to always know that what earns the respect and the trust of the people is not simply the visits, but the consistency in keeping promises and the struggle for solving problems.

AKEL has become a mass political force because with its struggles it contributes greatly in changing the life of the people for the better. AKEL will continuously be reconfirmed as a massive political force as long as it follows the same route.

The primary issue that worries, concerns and burdens our people is, of course, the Cyprus problem. I will refer to our position on the Cyprus problem at a later stage. At this point I will only stress the consistency that characterises AKEL in its policy on the Cyprus problem. Consistency that exists and is respected by the people despite the efforts of some to prove the contrary.

All that I have mentioned above - the correct position of AKEL on the Cyprus problem and internal matters as well as the consistency in promoting these positions, the renewal and modernisation of the Party, its bonds with the wider popular masses and the defence of working people's rights, along with its honoured 70 years of history - has contributed to maintaining AKEL's respectability high in people's consciousness and to extending its influence on the electorate. In the last five years we have had a series of electoral successes such as the parliamentary and municipal elections of 1991 and the community elections and the newly established municipalities elections of 1994. And all of these under the given conditions of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Socialist community in Europe, when many predicted the end of AKEL. Even the presidential election of 1993, considering its marginal result and the condition in which it was conducted can in no way be evaluated as a defeat for our party and particularly of its policy. President Vassiliou got 49.7% of the votes with the support, essentially, of only our Party. This was due to the fact that Vassiliou's terms were positive and productive in all aspects of our lives. It is AKEL's evaluation that had the then President avoided certain mistakes he would have been re-elected even though he was faced with a coalition of the Right and the church. To render justice, our assessment is that the main, the essential, reason for not being able to re-elect Vassiliou was the coalition of the Right and the Church, and the methods used by them, which, at certain instances were unacceptable.

In reviewing the five years that have elapsed we must take a look at those targets which we have not managed to achieve to the required level. I have the organisational situation of the Party in mind.

This concern regarding our organisational situation is not new. Long ago we had identified certain negative phenomena in our work such as the phenomena of fatigue, indifference, lack of discipline, "paragondism" (NOTE: the prevalence of party personalities in political life, instead of ideological principles) and a reduced contribution to the daily practical work of the Party. Aiming at overcoming these weaknesses we organised, last year, the Pancyprian Conference on Organisational Issues. Before the Conference and at the Conference itself we seriously considered the causes of these negative phenomena and reached certain decisions aimed at achieving a qualitative leap in the organisational condition of the party.

A year later we still believe that certain steps forward have been made, certain successes have been achieved, but we have not achieved the qualitative leap we had aimed at. So the duty of overcoming the negative phenomena in our organisational activity is still in front of us.

We live in an intensively developing capitalist consumerist society which forces us to move at exhausting speeds. The needs every family has to cover are many and variable. Consumerism and the mimicry of each other that dominates Cypriot society multiply these needs, adding products that while not essentially necessary are required by the mentality developed around us. A mentality unfortunately affecting our lives as well.

Every family is, therefore, obliged to work much more than 8 hours a day to secure all that it requires. Additionally, the so called social obligations use up the little free time that remains. Political activity and voluntary contribution to the Party's work, however, is exactly related to the use of every member's and cadre's free time.

As a result of this situation the time available to fulfil our duties as members and cadres of AKEL is reduced. At the end, the voluntary contribution to the Party's work is reduced.

What do we do when faced with this phenomenon? We have no other choice, comrades, but to pull our socks together and fight against it. Our Party was built and became what it is, based on the selfless contribution of its members and cadres. We must become conscious of this truth. We must classify our needs and prioritise party work. We must regard it as it really is, not just as dry organisational activity, but as work entailing political content and political importance. The current organisational weaknesses that appear as reduced attendance at local group meetings and reduced voluntary work, if not rebuffed, will in the future cause greater problems that could well be reflected even on the political level.

Comrades,

Since February 1993 an entirely new situation has been created in Cyprus. The right and extreme right have managed to get to power and a large number of problems have accumulated since. With Clerides resuming power, our Party resumed its place in opposition. Our Congress must evaluate whether we are playing our role correctly as the main opposition party. The Central Committee believes we have responded correctly, in exercising austere but documented and creative opposition. At the same time we have spared no effort in avoiding confrontation and conflict in our internal front.

I will remind you that the Party's Political Bureau at its first meeting after the Clerides election issued an announcement in which it stressed the readiness of AKEL to exercise constructive opposition and to co-operate with everyone to avoid polarisation. The same was declared a few days later by the plenary of AKEL's Central Committee

We also noted that the main responsibility for maintaining internal unity in the country, for avoiding polarisation, for meritocracy and for a just administration lie with the government.

We moved within the framework of our declarations. We have been strict with the government but always constructive. In our criticism we have carefully and consciously avoided demagogic characterisations and extremities. We exercised fair criticism for wrongful actions and decisions of the government, and always projected counter proposals and suggestions aimed at being of assistance in reaching the correct solutions and correcting the wrong ones.

Despite AKEL's positive stance, internal unity in the country is constantly tested. The responsibility for this lies entirely with the government. On the Cyprus problem decisions have been taken on important issues, such as the new CBM's, the negotiations of October

1994, and the secret talks in London which went ahead despite the disagreement of the majority of the National Council and even without the Council's knowledge. Essential dialogue with the opposition does not exist, neither is it sought by the government. The National Council has been undermined as an institution. The Council, as a rule is convened after decisions have been taken unilaterally by the President, who does not hesitate to violate even unanimous decisions of the National Council - as in the case of the reply to the recent American, so-called, questionnaire.

The case of the "62" caused a serious confrontation in our internal front. The President and the Democratic Rally have been confronted by the whole remaining political spectrum and the vast majority of the people. Was it the opposition that caused the trouble? Was it not the government's decision to vindicate the "62" and through them the coup. And even before the reactions calmed down, the feeling of our betrayed people was being provoked once again. The government decided to re-establish the "62" in their positions in the public service causing new intense confrontation.

It is with the blessings and the encouragement of the government that talk of Grivas has resurfaced and efforts are being made to turn the leader of EOKA B into a hero and a saint. Let us remind everybody of the official presence at the despicable symposium about Grivas and all that followed with the flagrant distortion of historical truth. Was this the fault of the opposition?

The government's declarations regarding meritocracy, just administration and equitable treatment remained words without deeds. Since February 1993 we have witnessed an orgy of favouritism on the part of the parties constituting the government, of party criteria prevailing in the state mechanisms reminiscent of the Giorgatzis era, and a maladministration full of scandals, lack of planning and co-ordination.

Under attack are the democratic institutions, which are being sacrificed in favour of the joint government's motives and interests, and they are being transformed into a means of satisfying their supporters, and meeting their electoral promises rather than being institutions serving common welfare and progress. We remind everybody of the scandalous distribution by the governing parties of positions on the Boards of semi-state organisations and School Authorities.

Crime in Cyprus has reached unprecedented dimensions in the previous ten years. Organised crime connected with specific economic interests has appeared. The problem of drugs and corruption is also reaching new dimensions. The government appears unable to control and face the situation. And it is further weakened because of its approach towards the police where promotions and transfers are now based on petty-party criteria. This has caused turmoil in the police force and reduced to a large extent its effectiveness. Faced with this situation the government resorts to attempts to impress public opinion in order to reverse the justified negative impressions against it. And in many cases these attempts end up in total fiasco with the case of EKAS being the best example.

In the last few years we have also seen an unprecedented climax in the conflict regarding labour relations which again is not unrelated to government policy. The socio-economic policy of the government, moving within the framework of neo-conservatism, encourages OEB's attack against the working people, as a result of which the confrontation is escalating. In some cases the government itself, being a major employer, provokes confrontation with the hasty and incorrect actions and declarations. For example, by the government's intention to prohibit the right to strike and to freeze public sector salaries.

All the above can be characterised as the «achievements» of the present government. Actions, the majority of which were uncalled for and certainly totally unjustified. Autarchic actions and decisions, mentality and policy that cause stress to our internal front, confrontation and frictions that seriously test unity, and objectively weaken our people's resistance to foreign occupation.

The opposition, as we understand its role, cannot be silent and tolerate this situation for the sake of a false unity and a tranquillity which at the end will be at the expense of the people, at the expense of Cyprus and its cause.

Comrades,

Twenty-one years after the treacherous coup and the Turkish invasion the Cyprus problem remains unsolved. Not only has no progress been made towards a just, viable and mutually acceptable solution of the problem, but on the contrary AKEL believes that the distance from a final partition of Cyprus is getting smaller.

This belief is not arbitrary. It is based on the cold analysis of developments and facts. It does not aim at spreading disappointment but at activating everybody towards the right direction, for we believe that it is still possible to prevent partition and save our homeland.

We want to be clear from the very beginning. The responsibility for prolonging the Cyprus problem lies with Ankara and the occupying regime of Denktash. And as long as Ankara and Denktash are not pressurised, are not convinced and do not decide to abandon their partitionist policy, a just, correct and viable solution of the Cyprus problem cannot be found. AKEL attributes responsibility for this to the permanent members of the Security Council, particularly the Americans and British, because they continue to appear unwilling to support the adoption of measures which would oblige Turkey to come into line with UN resolutions. The policy of equal distancing, that even the UN follows in certain cases, encourages Ankara's and Mr Denktash's intransigence and does not help to solve the Cyprus problem. We would also like to see a more decisive and clearer position from the European Union and other international organisations, so that Turkey should experience the cost of violating international law.

In assessing the foreign responsibilities we must not fail to examine our own responsibilities as well. Because at the end of the day, for the policy of the foreigners the decision is taken by others. For our policy, however, it is us that decide, and it is us that bear the cost of wrong decisions, actions and omissions.

For the current situation of the Cyprus problem we also attribute a share of responsibility to the government of Mr Clerides which has followed a contradictory and erroneous policy, improvising many times, serving the interest of the joint government and of equilibrium in the Democratic Rally, and hunting impressions.

The refusal to utilise UN Resolution 789 has been a terrible mistake. We do not claim that 789 would definitely solve the Cyprus problem. After many years, however, and following co-ordinated efforts of the government and the National Council a favourable opportunity presented itself to us, which we had a duty and obligation to utilise to the greatest possible extent. Instead we sacrificed it at the altar of party expediencies.

Naturally the vacuum that appeared was filled in by other initiatives that distanced further the substance of the UN resolutions. We were led into the adventure of the new package of CBMs, which, because of its content, was deemed by AKEL as one-sided, one that entailed dangers and that in essence was inapplicable. In spite of the fact that the CBMs have not been promoted further, the fact that the official Greek Cypriot side has accepted them will always stand before us.

The CBMs adventure was followed by the unofficial consultations of October 1994 and the London secret talks of May 1995. During those consultations the official Greek Cypriot side left the message that, under certain circumstances, it was ready to abandon the demand for a single sovereignty. We consider this approach extremely dangerous for the unity of the Cypriot state and, in the long run, for the existence of the Republic of Cyprus.

Another case of abandoning the unanimous decisions and unanimous proposals of the National Council is the scandalous unilateral declaration by the President of the Republic

with regards to NATO guarantees to the Republic of Cyprus!

The May secret talks took place under the auspices of the USA and for the first time the Cyprus problem was discussed outside the UN framework. AKEL expresses deep concern about these developments and warns that we are being led to an unacceptable compromise, that in essence will be outside the UN resolutions and the high-level agreements.

While the impasse on the Cyprus problem persists, it seems that backstage manoeuvres are taking place, but we are not sure that they are correctly based or whether they are aimed in the correct direction. The government observes from a distance as a passive viewer and is expecting the revival of the US initiative. It cannot be excluded that, when and if this initiative is revived, we will face unhappy surprises. Such a course of events should not startle us, since we have left the initiative to third countries, and we stubbornly refuse, as a government, to prompt, with our own actions, developments in the right direction.

What should be done?

To curb the negative tendency of these developments and to create the preconditions for a just, viable and correct solution, AKEL proposes the following:-

To restore the credibility and effectiveness of the National Council as the collective body for handling the Cyprus problem. To put an end to the continuous lack of consideration for the decisions of the National Council by the President of the Republic, leading to the degradation of that body and rendering it useless.

The National Council should reiterate the principles for the solution of the Cyprus problem as these are included in UN resolutions and high level agreements, and as these have been coded in the unanimous proposals of the Greek Cypriot side since January 1989. We should reiterate that the sovereignty of the future federal Republic of Cyprus will be one and indivisible. On the basis of this reconfirmation an international campaign should be started by the Government, the House of Representatives, the political leadership and all organised groups to promote a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem. An important role in this campaign can be played by Cypriots abroad, no matter where they live, and by their organisations, which, unfortunately, are not used to their full and effective strength by the government.

An end must be put to the passive observance of initiatives undertaken by third parties, and our side should take over the initiation of action. At the same time, initiatives like the Russian one, that are placed within the framework of the UN and strengthen its role, should be supported and utilised.

The Cyprus problem should be brought back into the framework of the United Nations on the correct basis of seeking a solution - which is the UN resolutions and the high level agreements.

It should be pointed out to the UN Secretary-General and the permanent members of the Security Council, that a new intercommunal dialogue can be resumed if the Turkish side abandons its demands for separate sovereignty, and accepts the relevant sovereignty resolutions of the Security Council. The permanent members of the Security Council, and particularly the USA and the UK, should exercise their influence on Turkey towards this direction.

It should be indicated to the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council that any implementation of advanced CBM's can make sense only if there is progress on the substance of the Cyprus problem.

While the Cyprus problem presents today a very worrying image, internally the voices opposing the federal solution are increasing. Although informal voices are heard, supporting a solution of two states with nationally pure populations, increasingly there is talk for a military solution. Legions are appearing which aspire, so to speak, to military victories, reviving nationalism-chauvinism. From the rostrum of the 18th Congress we address a warning to the Cypriot people that these are recipes for complete destruction, disguised by nice sounding slogans, covered under the pretext of love for the homeland and Greece. Let us remember where similar slogans and situations led us in the pre-1974 period. Let us not allow any hot-headed people to re-create that situation because in such a case Cyprus will be destroyed.

We place the government before its heavy responsibility because the anti-federalist outburst, the exaltation of nationalism-chauvinism, the flirting with military options on the one hand, and the readiness of some people to accept a solution of two states on the other, are phenomena not irrelevant to the government's contradictory policy. On the contrary it is this policy that cultivates and nurtures them. If the government does not revise its policy and choices, the time will come when it will harvest the storms from the winds it has sown, but then it will be too late for all of us.

Lately the debates on the issue of defence have been reactivated. Once again we declare that AKEL is unconditionally in favour of the defence of the Cyprus Republic, so that in the untoward event of a new offensive being launched by the Turks, we will be able to defend ourselves long enough for the international factor to mobilise.

AKEL approaches the issues of defence precisely within the framework of the word «defence» and it rejects any thought or insinuation of aggressive action which we believe will lead to definite catastrophe.

It is precisely within the framework of defence that we support the co-operation with Greece with which we do not even exclude the signing of a defence treaty although we believe that the existing treaties already cover the issue of co-operation on defence between Cyprus and Greece.

Defence is not an end in itself - it cannot substitute for the deliberations for a peaceful solution to the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, and it has to be conducted in such a way as to serve the declared aim of finding a solution through negotiations, and it is not to create obstacles to the unanimously declared policy of rapprochement.

Defence should take into account the capabilities of the economy, because the possible undermining of the country's economic robustness will have serious negative implications on our ability to resist in the wider sense.

AKEL strongly disagrees with the exaggerations on the issues of defence which are sending a message of militarisation of the Cyprus problem, of seeking a military solution, and which cultivate relevant illusions for such a solution among the people. AKEL also opposes the accession of Cyprus in Greece's defensive area because while this does not objectively offer more security as such, it sends, at the same time, the wrong message which undermines the independent entity of the Cypriot state and can possibly lead to undesirable complications.

AKEL opposes the way the government handles the defence issue, which like other aspects of its policy, it utilises for petty party interests, indifferent to the harm and consequences it causes.

Comrades,

The Turkish-Cypriot community lives, today, under difficult conditions. We often hear voices of desperation talking of the real possibility of the community as such disappearing. The escape of Turkish-Cypriot citizens due to many and various socio-economic prob-

lems continues at an unreduced rate. On the contrary the influx of settlers from Turkey is reaching such a magnitude that it threatens not only the Turkish-Cypriot community, but also distorts the demographic character of the island. The invasion and occupation have certainly not solved the problems of the Turkish-Cypriot community nor have they created the paradise that Denktash and his chauvinist supporters promised. The occupying regime has, however, created a structure and a feeling of statehood which we must not ignore in the sense that it affects the way of thinking even of our progressive Turkish-Cypriot compatriots, who otherwise sincerely wish the reunification of Cyprus under the roof of a federation. This was made even more obvious during the last few years when we had the so called coalition governments in which the Republican Turkish Party was participating.

From the floor of the 18th Congress we send our Turkish-Cypriot compatriots a message of friendship, respect and co-operation, and we assure them that AKEL will always consistently support its declared principles regarding the solution of the Cyprus problem and the peaceful cohabitation of the two communities.

Once again we stress that in our common homeland there is room for us to live together enjoying as free people the rights and freedoms that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights foresees for all people.

Once again we stress that the solution of the Cyprus problem must safeguard the rights of both Cypriot communities. This can easily be achieved without meaning that safeguarding the rights of Greek-Cypriots will be at the expense of the rights of the Turkish-Cypriots and vice-versa.

Once again we re-assure both our Turkish-Cypriot compatriots as well as each and every Cypriot that AKEL will continue to be at war with the nationalism and chauvinism which have caused our country and our people so much harm.

Each community can, and must, preserve and develop those particular characteristics which determine it either as Greek-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot. At the same time we have the patriotic duty and obligation to our common homeland and our future generations to support and develop all those things that unite us, all those things that define us as Cypriots, and first and foremost our common achievement, the independent Republic of Cyprus.

Before completing my reference to the Cyprus problem and the issues directly related to it, I believe it is necessary to reiterate from the 18th Congress floor the basic principles for the solution of the Cyprus problem which AKEL demands without deviation.

The solution of the Cyprus problem must provide for -

The restoration and respect for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The sovereignty of the independent Republic of Cyprus must be single and indivisible which also applies to its international entity as a nation and its citizenship.

The withdrawal of Turkish occupation forces and all foreign military forces, and the demilitarisation of Cyprus.

The withdrawal of settlers and the restoration of the demographic composition of the people of Cyprus which is dangerously being distorted, in our days, by massive settlement.

The restoration and respect of human rights and basic freedoms of Cypriot citizens. It is highly important to safeguard the right of all refugees to return and to secure the right of free movement, settlement and property.

The creation of a federal, bicomunal, biregional, non-aligned Republic of Cyprus on the basis of internationally accepted principles and regulations that rule the functioning of federal states.

The safeguarding of wider, reliable international guarantees within the UN framework which will exclude the rights of unilateral intervention.

The creation of conditions of security for all its citizens without exemption.

The Cyprus problem must be solved peacefully, through meaningful negotiations and on the basis of the principles of the UN Charter, the resolutions and decisions of the International Organisations and the high-level agreements of 1977 and 1979.

Irrespective of the course for the solution of the Cyprus problem, priority must be given to determining the fate of the missing people and the safeguarding of the rights of our enclaves. We call upon the UN to show more sensitivity in the promotion of these two humanitarian issues.

Comrades,

The character and the mission of our Party, as the Party representing the interests of the working people of Cyprus, determines our vanguard role and the necessity for continuous and essential interference in the socio-economic activity. For our Party, a robust and socially oriented economy constitutes on the one hand an important weapon in the struggles of our people for justice and on the other a guarantee of social justice.

Is there anyone however, who can today prove with convincing and tangible arguments that the form of economic development followed by the Right is in line and is oriented towards the needs of the popular masses which constitute the vast majority of the people of Cyprus?

Would anyone be able to claim that the government's economic policy has led to a fairer distribution and redistribution of the national income? Or even that the government's economic policy has led to a fairer distribution of the tax burden?

Unfortunately for the people and the workers no one can claim such a thing. Unfortunately, for the first time since the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, the policy of a mixed economy, followed until recently, has been abandoned by the present government.

What is currently followed and implemented is a faithful and blind copy of the neo-liberal, conservative, socio-economic policy followed by Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain.

The slogan of the Joint Government for less state participation does not target only state enterprises and semi-state organisations but also the health sector, the social allowances, the provisions and, in particular, development. The budget figures that the government submitted over the last few years indicate very convincingly that the relevant expenditure for public plans and programmes has either stagnated or been significantly reduced.

The reduction in social provisions and other allowances is accompanied by cuts in expenditure for culture (recently the Minister of Education has publicly protested about it) and cuts in even more sensitive sectors such as education, health and development. At the same time that the proposal for the General Health scheme is being delayed, the government proceeded with the anti-popular measure of compulsory payment for medication at the hospitals. At the same time free health provision for the people is being gradually abolished as the income criteria are redefined in such a way that makes it impossible for the vast majority of the people to qualify for their entitlement.

Comrades,

Our Party has always approved of development projects as the most fundamental factor of the general economic development. Unfortunately, the neo-conservative economic policy of the government has not left development unaffected, since for the first time in many years, stagnation is being observed, as well as a relative reduction of funds at a

time when the needs for construction of important development projects are constantly increasing.

The slogan for less state involvement appears to have a specific content. Under the pretext of inefficiencies or of the harmonisation with the European «model establishment», the joint government has already taken decisions for certain privatisations, such as the Larnaca marina and certain CYTA (telecommunications) services. At the same time, the privatisation of many other public utility organisations is being attempted, either in part or as a whole. The government of President Clerides consciously undermines the Department of Public Works, aiming at gradually rendering it useless while it already plans the sell-off of ports and the new Larnaca airport. Cyprus Airways is also a permanent candidate for privatisation and that is why it is being attacked both internally and externally.

If we compare our country's public and mixed sector to that of other countries, even those of the European Union, we find that we have very weak state participation and that very little exists for privatisation. The public welfare organisations have significantly contributed to our country's social and economic development, and it is for this reason that even the most distant areas of Cyprus enjoy electricity, telephone and water supplies. What is necessary in this case is not the sell-out of the property of the people of Cyprus to private capital, but the adoption of measures for cleansing, modernising and improvement of the effectiveness and productivity of the semi-state and other public utility organisations.

Neither the monetary system, nor price control policy have escaped the conservative economic policy of the joint government. In the name of liberalisation the abolition of all price controls is being attempted, resulting in a surge in inflation and the erosion of our products' competitiveness, with a direct negative impact on consumers, on producers and on exports. At the same time the freeing of interest rates is being attempted, though according to scientific studies, they will rise higher with very negative repercussions, both on the wide popular masses as well as on the competitiveness of the Cypriot economy.

AKEL will not concede to the policy of liberalisation which appears to be tailor made for capitalism in Cyprus.

Comrades,

The Cypriot economy has to adjust to the conditions of the new international economic environment.

The complete dependence on the international, and in particular the European economy, as well as the European choice, is expected to create new and acute antagonistic conditions for our economy.

Unfortunately, President Clerides' government, in addition to the incomplete preparation of our economy, failed to work out a strategic plan of modernisation and smooth adjustment of our economy to the new facts.

Instead of this it continues to beautify situations and facts in the same way that it continues to interpret and implement, at wish and selectively, the European «model establishment». At the same time, exploiting the ignorance of these issues by the majority of the people, it proceeds, hand in hand with the employers, to promote conservative anti-popular measures.

The co-ordinated attacks against COLA and the other gains of the working people, the government's and employers' insistence on freezing salaries and wage, the unacceptable government proposal to prohibit strikes in vital sectors of the economy which might lead to the full prohibition of the right to strike, the unacceptable proposal for the unified state payroll, the adoption by the government of IMF anti-labour proposals, and the attempts to dissolve the Planning Bureau disregarding its positive role and the opinion of the inter-

ested parties, constitute a few of the deeds of an anti-popular, anti-worker and anti-trade-unionist policy pursued by the Right.

And, although nobody can any longer dispute the fact that this socio-economic policy is full of all those elements that constitute the Thatcherite neo-conservative model, our government unsuccessfully attempts to present it as a popular policy veiled by a few positive actions such as the social pension, the write-off of refugee debts and the establishment of a body for the equitable distribution of the financial burden.

AKEL, of course, does not hesitate to salute and express its pleasure at these actions, although some of them were proposed by previous governments. Still, we unequivocally declare that we are eager to welcome more such positive actions.

Comrades,

The co-ordinated attacks of the employers' organisations against COLA and the other achievements of the working people make necessary, more than ever, the rallying of the working people to the trade union movement and a unity of action of the trade union movement, which, under the circumstances, constitute not only a necessity but also an obligation.

To face up to the anti-popular policy of the employers and the government makes it necessary, more than ever, to build a wide front of working people irrespective of ideological positions and on the basis of defending their rights and past gains against the attacks of capitalism.

AKEL's role is in the vanguard of this front and the Cypriot people look up to us as the national political force with a convincing pro-popular alternative proposal.

Comrades,

For some months we have been debating within the Party (on the basis of the procedures provided by the Party's Constitution and Regulations) our position in relation to Cyprus' accession to the European Union.

The issue of re-examining our position is being discussed publicly as well, with the rest of society, Greek and Turkish Cypriots, because it concerns the whole of our society, and the future of Cyprus and its people as a whole.

I will try, comrades, to briefly answer some views, arguments and questions raised during the pre-congress debate, and to document the view on the need to change the Party's position.

Whatever I mention in answering the views and questions raised, will always be with full respect towards the opposition view.

In the public debate the opinion was put forward that a possible change of the Party's position more or less amounts to violation of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the abandonment of our socialist ideal. That is because the E.U. is dominated by monopolies.

We have to say that this argument is initially correct, identifying the difficulties that the movement will face within the E.U., but it ends with a mechanical and incorrect conclusion. It is an argument that approaches the E.U. statically and offers it permanently to the monopolies, refusing to see things in their dynamic course through the role of left forces and socialist prospect of the E.U. member states. It is clear that under the present conditions, for the vast majority of left-wing forces in Europe, the aim of a progressive and democratic reform of the E.U. which will more and more approach the long term aim of a Europe of the peoples, constitutes, for the foreseeable future at least, the only prospect.

The conclusion is that changing AKEL's position with regard to Cyprus' course of entry to the E.U., under no circumstances means that the Party gives up its long term aims of

qualitative social reform. Our own concept of socialism as approved by the Party's 17th Congress, constitutes our stable social vision for which our Party will continue to fight with consistency.

Some comrades, who have the opposite view, are asking what has changed so that we should change our position?

Why does our position need to be re-examined? Could it be that, all of a sudden, some of us have turned from being fanatically opposed to the E.U. into its supporters, thereby suggesting that we change our position? The reply is certainly NO.

The dialectic examination of reality in Cyprus prior to 1991, political and socio-economic, and its position in the international community of States has led us, always with the interests of Cyprus and its people as our guide, to the position that Cyprus can develop close trade and political relations with the E.U. without it being a member. Cyprus as a non-aligned country could play the role of a bridge between the socialist community, with which it has had very friendly relations, and the E.U., with which it also has had friendly relations. Cyprus could play this role even better within the context of the Common European Home. Within this framework the two worlds, the socialist and the capitalist, could have contributed to a just viable solution for the Cyprus problem.

Since 1991 we have witnessed events that mark the fate of humanity as a whole and, indeed, of little Cyprus. Unfortunately for Cyprus, and for the progressive forces of the planet too, since 1991 the Soviet Union and the socialist community in Europe no longer exist. Cyprus has lost one of its basic supporters in the struggle against occupation and for its independence.

The Non-Aligned Movement has been seriously attacked and has weakened. Despite our opposition, in 1987 the then government agreed to the Customs Union of Cyprus with the EEC. In 1990 the government, with the support of all other political forces except AKEL, submitted an application for entry. Bearing this in mind it appears that the basic question, one of fundamental importance, has changed from a simple yes or a simple no. The question now moves to: is entry possible, how and under what terms and prerequisites will the possible entry be realised.

There is yet one more thing that AKEL has to take into consideration. In recent years, the forces within the Turkish-Cypriot community that wish for a solution to the Cyprus problem, more and more strongly support the view that within the framework of the E.U. it is possible to safeguard the security and rights of the Turkish-Cypriots. These are the changes that have come about, which AKEL must not fail to examine. As a party that is guided by Marxist dialectics, as a party that has its priority the salvation of Cyprus and the positive solution of the existential problem that has tormented it since 1974, AKEL cannot turn its back on developments. Following deep analysis of developments, our Party has come to the conclusion that it is necessary to move away from the negative position towards accession, to a positive position with preconditions. If these preconditions are not fulfilled, we will, at the given moment, again say "no".

AKEL is categorically against the logic of accession at any cost, which can not only neutralise the positive elements which can be utilised, but, at the same time, can create enormous dangers of diversion in a negative direction.

Considering the relationship of the E.U. member states and their support for Turkey, blocking ourselves to the logic of accession, as an aim in itself, may render our own side vulnerable to pressures for concessions on the principles on the Cyprus problem, or even to the freezing of the partitioning status-quo, to the degree that correct and decisive handling does not materialise.

AKEL, by putting above all the freedom of Cyprus, as the first and dominant major issue, considers the political dimension of the course towards accession, and its contribution to the struggle for a just solution of the Cyprus problem. For our Party it is explicit that

its final position on any accession agreement will be formed with the basic criterion to whether this agreement would assist and would not oppose a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of principles. We shall not hesitate to stand up against any procedure or agreement that, according to our opinion, moves in the wrong direction. The content of this agreement with regards to social-economic issues and the degree that the interests of the popular strata are safeguarded, are going to play a decisive role in our final position.

On the basis of the above, the Central Committee has proposed to the whole Party membership that, in the light of new international facts, and with the main guideline being our concern to safeguard the security of the Republic of Cyprus and our people, our Party's present position on the Cyprus-European Union relations should be altered as follows:-

On the precondition that it assists the solution of the Cyprus problem, Cyprus as a whole joins the European Union and that the significant socio-economic achievements of our people are safeguarded, AKEL is ready to consent in favour of Cyprus' accession to the European Union.

This proposal of the Central Committee was put before the Party membership. The opposite view, which supports that the Party's position should remain unaltered, was also put before the Party membership.

Following a free debate 65.24% of the Party members voted in favour of the Central Committee proposal, 28.47% against and 6.29% abstained.

This result is set in front of the 18th Congress for the delegates to bear in mind. The Congress of course has the last word. Whatever the Congress decision will be on this, admittedly not easy, issue, the whole process has once again confirmed most convincingly AKEL's commitment to democracy. When we say that the Party members are masters in their own Party this is what we mean. There is the proof.

Additionally we unanimously declare that after the Congress no majority or minority will exist.

What will exist will be the 18th Congress decision. There will be no winners or losers. There will be only winners. And winners shall be all members of AKEL who in unison will collectively work for the implementation of the Congress decision. So, once more, winner and triumphant will be the honoured AKEL.

Comrades,

The parliamentary election of 1996 are not far away. In these elections the forces of the joint government will clash with the opposition forces. The conservative forces that lead society backwards will clash with the forces of democracy and progress that are the brakes to backwardness and that can lead the society forward again.

The joint government pursues a deadlock policy on the Cyprus problem. It destroys democratic institutions and revives the ghosts of EOKA B and Grivas. It is facilitating life for big employers and provides them with the weapons to fight the working and middle strata people's achievements. Provocatively repeating the word meritocracy, it tears apart the dignity of citizens by asking them to pray to the joint government in order to be able to claim a position, a promotion, a transfer, or a solution to a simple problem. Even the people it is persecuting, are asked to pray in front of it in order to solve their problem which it has created itself in the first place.

Some people, presenting themselves as the heirs of Makarios and claiming the spectrum of the democratic centre for themselves, are becoming accessories to the course of tarnishing the Greek-Cypriot Leader's name by sharing in government posts. The name and deeds of Makarios are heard less and less and his stature is constantly decreasing,

from the present day Procrustean, so that it becomes as small as Grivas', the destroyer of Cyprus.

It is for all these reasons that those who believed in Makarios and his deeds feel, like all democratic citizens, to be suffocating under the current administration and look for a way out.

In today's Cyprus, the Cyprus of impasses of the right and extreme right there is only one force which the working people, the middle strata, the intellectuals, the democratic forces of Makarios, can look up to. This force is AKEL-LEFT-NEW FORCES. Why AKEL? AKEL is the great force of opposition that fights with all means available - for Cyprus and democracy - for the dignity of the Cypriot citizen.

AKEL defends with consistency the principle of solving the Cyprus problem and fights continuously both against the Turkish occupation and intransigence, and against chauvinism wherever it comes from.

AKEL is in the vanguard of the struggle to defend the democratic institutions, against the distortion of historical truth, against forgetfulness of the historical memories, against the restoration of EOKA B and against turning its leader Grivas into a «hero». AKEL with constancy defends the name, the struggles and the deeds of Makarios. AKEL and the Left daily lead the struggle against the arbitrariness of big capital and in the defence of the rights of the working people and wider popular strata.

AKEL-LEFT-NEW FORCES have spoken at Parliament with new words - responsible, serious, militant and documented.

AKEL is the party which, despite its 70 years of age, is the youngest and most contemporary Party in the country. This AKEL is the national political force that today expresses the desires and expectations of each Cypriot democrat.

It is the force that can give and will give hope again to Cyprus and its people.

Because a lot of people further than what we call «traditional left» look up to AKEL, we want these people to find their place and express themselves within the ballot papers of AKEL-LEFT-NEW FORCES in the coming Parliamentary general elections. A place in the party's ballot papers exist for people of the centre who accept the Party's position on our national issue, on issues of internal administration and socio-economic policy and are ready to fight with us inside and outside of Parliament for the fulfilment of the serious pan-democratic duties ahead of us.

The 18th Congress will discuss, and I am sure will approve of, the policy of further widening of the ballot lists (to non-party candidates). It also has a duty to mandate the Party to immediately set all the forces of the popular movement in battle positions for the huge electoral fight coming up.

The aim of the party in the coming parliamentary elections is not only to preserve but also to exceed the percentage of voters it secured in 1991. Another aim of the opposition forces should be that their total representation in Parliament reaches and exceeds 50% of Parliamentary seats. This aim is certainly difficult but not unattainable.

These forces, whatever their percentages in the parliamentary elections, have a duty, right after the elections to inaugurate an intensive democratic and open-minded dialogue which will have as its basic objective the change that the country so much needs.

The people expects the forces of the democratic progressive spectrum, along with personalities and organised groups outside Parliament, to end up with common positions on the Cyprus problem, internal administration and economic and social policy.

The people expect that all these forces will create the wide front of change which will lead to the election of a President for the Republic. A President who, together with these forces, will give back hope to Cyprus and its people.

This duty is of extreme importance. I would dare describe it as a duty of historic importance, for the fulfilment of which personal and party ambitions and calculations must be set aside.

From the podium of the 18th Congress I am mandated to re-affirm to all democratic forces, to the whole of the people of Cyprus, that AKEL is going to work hard, with consistency and respect towards the will of the people in order to achieve this aim.

AKEL is going to respect fully the rest of the democratic forces and shall work with them on an equal footing to shape a Front of change and for change. Within this framework and always with the interest of the country above any party interests, and for its contribution to be creative and effective in practice, AKEL is going to claim its own share of participation in the country's administration.

Comrades,

I will finish my introductory speech to the Congress by continuing from where I began my speech to the 17th Congress of our party exactly five years ago.

I remind you that then we gave the example of the party as a ship which began its journey in 1926 destined for the calm port of a truly independent, free Cyprus, a Cyprus of socialism, equality, peace and brotherhood of all its citizens - Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins.

On our journey we faced many difficulties and managed to overcome them. In 1990 we talked about whether we would allow our ship to sink, as some former captains wanted, because our ship was letting in a bit of water, or whether we would repair its few imperfections and promptly start forwards again full speed. You will remember that all of us, crew and captains, ordinary passengers, members and cadres, workers and ordinary people decided that the structure of the ship is strong because it was built with material damped with lots of sweat and blood, and we do not have the right to leave it helpless to the winds.

We told five or six persons to get off if they wanted and they did just that. We stayed, worked hard in unison and repaired it, we renewed it and gave it a modern guiding system which pointed it towards freedom, democracy and humanitarian socialism, we steadied its course and we set off. Seventy years have passed by and the ship looks brand new, as if it was launched only yesterday.

Our work has been appreciated. On our way we also took others along with us, many thousands of new passengers, which, in percentage terms amounts to 4.5 per cent more than before. And we continued on our great journey. Half way through on our journey we came up against a tremendous storm and huge obstacles which a catastrophic earthquake had caused in the big country. Some people on the outside were saying that the tremendous waves would drown us, that the obstacles would crush us. We did not give up. We took a deep breath, rowed with all our strength and the structure of the boat survived intact and it continues its honourable course.

This achievement of ours is valued not only by every honest person of our country but also internationally. This appreciation is expressed by the presence here today of many representatives of 42 communist, socialist and progressive parties from 33 countries from all corners of our globe.

We warmly thank them and we assure them that we shall honour their expectations and the trust which they have in us.

Comrades,

From the time we all together renewed our boat we have managed to overcome great

ordeals and tribulations because we have guided it in united, captains, crew and the people with unshakeable faith in its final destination.

Our friends are proud of this unity whilst our opponents are envious of it. That is why our opponents every now and then imagine quarrels and conflicts between us. Their unbridled imagination sometimes dreams of quarrels between Christofias and Christou, other times between Katsourides and Christou, between Christofias and Katsourides and so forth. We say to them in the most official way from this very rostrum not to worry at all. We shall not do them that favour. We do not owe them anything. We have an open account with the workers, with the people. We owe only to them. And we pay off our debt daily with admirable ideological and political unity. For the sake of the people and our country we are and shall remain one voice, the voice which passes through the barbed wire and reaches as far as Kerynia, Karpasia and Morphou (NOTE: occupied towns), a voice which goes far and away from the borders of our island and is heard loudly everywhere all over our planet. We are a powerful fist made of steel which breaks down the walls of separation and hatred, which will break the right-wing establishments and will bring the change which shall give hope once again to Cyprus and our people.

Those that do not sleep, waiting for the smashing and sinking of our boat will remain sleepless for the rest of their life. The boat is guarded by the work-hardened hands of the old people, those that first built it, the veterans who are here amongst us today and also those that have passed away, who we bow our heads to in respect.

It is also guarded however by the young people who have taken, in their own hands, the baton from the older comrades and who now hold high the glorious flags stained in red from the honoured blood and they hold them even higher, waving them in the fresh wind of freedom, peace, democracy and socialism.

Next year we shall celebrate in a glorious manner the 70 years of honourable AKEL together with the veteran and young fighters, workers and peasants, scientists, intellectuals and middle strata, the people, because this party is not the seed of fortune, it is the creator of a new life.

- Forward therefore every one together even though our road is difficult
- Forward in the struggle for the precious freedom
- Long live peace, democracy and socialism
- Long live Marxism-Leninism and International Solidarity
- Long live the honourable AKEL
- Long live Cyprus and its unflinching people.

POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE 18TH CONGRESS OF AKEL

The 18th Congress of AKEL that was convened in Nicosia from 16 to 19 November, 1995, has taken particular importance due to the specific local and international conditions in which it was held.

The 18th Congress of AKEL was the culmination of a many-months-long pre-congressional work, of dialogue and deep search both inside the Party and in public, that continued in the Congress itself.

The delegates discussed expressing freely and democratically their will and adopted the introductory speech of the General Secretary of the C.C. of AKEL, the "Thesis for the Congress", "the Proposal to review AKEL's position regarding the accession of Cyprus to the European Union", the "Report of the Central Control Committee" and the "Report on the Finances of the C.C. of the Party". The Congress discussed and adopted certain amendments to the Party Constitution and Regulations of functioning and elected the new Central Committee and Central Control Committee of AKEL.

Concluding its procedures the 18th Congress discussed and adopted the following political resolution that defines the main guidelines of the Party's policy up to the next Congress.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. The 18th Congress of AKEL evaluates the developments that led to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the community of socialist countries in East Europe to be negative for the whole of humanity. The evaluations of the course and contribution of "existing socialism" as well as of the necessity to renew socialism with its further democratization, made by our Party at its 17th Congress, were correct and are true also today. Unfortunately, the effort to renew socialism failed.

When the necessity of democratisation and modernization of the concrete model of socialist building was understood by the leadership of the communist parties which were in power and particularly by the CPSU, the attempt which was undertaken to achieve this target was without any method and planning. In the process of perestroika basic principles were violated, the foundations of the socialist idea were undermined, and the role of the state and the Party were undermined. Faults and omissions were committed while such contradictions and conflicts were caused which led the whole attempt to failure. The external interventions also played important destabilizing role. The facts have proved that even some of the leaders who undertook the task of renewing socialism had ceased essentially to believe in socialism. Some of them had even acted consciously to undermine socialism and contributed to its collapse. In the end, instead of renewing socialism in Eastern Europe they contributed to having today a resurrection of capitalism and worse so in its most primitive and barbaric version.

2. The failure of the specific "model" to build socialism does not constitute a failure of the socialist idea. Socialism was born out of the objective necessity for progress of the human society, that is found in continuous motion towards higher forms of social organization. The deadlocks and the exploitative nature of capitalism recreate the socialist idea and the need to build a socialist society. Socialism identifies with the ideals of social justice, real freedom and essential democracy. That is why it cannot depart from the stage of history.

The future of humanity is not and cannot be a society of exploitation, oppression, inequality and injustice. The future of humanity is with socialism, social justice, democracy and the humanism that is included in socialism.

3. The political forces that are carriers of the socialist idea and socialist practice are not outdated by history and developments but on the contrary they are called upon to play again a vanguard role, projecting through the struggle for popular rights their own alternative. From this point of view they are tantamount to the present and future.

The 18th Congress of AKEL greets the forces that build socialist societies in their countries and expresses the Party's internationalist solidarity with the peoples of these countries. AKEL also welcomes the fact that left progressive forces have come to power in countries of the former socialist community, as well as the significant strengthening of some others.

The 18th Congress greets the socialist forces and parties that under unfavourable conditions struggle against exploitation and oppression for the prevalence of socialist ideals and expresses to all forces its stable internationalist solidarity.

4. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and of the community of socialist countries in Europe the so called new world order prevailed. The new world order is based on the right of the strongest power that is to say of the United States and their close allies and serves their interests. The UNO is virtually under the guidance of the USA. The inter-imperialist contradictions between the centres of capitalism are intensifying again. The struggle for spheres of influence takes on new dimensions. At the same time, a number of new hot-beds of armed confrontation have appeared while old conflicts re-emerge. The revival of nationalism and chauvinism as well as the spreading of religious fanaticism give new dimensions of tragedy to hot-beds of confrontation and threaten with yet bigger and more destructive explosions. The gap between the industrially developed countries and the rest of the world is growing and deepening. The environmental and ecological problems created by the unrestrained thirst for easy profit become more acute.

5. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and of the socialist community in Europe, small struggling peoples like the people of Cyprus, lost a very important support in their struggle. As time goes by and as the present day world supremacists become more cynical, so does this loss become even more evident.

A concrete order has been formed in the world. The socialist, left, progressive forces cannot accept it and compromise with it. The only available option is the struggle against the new order and all that it means. The struggle for the protection of universal principles and values such as essential democracy, human rights in practice and not on paper, national independence, social justice, human dignity and progress.

AKEL believes that for the successful tackling of the so-called new order, the links, common search, cooperation and coordination of the left, progressive and socialist parties on an international level is necessary. This conviction led to the organization of the international symposium of October 1991 on "Socialism as an Ideology and the Role of the Left at the Threshold of the 21st Century" as well as the international meeting held in Larnaca in December 1994 on "The Need for Common Action of the Left, Progressive and Patriotic Forces to Face the New Situation". It is also necessary to strengthen internationalist solidarity which must take the form of concrete initiatives.

The 18th Congress mandates the Party the duty to take its share of the responsibility participating in initiatives undertaken by others and promoting its own initiatives to renew the ties and coordination of action of the progressive socialist forces on a regional and international scale.

6. The new world situation has also affected negatively the Non-Aligned Movement. In addition, internal contradictions within the movement itself as well as the effort for its manipulation by large Western forces and efforts for its capture by several centres of Islam,

have weakened the Non-Aligned Movement which, today plays a diminished role in international affairs.

In the ranks of the Non-Aligned Movement, there exist forces which resist the attempts of its manipulation, division or/and self-dissolution. Forces exist which think and work for the renewal of the movement, its modernization and the new role which it can and must play especially as regards the defence of the countries of the so-called South against their being robbed by the imperialist forces and the fight against poverty, misery, diseases and the bloody conflicts which torment these countries. AKEL believes in the Non-Aligned Movement and its potential to play a balancing role, a role of political and social justice in today's world.

7. The 18th Congress of AKEL considers any thoughts, made both inside and outside the Government, to distance Cyprus from the Non-Aligned Movement, under the pretext of Cyprus' course of accession to the European Union, to be extremely wrong and dangerous for the interests of Cyprus.

The orientation of Cyprus towards accession to the European Union, and more so in a period when still the European Union does not have a common foreign policy, is not in conflict with the participation of Cyprus in the Non-Aligned Movement; a participation that is necessary, useful and supportive of the struggle we wage.

The 18th Congress of AKEL considers that Cyprus should remain an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement and play a vanguard role in the efforts to modernize it. A possible withdrawal of Cyprus from the Non-Aligned Movement will lead to isolation. For an undefined period of time, Cyprus will be neither non-aligned nor an E.U. member. Such a development would be detrimental to the struggle of defending and completing our independence.

THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

1. The 18th Congress reaffirms the position of the Party on the Cyprus problem which it considers correct. The Cyprus problem is a problem of invasion, occupation and foreign interventions. The treacherous coup d'etat of the Greek Junta and EOKA B' paved the way for the Turkish invasion and occupation. Of course, the problem of normalization of relations between the two communities and the common shaping of the federal structure of the State of Cyprus, is a real one.

The solution of the Cyprus problem should provide for:

a. The restoration and respect of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The sovereignty of the independent Republic of Cyprus should be single and indivisible, in the same way that the international personality and citizenship should be a single one.

b. The withdrawal of the Turkish occupation troops, of all foreign troops and the demilitarization of Cyprus.

c. The withdrawal of the settlers and the restoration of the demographic composition of the people of Cyprus that is today being altered in a dangerous way due to the mass influx of settlers.

d. The restoration and respect of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Cypriot citizens. The safeguarding of the right of all refugees to return to their homes and the safeguarding of the right of free movement, settlement and property are of priority importance.

e. The creation of a federal bi-communal, bi-regional, non-aligned Republic of Cyprus on the basis of internationally accepted principles and rules that govern the functioning of

federal states.

f. The ensuring of extended trustworthy international guarantees within the framework of the UN that would exclude any rights of unilateral intervention.

g. The creation of conditions of security for absolutely all its inhabitants.

The Cyprus problem should be solved by peaceful means, by means of essential negotiations and on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the UN, the UN and its Security Council resolutions as well as the 1977 and 1979 high-level agreements.

Irrespective of the course of solution of the Cyprus problem, priority should be given to the verification of the fate of the missing persons and the safeguarding of the rights of our enclaved compatriots. We appeal to the UN to exhibit more sensitivity to the promotion of these two humanitarian issues.

2. Twenty one years after the treacherous coup d'etat and the Turkish invasion the Cyprus problem remains unsolved and the responsibility lies on Ankara and the Denktash regime. No progress has been achieved towards a just, viable and mutually acceptable solution but, quite the contrary, a dangerous retrogression has been noted in recent years. The 18th Congress ascertains with great concern, that the distance separating us from final partition is constantly narrowing.

For the perpetuation and deterioration of the situation on the Cyprus problem, responsibility also lies on the shoulders of the permanent members of the Security Council, particularly the US and Britain, that continue to appear reluctant to exercise pressure on the Turkish side to comply with the UN resolutions. The UN itself is avoiding to examine and implement alternative ways to promote a solution of the Cyprus problem, as provided by its own resolutions.

Clerides' Government, by pursuing a contradictory and erroneous policy as it has been expressed by the refusal to make use of UN resolution 789, by the acceptance of the CBMs of March 21, 1994, by its behaviour on defence issues - which it uses in a demagogic way to cover up its deadlock policy on the Cyprus problem-, the participation in the unofficial consultations and the secret talks, with the messages of readiness to concede sovereignty and the idea for NATO guarantees, is not free of responsibilities for the present situation in the Cyprus problem.

3. The only acceptable framework of finding a solution to the Cyprus problem is that of the United Nations Organization. Any other initiative should be such as to strengthen the UN efforts and should be based on the UN Resolutions on Cyprus.

The manifested US initiatives go out of the above mentioned framework, supplants and displaces the United Nations, a fact that hides great dangers for the cause of Cyprus. The 18th Congress of AKEL ascertains that the deviation of the Cyprus problem from the framework of the UN is taking place also as a result of the inertia and tolerance of the Cyprus Government, that is passively sitting back in expectation of the outcome of the US initiative.

4. The 18th Congress of AKEL also ascertains with concern that the voices for a solution of two nationally pure states in Cyprus are increasing both outside and inside Cyprus. The lengthy abeyance of the Cyprus problem and the weariness that accompanies it, the ineffectiveness of the procedures tested to date within the framework of the UN and the real security problems, cultivate the ground for a gradual acceptance of the philosophy "land for sovereignty". The danger is real to be led to an unacceptable compromise that is not within the UN resolutions and the high level agreements and that would result to a loose confederation of two practically independent states in Cyprus. Such an outcome would mean the end of the Republic of Cyprus and the beginning of new adventures for our people.

The apparently unyielding "liberating" anti-federal policy, that develops in parallel to

the revival and cultivation of nationalism and chauvinism, leads objectively to the same partitioning result.

5. The 18th Congress of AKEL expresses the conviction that the course towards a partitioning solution can be halted. Preconditions for a just and viable solution that would restore the unity, territorial integrity and independence of the Republic of Cyprus can still be created. In order to achieve the above, the 18th Congress suggests the following:

- To restore the trustworthiness and effectiveness of the National Council as a collective body of handling the Cyprus problem. An end to be put to the continual disregard by the President of the Republic of decisions taken by the National Council, a fact that leads the body to humiliation and renders it useless.

- The National Council should reaffirm the principles of solution of the Cyprus problem as these are included in the UN resolutions and the high level agreements and as they were formulated in the unanimous proposals of the Greek Cypriot side in January 1989. We should reiterate that the sovereignty of the future federal Republic of Cyprus will be one and indivisible. On the basis of this reaffirmation, a world-wide campaign should be undertaken by the Government, the House of Representatives, the political leadership and all organized groups to promote a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem. A significant role in this campaign can be played by the Cypriots living abroad and by their organizations, which the government, unfortunately, is not using adequately and in an effective way.

- Our side should stop staring passively at initiatives taken by third parties and should take up the initiative of moves. At the same time, initiatives like that of Russia, that are placed within the framework of the UN and strengthen its role, should be supported and used correctly.

- The Cyprus problem should be brought back into the framework of the United Nations and to the correct basis of searching for a solution, that is the UN resolutions and the high-level agreements.

- It should be pointed out to the UN Secretary-General and to the permanent members of the Security Council that the intercommunal talks can be resumed if the Turkish side abandons its demands for separate sovereignty and accepts the Security Council resolutions relative to sovereignty. The permanent members of the Security Council and particularly the USA and Britain should exercise their influence on Turkey in this direction.

- It should be pointed out to the UN Secretary-General and to the Security Council that implementation of advanced CBMs is possible only if there is progress on the essence of the Cyprus problem.

6. The 18th Congress reconfirms the position taken by AKEL on defence.

The defence of the Republic of Cyprus is essential in order to face the threat arising from the presence of the Turkish occupation troops as well as any other foreign plot against our homeland. Defence is not an end in itself, nor can it achieve to upset the correlation of forces. Defence ought to be submitted to and serve the strategic target which is the political and peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem.

The defence policy, however, must be within the possibilities of our economy and must not affect the development process.

Any tendency of exaggeration, inconsiderate expenses at the expense of development and excessive emphasis on the significance of defence, leads to the impression of militarization of the Cyprus problem and our economy, cultivates illusions about the feasibility of the military route to solve the Cyprus problem and opposes the commonly acceptable policy of rapprochement between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots.

Regarding the Dogma of a United Defence Area (NOTE: agreed between the governments of Cyprus and Greece) we believe that the rights and the obligation of Greece aris-

ing from the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance give it, to a greater degree the legal right, to support and defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the entire Republic of Cyprus, without, at the same time, giving the impression of undergrading the state entity of the Republic of Cyprus.

7. The Turkish Cypriot community currently lives under difficult conditions and is at a state of search. The various "governmental" patterns that have been tried in the illegal state, have not brought the solution to the economic and social problems faced by the Turkish Cypriot community. In the past five years too, the Turkish Cypriots continued leaving Cyprus in quick rates. On the other hand, the influx of settlers from Turkey has taken on large dimensions, thus the demographic character of the island has changed. The difficulties in the economic sector have led to a further deterioration in the standard of living. These developments, though not leading directly the Turkish Cypriots to stand in favour of a solution of the Cyprus problem and against the lack of solution, they, non-the-less, help them realize that it is the Cyprus problem that lies at the heart of their problem and that only with its correct solution their problems will also be solved.

The 18th Congress of AKEL reiterates its commitment to the policy of rapprochement between the two communities and repeats its proposal for practical rapprochement measures that were approved by the 17th Congress and which were consequently submitted at the meetings of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political leaders in March 1991.

AKEL has the warmest feelings of respect and friendship towards all those Turkish Cypriot compatriots of ours who, like us, desire the peaceful reunification of Cyprus. We consider those Turkish Cypriot compatriots to be fellow fighters in the common struggle and we deem their struggle too, a serious factor in achieving a solution of the Cyprus problem; indeed a factor that no one should underestimate.

The 18th Congress declares that AKEL is going to continue uncompromisingly the struggle against nationalism and chauvinism considering this struggle to be an outmost patriotic task. We shall continue to struggle for the development of feelings of friendship and mutual respect between the two communities and the promotion of cooperation between them. We shall continue promoting the common elements that unite us as Cypriots, being absolutely convinced that this is not in contradiction nor in conflict with the national origin of each community.

Within the above mentioned framework, AKEL considers the continuation of its contacts with the Turkish Cypriot parties as extremely necessary and welcomes every kind of contact between the youth, women, trade union, cultural and other organizations of the two communities as well as between ordinary people.

8. The 18th Congress calls upon the Party to continue the struggle to avert partition and reunite Cyprus and its people. The Congress calls upon all party members to defend and promote everywhere AKEL's policy on the Cyprus problem and to be on a constant alert and readiness to proceed to popular mobilizations if needed, for the promotion of the correct policy of solution of the Cyprus problem and to avert partition.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. Under the Clerides government internal unity in the country is being seriously tested. By their decisions, actions and declarations the ruling circles provoke the public perception of justice and cause unnecessary tensions and conflicts in the country. The attempted restoration and expiation of EOKA B' and Grivas constitute an unacceptable and condemnable policy that undermines the unity of our internal front. The 18th Congress calls on all AKEL members as well as every democrat to continue defending the historical truth, the historical memory and the dignity of this country.

2. With the right-wing coming to power, the implementation of a policy vindicating Grivas and EOKA B', the concluding of the defence dogma with Greece (NOTE: of a united defence area) and its populist demagogic use by the governing circles, we become witnesses of the revival of nationalism and chauvinism. Chauvinism serves the path of partition. It works in the interest of the enemies of Cyprus and prepares ideologically either new extremist actions, or the acceptance of partitionist solutions in the name of national purity.

The 18th Congress of AKEL condemns nationalism and chauvinism and appeals to every Cypriot patriot to be in a continuous and decisive struggle against them.

3. As a result of the struggles of our people and with AKEL's very significant contribution, in Cyprus we had a progressive course of consolidation and broadening of the democratic institutions and values. This development became particularly noticeable during the previous five-years term. The coming of the right-wing to power halted this course. Currently, a policy of restrictions of democratic rights and undermining of democratic institutions and values is being pursued.

The 18th Congress of AKEL condemns these phenomena and struggles for the defence of institutions and values, for the defence of the democratic achievements of our people.

4. Under Clerides' administration, the role of the National Council (NOTE: a consultative body to the President of the Republic, composed of the leaders and representatives of the Parliamentary parties) has been degraded. The fact that the President of the Republic takes significant decisions in absentia of the National Council, or in confrontation with the majority of the body, leads to rendering the institution useless; AKEL considers this institution absolutely necessary for the correct handling of our national issue. AKEL insists on:

- a) the timely, full and continual information to the National Council members before the decision making on serious issues regarding the handling of the Cyprus problem;
- b) the substantial discussion in the National Council;
- c) the adherence to the unanimous National Council decisions;
- d) the respect of the National Council majority's view.

5. The established situation of negative discrimination against left-wing citizens and generally to the detriment of citizens that are not supporters of the parties in the coalition government, has taken large dimensions. Meritocracy is being replaced by the submission of the state mechanism to party interests and the sharing of posts between the parties in the coalition aiming to satisfy party objectives.

The 18th Congress mandates the Party to undertake specific initiatives to defend and consolidate meritocracy, including measures for its institutional safeguarding.

Scandals are a daily phenomenon and mismanagement a permanent characteristic mark of the coalition government. The 18th Congress calls on the Party to go on exposing, criticizing and condemning every case of scandal, mismanagement and inadequate management, having fair management as its permanent aim and goal.

6. The unity of the internal front is tested also due to the socio-economic policies of the government, that is in line with the interests of the big capital. The attempt to destroy the Cost Of Living Adjustment and to undermine other achievements of the working people, the intention to prohibit strikes, the insistence on zero pay rise and the undermining of the institution of collective bargaining are not only aimed against the standard of living of the working people, but cause also frictions and conflicts that weaken our internal front. The 18th Congress calls on the Party to continue the struggle resisting the government and big capital machinations against the working people, their standard of living and their achievements.

7. The citizens of Cyprus follow with concern the rise of criminality that is even taking the form of organized crime. The feeling of insecurity is intensified also by the fact of the weakness exhibited by the government to face the increasing criminality effectively.

We reject every effort of the government to be vested with special powers, a phenomenon that constitutes an attempt to restrict the constitutional and human rights and we condemn the cases of violation of these rights by state organs.

8. The sharp increase of Mass Media, and particularly the electronic is accompanied by the appearance of negative phenomena, like the creation of private information giants that work for specific interests, specific ideologies and policies, that shape public opinion at will. The 18th Congress of AKEL believes that an institutional framework and a deontology code should be defined, that would regulate the various issues linked with the functioning of the Mass Media in cooperation with all bodies involved. The 18th Congress mandates the Party to continue working for real pluralism in the Mass Media and for the control of information quality, for deterring the phenomena of concentration of mass media in the hands of separate, economically powerful individuals. The 18th Congress of AKEL is in favour of supporting and maintaining public Radio and Television, considering its existence necessary for the country.

THE ROLE OF AKEL IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. The 18th Congress considers that AKEL has responded fairly well to and played under Clerides' administration correctly its role of main opposition. AKEL in exercising its opposition role has succeeded in waging strict but constructive criticism, without drifting to mere negation and populism. This policy is appreciated by the people. The 18th Congress calls the Party to continue to act within this framework in the future, making sure that its reactions are timely and its positions well-documented.

2. The 18th Congress of AKEL considers the 1996 parliamentary elections a political battle of a great and multi-sided importance for the country and our Party. The 18th Congress sets as AKEL's strategic aim in the parliamentary elections the largest possible broadening of its influence among the electoral body.

The achievement of this aim would be interpreted as:

- Adoption and support of AKEL's correct policy in the Cyprus problem and the internal issues.

- Reaffirmation of AKEL as the most serious renewed and modernized political force with steadily increasing influence, that, in the given conditions, expresses the interests of the whole people and is established as a national political force.

- Reinforcement of AKEL's role in the consultations, sounding and processes in view of the 1998 Presidential elections.

The aim to broaden the Party's electoral strength will be achieved:

- By consistency to principled positions both on the Cyprus problem and the other issues of concern to the Cypriot citizen and particularly to the working people.

- By resoluteness in the struggle waged by the Left in the multiple fronts of the political, economic and social struggle combined with a political approach, flexibility, farsightedness and broad-mindedness both in our approaches and actions.

- By direct, sincere and continual contact with the people about the problems that worry them, whether these concern social groups or even individuals, though this does not mean that everything is submitted to the service of the individual interests.

- By the further broadening of our approaches and election lists, and continuation of the process of renewal. The broadening of the Party's election lists to include personalities

beyond the traditional Left, honourable people who accept the Party's positions on our national problem, on issues of internal administration and the socio-economic policy, and are prepared to stand by AKEL's side in a series of forthcoming struggles.

The 18th Congress of AKEL calls on all Party members to set in battle lines all Left forces as from the day after the Congress and until the elections to achieve our aim for a new big electoral victory of the Party and the Popular Movement.

3. The municipal elections will also be held in 1996. Having in mind, of course, the peculiarities of the local government elections, the 18th Congress calls on the Party to act in the same spirit, i.e. in the spirit of consistency of our positions and in favour of the people, in the spirit of broadening our approaches and our electoral lists, aiming at the strengthening and upgrading of the institution of Local Authority.

4. The 18th Congress of AKEL defines that the strategic aim of the Party in the 1998 Presidential elections is to free the country from the present right-wing and extreme-right administration and the coming to power of a democratic government that is going to meet the needs of the country and the people, as well as of the struggle which we are engaged in. Of a government that will be characterized by its consistency in the quest of a peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem within the framework of the UN and on the basis of the UN resolutions and the high-level agreements. Of a government that will promote the democratic values and institutions, dialogue and unity, that will support meritocracy and just administration and that will pursue a pro-popular and progressive policy on the internal issues and the socio-economic issues in general. Given the present facts, the democratic change of power should originate from a wide cooperation of progressive and democratic forces and personalities of a broad political and ideological spectrum that would spread from the Left to the edges of the Right.

The 18th Congress mandates the new C.C. of AKEL the duty to work for the establishment of such a broad cooperation that would be in position to bring to the country a democratic change.

Concerning the presidential candidate, AKEL points out the need of such a candidacy, that would attract the broader possible acceptance and would be committed to exercise the Presidency within the framework described above.

The 18th Congress declares that AKEL contests and demands the share of power that rightly belongs to it and is prepared to undertake the relevant responsibility. AKEL does not simply support candidates but also contests a role and a say in the administration of this country, when and if the candidate, it will support, wins the Presidential Elections.

THE PARTY

1. The 18th Congress reaffirms and adopts the conclusions and decisions of the Pan-cyprian Conference on Organizational Issues, held on 9 and 10 July, 1994, and calls on all party members to exert intensive efforts for the materialization of these decisions.

The 18th Congress assesses positively the steps made towards the qualitative upgrading of the organizational situation in the Party. Nonetheless, it assesses that phenomena of indifference, lack of discipline, "paragondism" (NOTE: the prevalence of party personalities in political life, instead of ideological principles) and lack of eagerness for voluntary contribution of work still appear. These phenomena pose obstacles to the Party's smooth functioning, and if not surpassed these could, in the long run, affect negatively the Party's relations with the broader strata of the people and the implementation of AKEL's political objectives.

The 18th Congress notes with emphasis that for the successful conducting of the sig-

nificant electoral and political battles that we shall have to confront, the good functioning of the Party mechanism from the Central Committee to the Local Party Group is a necessary precondition. The Congress mandates the C.C. to study and take the necessary measures to raise the efficiency of all bodies, starting from the Central Committee down to the Bureaux of Local Party Groups, as well as to raise the efficiency of the cadres, particularly of the professional cadres. Personal example in Party life should characterize first and above all the cadres. By taking the necessary measures and making deep changes in its approaches, our Party succeeded in asserting itself in the people's consciousness as the most modern and renewed party in Cyprus. This positive picture should be maintained and strengthened by continuing the renewal and modernization that should be a continual process inside the Party. The 18th Congress ascertains that in the Party ranks there is unity today, that is based on the common ideological and political approaches. This unity should be strengthened further by developing the spiritual unity between the Party members and cadres and by cultivating self discipline, respect of the Party Constitution and Regulations of Functioning, comradeship, mutual respect and submission of any possible ambitions, no matter how noble these are, to the interest of the Party and the people.

2. The 18th Congress assesses that the daily "Haravghi" has achieved a notable improvement in its form and content and is doing positive steps as to its finances. Nevertheless, we are still faced with the duty to overcome the weaknesses and shortcomings in the form and content that the paper still has, as well as the duty to stabilize and accelerate its financial come-back and the increase of its circulation.

The increase of the circulation of "Haravghi" through which the Party's voice will be heard more broadly is a task for every party member, who must not only buy the newspaper but also consistently and in an organized manner contribute to its spreading. The personal example of the cadres is a decisive factor in the efforts to increase the circulation of and spread the newspaper.

All the bodies of the Party, from C.C. to local party group bureaux must systematically and on a practical basis deal with the issue of increasing the circulation of "Haravghi" and of solving problems of its circulation. Our aim should be "Haravghi" to be read at every party home. Additionally, party members can play an essential role in upgrading the content of the newspaper with suggestions and contributions as well as by the provision of news and information to the management and Board of Directors of the Newspaper.

3. The 18th Congress of AKEL ascertains and stresses the need for substantial upgrading of our ideological work.

Our members must assimilate, on a permanent basis, the main principles of our outlook, our conception of socialism, the modern searchings in the international progressive movement. In order to achieve this purpose first of all everybody must understand the need of ideological education as a necessary precondition for the preservation of the ideology and class character of our Party.

At the same time, we should carry out continuous and coordinated organizational efforts to plan, implement and achieve multifaceted activities of ideological content, which will give us the necessary ideological-political education.

However difficult may be the objective conditions in which we work and struggle, we have a duty to upgrade our efforts in the ideological sphere, understanding that the ideological education and shielding of our members, the preservation of the ideological identity will not only strengthen the party as a whole, but will also result in the upgrading of the participation of the members in the party's life and activity.

The 18th Congress underlines emphatically the need to give special attention to our ideological front towards the society, where we must be in a constant counter-attack, defending our ideology, uncovering the deadlocks, the illusion and the contradictions of bourgeois ideology, uncovering and rectifying the neo-liberal and neo-conservative poli-

cies of those in government and combating nationalism and chauvinism on the one hand, and national nihilism on the other, sub-culture and indifference which are consciously cultivated in our society. The 18th Congress calls on the CC of AKEL to study seriously the establishment of a Party School and of a Centre of Scientific Research.

In order to fulfil its mission, the Party theoretical and political magazine "THE NEW DEMOCRAT", should be upgraded in content, should become a forum of searching and projection of our ideological and political positions in the broader meaning of the word, and should be embraced with interest by the Party cadres and members.

4. The 18th Congress assesses party vigilance as being a very significant aspect of party life. In the specific conditions of Cyprus it is necessary to reinforce as a Party our vigilance, which must become a task of the Party members and the popular movement in general. Our vigilance has to aim to the full information of the Party about all that is happening in our society, at preventing provocations and at protecting the Party cadres and the Party's and popular movement's property.

5. The 18th Congress of AKEL assesses that the Parliamentary Group (P.G.) of AKEL-Left-New Forces has worked systematically and actively for the implementation of the Party Electoral Platform, playing a positive and creative role inside and outside the House of Representatives. This course should be pursued further and strengthened in the next five-year period. Particular attention should be given to the duty to promote the Party policy, to the defence and promotion of the interests of the broader popular strata, the continuous contact of our MPs with the people and the pinpointing and solution of problems, the contribution of AKEL in the best possible way to the parliamentary work, the control of the executive power, the utilisation of the international relations of the House of Representatives.

To achieve the targets set out above the planning, coordination and degree of information provided to our Parliamentary Group must be constantly improved. It is also very important that the Parliamentary Group coordinates and cooperates with the bodies, the bureaux and the sectors of the Party as well as with the Popular Movement Organizations. We must also aim for even more timely and documented positions by our Parliamentary Group on the various motions and problems.

6. The 18th Congress considers that in the contemporary conditions the international relations of our Party must be continued and be upgraded as much as possible so that they can be utilised in the promotion of the Cyprus problem, in determining policies on international problems and of course in informing both the leadership and party members as well as the people. These efforts must be directed both towards a geographical as well as an ideological broadening. The degree of relations with each party will be determined on the basis of principles and common interests.

We must also intensify and organize our efforts to connect our Party with the various international and regional bodies and organizations.

The Party's initiatives for better coordination and cooperation of the leftist and progressive forces, that have been highly appreciated in the international progressive space, need to be continued and upgraded aiming at a more effective contribution in combating the New world Order and all its consequences.

MASS POPULAR MOVEMENT

1. The Mass Popular Movement is a great achievement of the working people of our country. The mass popular organizations are the bodies that demand and defend the rights of the blue and white collar workers. It is in these organizations that the militants receive their education and experience. They are the vehicles by means of whom the posi-

tions and policies of the Left reaches the broader strata of the population, while, at the same time, they become the daily receivers of the problems and search, worries and expectations of the people.

In the Mass Popular Movement the Party members should play a vanguard role. A role that they should win daily by their work, consistency and devotion to the defence of popular interests.

At the same time the 18th Congress sets before the members of AKEL the duty of a more active participation, creative presence and contribution to the various mass bodies beyond the Organizations of the Popular Movement.

2. The 18th Congress of AKEL appreciates the activity and successes of PEO (Pancyprian Federation of Labour) achieved in the past five year period. PEO has continued to play a vanguard and defining role in the struggles for the defence and broadening of labour achievements. The working class and the Trade Union Movement have faced, following Clerides' election, a frontal attack of the employers' class against the gains and benefits of the working people. This attack is encouraged by the governmental policy. Despite the difficulties that appeared at the beginning, the trade union movement succeeded in uniting its forces and the working people in general, in the resistance and struggle for the defence and safeguarding of the gains and the standard of living. It achieved the prevention, to a great extent, of the implementation of this policy, to defend the gains and at the same time to win both pay rises and other benefits.

The 18th Congress of AKEL points out that, despite the achievements, not all problems have been solved and particularly that the difficulties and dangers from the employers' and the government's attack have not been finally overcome and have not ceased to exist.

The Trade Union Movement has to remain strong and united in order to remain able to defend the interests of the working people. The contact with the working people at the place of work and residence, their organization and education, remains the priority task of the members of AKEL and in general of all the cadres of the Trade Union Movement.

The AKEL members who are trade union activists in PEO have the noble duty of the organizational development and further spreading of PEO. The maintaining of PEO as the most numerous trade union organization constitutes a key factor for a more effective organization of the workers's struggle in general in defence of their rights and the achievement of new gains.

The spirited defence of the working class gains, the full implementation of collective agreements, the safeguarding of the COLA and other gains, the safeguarding for all beneficiaries of the rights emerging from the labour legislation and the International Conventions, the cancellation of the efforts to freeze and decrease incomes and the stable rise of the standard of living remain the daily concern of AKEL and the cadres working in the Trade Union Movement.

3. The 18th Congress of AKEL expresses its appreciation for the work done by EDON - the United Democratic Youth Organization - in the objectively unfavourable conditions that bring about feelings of disappointment, individualism, mistrust towards political life, passivity and turning away from organized struggle. The Congress expresses also its appreciation of EDON's struggle against nationalism and chauvinism and for rapprochement with the Turkish Cypriots.

EDON, despite the difficulties, is active in a number of sectors that concern the youth, developing in a creative way the policy and line of AKEL in that area and strengthening the bonds with the youth.

The Party should back up this effort. The young party members should consider it a party responsibility to undertake an active role in EDON's work. A closer coordination and

cooperation should be sought, but particularly the frequent and specific dealing in the Party bodies at all levels with the work of EDON. More generally, on the basis of the C.C. resolution, the Party should approach with more attention the issues that concern the youth, encouraging, at the same time, the development of initiatives from the EDON local organizations so that their activity would be in pace with the contemporary demands of the youth.

4. The 18th Congress calls upon the Party to continue having at the centre of its attention the problems and demands of the peasants and to support the difficult struggles of EKA - the Union of Cypriot Peasants - and the peasants' Movement to upgrade and modernize agricultural production. The 18th Congress of AKEL is in favour of progressive reforms in agriculture in order to upgrade and modernize the Cyprus agriculture and cattle-breeding sector, and for a rational communal development and revival of the rural areas.

5. AKEL appreciates the work carried out by the Women's Movement of POGO, which, thanks to its long struggles has helped for measures to be taken in several sectors of social and political life that have in their turn contributed to the raising of the position of the Cypriot woman. The 18th Congress appreciates that there is a need for AKEL to wage a more intensive struggle in cooperation with POGO, aimed at solving the problems of women, the improvement of their social stand, for the abolition of all unfavourable discriminations that continue to exist against them. The Congress believes that the rights of women in all sectors of social life should constitute an object of organized contest by the Party and the progressive movement of women. The Party should give the movement more support and help; at the same time, the Party should press to increase the rates of promoting women to decision-making centres.

6. The 18th Congress of AKEL reaffirms that the Party shall continue granting assistance and support to the middle strata, including the self-employed, for the promotion of problems they face. The duties of the Party and more broadly of the Popular Movement in this sector can be summarized as following:

a) To reiterate the community and relation of interests of the middle strata with those of the working class and peasantry.

b) To contribute through the party members of that body to the further spreading of its organizations and branch sectors, as well as to the study, classification and prioritization of their problems.

c) To bring up these problems to the competent bodies both in and out of the House of Representatives, and struggle with the middle strata and the self-employed to demand their just claims.

d) To guide and struggle along with these strata in case we enter the European Union, so that our harmonization with the *acquis communautaire* would not adversely influence their standard of living.

e) To take carefully into consideration also their own interests when formulating the Party's more general policy and tactics.

7. AKEL expresses its appreciation to the professional organizations of elementary and secondary school teachers, doctors and more broadly of professionals and calls on its members to increase their positive contribution to the activity of these organizations.

8. The 18th Congress declares that AKEL shall always be at the side of the Cooperative Movement. The fundamental task in the present conditions is to protect, defend and further broaden the achievements of the Cooperative Movement, its further democratization, as well as to take the necessary measures to secure correct management, programming and deterring of irregularities.

AKEL and its cadres who work and are active in the Cooperative Movement have the obligation to continue as in the past, away from petty political objectives, to contribute to

the continuous strengthening of mutual help and solidarity within the Cooperative Movement and the consolidation of its trustworthiness, that would prove in favour of its hundreds of thousands of members.

9. The 18th Congress of AKEL reaffirms the Party's faith and devotion to the principles of peaceful co-existence, internationalism and internationalist solidarity. Under the new circumstances in the world, AKEL believes in the necessity not only to maintain the Peace and Solidarity Movements but at the same time underlines the need to broaden their objectives and goals as well as their prestige and weight. A fundamental task is their organizational strengthening and further use of personalities of recognized prestige.

AKEL shall work for the revitalizing and strengthening of the Peace and Solidarity Movements.

10. Following the enormous disaster of 1974, the refugee movement established the Pancyprian Committee of Refugees -PEP-, which offered invaluable services to the refugees. Unfortunately, however, in recent years serious functioning problems were caused in PEP mainly due to the attempt by certain circles to serve their political interests.

Eventually, the House of Representatives established the new PEP (Pancyprian Union of Refugees) which, following the suggestion of our Parliamentary Group, is going to form its leading bodies by elections on the basis of the simple proportional representation system. The Congress calls on the refugee members of AKEL to work in order to elect the most democratic leadership of the new PEP and to continue struggling for the solution of refugee problems, that are still many and difficult.

11. The 18th Congress reaffirms the principled position of AKEL for the need to verify the fate of the missing persons of the Cyprus tragedy.

AKEL had and continues to rate the problem as one of priority both in its activities and its efforts in every direction and on every occasion, until the effort to speed the verification of the missing persons' fate is successful.

12. The violation of the human rights of the enclaved persons on the issues of free movement, property, medical treatment, education, exercise of profession and on many other issues of their daily life goes on.

Given that the enclaved at present are almost exclusively people of a certain advanced age, the 18th Congress of AKEL considers that it should be dealt with as a priority issue.

Both in the 4th Interstate Appeal of Cyprus to the Council of Europe and to every international organization we should press so that Turkey should be obliged to alter its stand, thus enabling the enclaved to remain in their homes and properties under human conditions.

13. The 18th Congress states that the various issues that concern the victimized by the coup d'etat, the invasion and occupation, the families of the dead and missing persons, and the disabled and their families, shall continue to be at the centre of AKEL's attention.

Our Party shall continue taking initiatives for the resolution of problems faced by these groups of our fellow citizens.

CYPRUS ECONOMY - ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

1. The 18th Congress of AKEL reaffirms the position that a strong economy constitutes a significant weapon in the struggle of the Cypriot people for justice. At the same time, economic development that is harmonized and orientated towards the needs of the popular strata strengthens unity in the country.

2. The ascending course of the economy, continued during the last five years achieving high rates of growth (5% average) despite certain side problems that arose. The small size and the high degree of outward orientation of the Cyprus economy have led it to be highly dependent on the world capitalist and particularly the European economy. The serious structural problem of an oversized service sector at the expense of the productive sectors continues to exist and to intensify with the productive sectors being pressurised intensively by competition due to the need of harmonisation with the European prospect without the government making any effort to modernize these sectors in order for them to become more competitive.

3. The Clerides right-wing government adopts and implements the well-known neo-conservative economic development model against the interests of the people.

To face the anti-popular government policy a broad common front of the working people irrespective of ideological stand should be formed on the basis of defending the achievements and protecting the healthy structures of the economy from the undermining of big capital. The 18th Congress calls upon the Party and more broadly the Popular Movement, to continue being at the vanguard of the struggle to curb the anti-popular policy responding to the expectations of the working people and the people in general.

4. AKEL's economic philosophy in the present circumstances, is based on the following principles:

- The contemporary, dynamic, flexible and socially oriented mixed economy.
- The regulation of the uncontrolled operation of market laws of the present system in such a way that the market does not operate against the economically weak strata of the society.
- The safeguarding of a more equitable distribution and redistribution of the created wealth.
- The distribution of economic burdens according to each one's income.

5. On the basis of the above principles AKEL forms its own pro-popular alternative that includes:

- Dealing with the structural problem of our economy in the productive sectors, industry and agriculture.
- Dealing immediately with the problem of modernisation of the productive basis of industry, particularly in the manufacturing sector.
- Radical rational dealing with the budget deficit and the public debt.
- Reforming of the tax system towards a pro-popular approach, controlling of tax evasion and the strengthening of state social supplements.
- Strengthening the role of the Price Committee (sets prices on certain goods).
- Supporting and protecting the Cooperative Movement.
- It is necessary that the relevant public organisations produce such housing plans that would be within the capabilities of lower and middle income classes. Curbing the privatization policy promoted by the government in the state and semi-governmental sector.
- Study and form a policy for the improvement of the life of our compatriots who today live under unacceptable conditions, under the poverty line. A large number of our compatriots live marginalized by society in miserable conditions despite the appearance of our flourishing consumers society. As the Party of the working people, the movement which is against social injustice we have to face this huge social problem and prioritise it.
- Elaborate on a specific policy of struggle against crime and drugs that increase constantly, take an organized form and erode the Cypriot society with incalculable consequences.

- Upgrading and intensifying the struggle waged against sub-culture and the way of life that accompanies it.

- Supporting of the claim of the Trade Union movement to end the issue of permits to foreign workers except in very special cases and to take drastic measures to put an end to the illegal employment of foreign workers. AKEL also supports the claim of the trade union movement to plan measures of encouraging the idle Cypriot work force in covering the needs. Within this framework we warmly support the employment of Turkish Cypriot workers, a measure which will not only solve the problem of required work force but will also contribute to the rapprochement of the two communities.

AKEL will work so that foreign workers employed in Cyprus get the same treatment as their Cypriot colleagues and will decisively fight against possible phenomena of racism and xenophobia.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The institution of Local Authorities constitutes, for the Left, a broad field of action within which contact with the citizens and their day to day problems is developed. The fundamental guidelines of activity of the Left representatives are: the aim for a dynamic and balanced local development that would be submitted, however, to the need of a human quality of life and be extended not only to the issues of material infrastructure but also to issues of culture, sport, social programmes, environment and in general to everything related to the contemporary concept of the standard of living of the ordinary citizen.

Despite the positive steps made, AKEL continues to struggle for the broadening of the competence and powers of local authorities and the safeguarding of their economic independence, in combination with the improvement of the quantity and quality of activity of the local bodies. The still existing system of appointing heads of local councils and councillors in the areas administered by municipalities, is out-dated and unacceptable. This is why it should be abolished and these local authorities be elected.

The 18th Congress appreciates the progress achieved in the functioning of the Local Authorities Bureau of the C.C. At the same time, it considers that the necessary prerequisite for a more coordinated and efficient activity of our Party in this field is the improvement of the functioning of the Local Authorities Bureau of the C.C. and the relatives district bureaux, and the upgrading of the significance and attention of the party bodies to the issues of Local Authorities.

EDUCATION

The 18th Congress approves the comprehensive proposal for the Education Policy as adopted by the C.C. on the proposal of the Education Bureau. The 18th Congress calls on the Party as a whole and particularly on the members and cadres of AKEL that have a direct relation with the educational issues, to intensify their efforts for the promotion of the positions on which the Party policy on education is based.

The 18th Congress expresses the Party's full support to the University of Cyprus and condemns the attacks and attempts against its autonomy and bi-communal character as well as against academic liberty.

CULTURE

The 18th Congress welcomes with satisfaction the rich and many-sided activity the Party is developing in the Cultural sector.

AKEL considers Culture a significant weapon of resistance against the occupation as well as against the frontal attack of subculture observed particularly in recent years and which mainly targets the youth and the working people. In this sense, the work of the Party in the field of arts and culture constitutes a significant and indivisible part of the ideological front and a weapon in the broader political struggle.

Having in mind the above the 18th Congress considers it indispensable to intensify further the Party's cultural activity and more initiatives should be undertaken in this respect.

HEALTH

The health of the people is of outmost importance. There are extremely serious problems in the health sector. The introduction of a General Health Plan has been for years one of AKEL's most basic demands. AKEL's stable position is the creation of conditions of unobstructed granting of a high level of medical treatment to all strata of the Cypriot people, within the framework of a National Health Plan.

The 18th Congress of AKEL is in favour of free medical treatment for the people and particularly for the lower and middle income strata. For these strata we demand the elimination of paid medical treatment in our hospitals.

AKEL notes with concern the delay observed in the introduction of a General Health Plan and is going to use all its forces for the creation of favourable conditions so that the implementation of the National General Health Plan becomes a reality the soonest and with economic sources that would favour the lower and middle income strata.

SPORTS

Sports is a social phenomenon that can and should be used for the correct occupation and education of the youth, the keeping of the people's health, as well as for our country's projection on the international field, something which is very important in the present particularly difficult conditions.

The 18th Congress welcomes the initiatives taken by the Party in this field and the elaboration by the respective Bureau of the C.C. of a well-founded, scientific study aiming at the establishment of a comprehensive state sports policy that would concern the organization, spreading and development of mass sports. The Congress calls on the Party to use the conclusions of this study to the full extent.

The 18th Congress approves the initiatives that the Party is undertaking in the field of sport and appeals for the continuation of these initiatives.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

AKEL, being a party that has the human being at the centre of its attention, has, in recent years, upgraded substantially its attention and interest on environmental issues. In the framework of this interest it has elaborated with the help of specialists and cadres of

the environmental movement, a comprehensive programme of action for the protection and upgrading of the environment.

The 18th Congress welcomes the elaboration by the Party of a comprehensive environmental policy and calls for action for its promotion.

AKEL appreciates particularly the development of an organized environmental movement in our country that finds its expression in the Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organizations. AKEL considers its contribution and activity positive and seeks the development of cooperation with it on the basis of common goals.

The 18th Congress of AKEL considers that the dealing with these environmental problems as they have today, impose the broader possible agreement and unity of all forces of society irrespective of ideological and political stand and we shall work in this direction.

CYPRIOTS ABROAD AND REPATRIATED CYPRIOTS

Our compatriots who live abroad play a very significant role in the promotion of a just solution of the Cyprus problem, particularly in what concerns propaganda abroad and the lobbying of decision-making centres. At the same time, however, the Cypriots abroad face serious problems in the countries that host them.

The 18th Congress of AKEL believes that it is a duty of the Cypriot state to help solve these problems particularly the education problem. The upgrading of the Service for Cypriots Living Abroad is an issue of priority for it to be able to carry out its mission.

Many of our compatriots return to the country but they face many problems. The 18th Congress believes that the state should deal with particular interest and love with their problems as such an approach would encourage more Cypriots to return.

The 18th Congress of AKEL calls on the Party to grant help to our repatriated compatriots.

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The 18th Congress of AKEL hands out the Political Resolution of the Congress to the judgement of the Cypriot people.

The Congress calls on the bodies of the Party, the cadres and members of AKEL to work in a planned and energetic way, and with an aim to materialize the Resolution of the 18th Congress in life and practice.

18th CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON AKEL'S POSITION ON THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS' ACCESSION TO THE EU

1. As it is known, AKEL has, for many years now, been placed, through Congress decisions, against the idea that Cyprus should pursue accession to the European Union.

This position of AKEL was assumed as early as the beginning of the 1960s in opposition to the pursuit of President Makarios' Government to secure the status of association with the EEC, which would subsequently develop into a Customs Union. AKEL claimed then that the association with the EEC, for political and economic reason, should be avoided and that, instead, Cyprus should aim for an equitable commercial treaty.

The essence of the position taken then by our Party remained the same to date and for approximately the same reasons. AKEL opposed both the implementation of the second phase of the association agreement, the Customs Union, as well as the decision of the Vassiliou Government to submit an application for accession to the EEC.

The main argumentation of the Party for the position it assumed had three main axes:

a) The international political options that Cyprus had, i.e. the non-aligned policy and her dependence on the support of the USSR and the other ex-socialist countries, came into conflict with the character of the EEC which constituted, apart from an economic union, the political extension of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe.

b) Given the economic situation then in existence, accession to the EEC would have put the Cyprus economy in an unfavourable competitive position vis-a-vis the economic EEC giants, which would have resulted in the shrinking of the industry and agriculture of Cyprus.

In the social and economic field we pointed out the danger of the loss of gains won by the people of Cyprus, something that would have been imposed by the EEC supranational centres through their various directives. We also foresaw the danger of serious negative effects in the social and economic field, such as unemployment, under-employment etc.

c) Given the facts that existed at the time, our view was that possible entry to the EEC came into conflict with our long-term ideological orientation within the framework of the world balance of forces as it then existed.

2. The appraisal and views of AKEL about the character of the European Union as an advanced form of capitalist political and economic integration have not changed. Today, however, the objective situation in the world and particularly in the European continent have changed radically. This change forces us to re-examine the position of our Party vis-a-vis a possible accession of Cyprus to the EU, so that our stand will take into account the current objective reality and will respond more convincingly to the problems of today.

The new realities concern mainly the serious re-arrangements that have taken place in the world as a result of the dissolution of the USSR and of the socialist community in Europe, the serious weaknesses of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has, at least for the time being, significantly limited its world intervention, the fact that Cyprus' Customs Union with the European Union has almost been completed, and the fact that the application for accession to the EU has been submitted and that it already constitutes one of the basic elements that make up the developments concerning the Cyprus problem. Having in mind the fact that the rest of the political forces in Cyprus have sided very strongly in favour of accession, and the position that the question has now reached, it appears that the basic

question of essential practical significance has now shifted away from a "yes" or a "no" to accession and now concerns the question whether accession is possible and how, and under what terms and conditions such accession might be achieved.

New realities have also emerged in the area of the EU itself which has now been quite enlarged and consists of 15 states, while the majority of European countries, including some of the ex-socialist states, as well as Turkey, have either submitted or intend to submit an application for accession.

3. It is a fact that our Party has never been against the idea of a European union on an equitable and democratic basis. At a time, however, when there were two Europes, which bitterly struggled in all fields, the EEC, because of its nature and character, in no account could have played such a unifying role.

The political resolution of the 17th Congress of AKEL said, "Our position is not a refusal for Cyprus to take part in the procedures for the creation of a common European home. However, we do not equate the ideas of a common European home with the EEC. We believe that the non-aligned Cyprus can contribute more actively to the building of the common European home".

AKEL supported the idea of a common European home in which all European countries, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, would proceed voluntarily to create collectively worked-out mechanisms for common security, economic co-operation and development, the protection of the environment etc. The dissolution, however, of the socialist community and the way this was done, has left very little hope for such a vision. The prospect of European convergence has today very few alternative routes. For the overwhelming majority of the left-wing forces in Europe, the target of a progressive and democratic transformation of the EU, a transformation that would approach more and more the long term target of the "Europe of the peoples", appears necessarily, at least for the foreseeable future, the only prospect.

4. In view of the possible start of accession negotiations with the European Union, AKEL sets the use of this course as one more battlefield in the direction of a just solution to the Cyprus problem as its primary target.

Although we still have serious reservations about the "acquis communautaire" which generally moves in a conservative direction, especially in the social and economic fields, we, nonetheless, detect elements which, if properly utilized during our accession course through steadfast and responsible handling, may work positively in the political struggle we are waging. Such elements are:

a) The possibility of exercising pressure on Turkey for a solution in view of the fact that Cyprus is trying to approach the European Union more closely, but also because our problem will be moved, in a more determined way, to the decision making centres of the European Union.

b) The fact that possible accession will reinforce the feeling of security in both communities and will render Cyprus less vulnerable to Turkish and other unilateral actions.

c) The fact that the nature of the "acquis communautaire" may strengthen the unifying elements both in the course to a solution and after the solution of our problem, not, of course, as an alternative course in opposition to a correct solution, but as an element that will strengthen its viability.

d) The fact that the usefulness of Cyprus' accession to the European Union constitutes a point of convergence and agreement with almost all Turkish Cypriot political forces, despite the existing differences as to how and when such entry will take place.

5. AKEL is decidedly against the logic of accession at any cost, which, may not only neutralize the positive elements that can be utilized but it may also create huge dangers leading in a negative direction.

Remaining attached to the logic of accession as an aim in itself, given the correlation of forces in the European Union as well as the sensitivity of its main partners in the question of propping Turkey, may render our own side an easy prey to the pressures for concessions on principles concerning the Cyprus problem or even to the entrenchment of the partitioning status quo, to the degree that correct and decisive handling fails to take place.

6. As regards the Cyprus problem, the basic preconditions, in our view, that must be kept so that Cyprus may proceed to accession, are the following:

a) Possible accession, either before or after a solution, must clearly apply to the entire territory of the Republic of Cyprus and not only the free areas.

On no account must we accept an unsatisfactory solution of the Cyprus problem based on concessions of principles by the Greek Cypriot side on the false belief that, with our entry to the EU, the solution will be adjusted to the so-called "acquis communautaire".

b) Cyprus' prospect of accession must be independent of the procedure for Turkey's accession and it must not appear in the negotiations as one of two chapters of the same question because, in this way, our own side is forced to contribute to the easing of political pressure on Turkey.

7. AKEL believes that the course of accession of Cyprus to the European Union can have positive results only to the extent that it strengthens the efforts for a solution to the Cyprus problem within the framework of the UN, based on the resolutions of the International Organization and on the high-level agreements.

The right sort of handling and a consistent and constructive attitude on the Greek Cypriot part towards the initiatives of the UN Secretary-General in such a way that if they do not succeed Turkish intransigence will be taken down is the surest way to strengthen Cyprus in her course for accession to the EU. This will also avert the real dangers of our side becoming a prisoner of this course.

8. AKEL finds the desire expressed by the Turkish Cypriot political forces to have a say in the course for Cyprus' accession to be justified and welcome, since possible accession will influence their own future too. The government of Cyprus must be ready to support participation to the extent that it may be achieved without direct or indirect recognition of the pseudo-state. From the moment, however, that the Turkish Cypriot leadership obstructs the solution of the Cyprus problem, its position that to enable Turkish Cypriot participation in the pre-accession procedures accession procedures must start after the solution to our problem, cannot be accepted.

9. In the social and economic field the treaty for accession to the EU must be the result of substantive and dynamic negotiations so that a substantial transition period of adjustment may be secured and so that serious economic and social achievements for the people of Cyprus may not be put in danger. We are particularly sensitive to :

a) Securing trade union rights and workers' achievements (such as Cost of Living Adjustment, Social Insurance Fund, etc.).

b) Securing the independence and the democratic framework within which the Co-operative movement functions.

c) Securing the social character of the businesses of general utility and more generally of the social role of the state.

d) Protection and support of certain sensitive sectors of production (industry, agriculture) as well as of the producers' income.

AKEL rejects the practice pursued to-date by the government and the Employers' organizations who, in the name of harmonizing our economy with the European Union, selectively promote those social and economic measures which serve their interests and their own socio-economic philosophy. What must prevail in the period until accession and

even after it, is the struggle to maintain and extend the gains of the people of Cyprus, and not their "voluntary" limitation in the name of accession. This selective anti-popular policy aims to lead Cyprus to the accession negotiations with conditions and requirements that favour not the people of Cyprus as a whole by Cypriot capital.

10. The re-examination of AKEL's position as regards the course of accession for Cyprus to the EU in no case means that the Party abandons its long term goals for a qualitative social transformation. "Our Concept of Socialism", as adopted by the 17th Party Congress, constitutes our social vision for which our party will continue steadfastly to struggle.

11. Having in mind the complexity of the development taking place in the European Union today as well as the extent of the "acquis communautaire" and the government options, our Party will work hard through its various departments for further elaboration and specialization of its proposals on the issues of the European Union, especially the preconditions and the demands that Cyprus must seek in the framework of the accession negotiations in the interests of the working class strata and of the people of Cyprus in general.

12. The political dimension of the course of accession and its contribution to the struggle for a just solution of the Cyprus problem remains for AKEL the primary and dominant issue. It is clear for our Party that its final stand on any accession agreement, will be made having as its basic criterium whether or not this agreement helps and does not contradict a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of principles. We shall not hesitate to oppose any process or agreement that would, from our point of view, move in a different direction. A decisive role in our final stand will be played by the context of this agreement with regards to the social and economic issues and the degree of implementation of the preconditions we have set.

13. In the light of the new world facts, having as our main guideline the concern for the safeguarding of the security of the Republic of Cyprus and of our people as a whole, and taking into account that the Turkish Cypriots too are in favour of accession to the EU, the 18th Congress of AKEL decides to alter our Party's present position on the Cyprus - EU relations and formulate it as follows:

On the precondition that the EU would help the correct resolution of the Cyprus problem, that the whole of Cyprus accedes to the European Union and important social and economic achievements of our people would be safeguarded, AKEL would be prepared to speak in favour of Cyprus' accession to the European Union.

AKEL believes that the Cypriot people should have the final say on the possible accession of Cyprus to the European Union.

The 18th Congress decides the establishment of a specialized department/bureau of the C.C. on issues concerning Cyprus and the EU, aiming at the study of European facts and developments of accession course and the better preparation of our Party for an essential intervention to this course from the point of view of the interests of Cyprus and the working people.

DECLARATION TO THE CYPRIOT PEOPLE

Compatriots,

The 18th Congress of AKEL, that took place from the 16th to the 19th of November, 1995, in Nicosia, addresses to you a warm militant greeting.

The modernisation of the Party and its renewed militancy characterized the Congress. A characteristic feature of the Congress was also the manifold and deep search which encompassed all fields of political, economic, social development and conditions.

The 18th Congress of our Party considers that the struggle to find a just and viable solution which will secure the sovereignty and independence of Cyprus conflicts with the intransigence of the Turkish Cypriot leadership and of Ankara. This intransigence is intensified also by the stand of Ankara's powerful allies, who do not exert effective pressure regarding the implementation of the principles of international law, but, moreover, they tolerate it not to say that they even encourage it.

However, serious difficulties and obstacles also stem from the resurfacing and expansion of nationalism on both sides, the reemergence of the support for and propaganda in favour of "enosis" (union with Greece), the spreading of illusions about the feasibility of a military alternative, the degrading and weakening of the role of the National Council, the often thoughtless statements and actions made by ruling circles, and others that certainly influence the continuation of the deadlock and that also harbour serious dangers for the course of the Cyprus problem.

The 18th Congress of AKEL expresses its deep concern about the situation, which the Clerides government has created, with its concrete actions on the internal front. By the violation of democratic institutions, the attempt to limit the citizens' constitutional rights and freedoms, the intense effort to justify the coupists and Grivas (leader of the terrorist organization EOKA B'), the uncontrollable favouritism to fix the government coalition supporters in jobs, and the encouragement of big capital in its attack on the gains and living standards of the working people, a dangerous weakening of the internal front and of the militant aspiration and desire of the people is being created.

Disappointment and discontent as a result of the behaviour of the governing circles are evident amongst broader strata of our people, that turn for hope to the democratic forces of the country.

The evaluation of the Congress is that our country needs another policy through a government which will be based on a broad gathering of the democratic, progressive opposition forces.

A government with steadiness and consistency in seeking a solution based on the UN resolutions and the unanimous decisions of the National Council. A pro-popular government, with a vision and programme, which will strengthen unity and cohesion in our internal front and which will renew hope for a better future for our people.

AKEL, from its position as the main opposition force, is aware of its responsibility and will work tirelessly in this direction.

In the forthcoming parliamentary elections, AKEL is going to wage the electoral struggle with an even broader list, that is going to reflect the consistency to principles and responsibility of AKEL -which is well known to all - combined with the new spirit, renewal and modernisation.

We are sure, dear compatriots, as in the past and so today you will honour the party of the working people and you will give it all the necessary power so that it will be even more stronger powerful and able to resolutely carry out its role.

The Progressive Party of the Working People which will celebrate in the coming year 70

years of honourable, proud and consistent militant struggles for the benefit of the country, from the official forum of its 18th Congress, sends to the whole of the Cypriot people a message of continuous struggle and optimism and renews its promise and contract with the people "to give again hope".

MESSAGE TO THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS

Dear Compatriots,

The 18th Congress of AKEL, that took place in Nicosia from the 16th to the 19th of November, 1995, addresses to you a warm militant greeting.

The prolonged stagnation of the Cyprus problem, which continues without indication of progress, the voices which unfortunately are growing stronger on both sides for solutions which finalize the partition instead of surpassing it, the distancing from the processes and resolutions of the U.N. and the high level agreements, are elements which unfortunately support our assertion that the distance from the partition of the island is constantly diminishing.

We strongly believe that, at this critical moment, all Cypriots who aspire to and envisage the reunification of Cyprus and the peaceful coexistence on the basis of mutual respect, should make their voices heard more strongly.

- For the prevention of the partition of the island, which the reactionary and chauvinist circles from within and outside Cyprus seek.

- For the promotion of a solution based on the U.N resolutions and the high level agreements, for the creation of a demilitarized, bi-communal, bi-regional federal Republic of Cyprus, in which the human rights of all its citizens will be safeguarded.

- For the further adoption of specific and practical measures for promoting the rapprochement and mutual understanding between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Promoting rapprochement we reinforce the forces which are struggling to demolish the wall which foreign reactionary powers and by the enemies of Cyprus raised between us and divided us, and we are creating the prerequisites for the viability of a just solution to the Cyprus problem.

We believe that together we can and must struggle for a solution which restores the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus.

AKEL will consistently struggle against chauvinism, for the reunification of Cyprus. In these critical moments for our common country, it calls upon everyone to rally for a common struggle to give again hope, to bring peace and happiness back, and give a better standard of living to our people, better and more humane living conditions.

We can and must fight together for the salvation of our common country.

MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLES FIGHTING FOR A PEACEFUL AND MORE JUST WORLD

At the threshold of the 21st century, from the forum of the 18th Congress, AKEL sends a message of solidarity and common action to the peoples of the whole world, in the struggle for a better future based on the universal values of peace, justice and equality.

The international order, as it was formed after the Second World War, has been overturned after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the socialist community in Europe. However, the brittle cold war balance which existed has not been replaced by truly new, just and democratic international relations as has been loudly declared, but, quite the contrary, the so-called "new world order" was very soon proved in practice to be a complete disorder and a self-interested attempt to impose the right of the powerful.

Unipolarism and the rule of the USA and its allies has not secured the respect of the principles of International Law, but, what's more, these principles all the more adapt themselves to the self-interested economic and political interests of these powers irrespective of the fact that the price for this is war and catastrophe.

Attempts are also being made to take over control of international bodies such as the UN Security Council and to use them in opposition to the aims which they were initially formed to serve.

The cold war may have ended, but the contradictions and the North-South gap is widening, hunger and destitution in vast areas of the planet remain, nationalism and religious fanaticism are spreading and in the heart of Europe, the Balkans, are threatened by the breaking of a war on an immense scale with the tolerance and encouragement of imperialist forces.

The message which the delegates to the 18th Congress of AKEL extend to all of the peoples of the world is a message for the strengthening of international solidarity, a message of resistance to every effort to return international relations to the "gun-boat" policy.

The left and progressive forces by strengthening their unity in action have a duty to support with a new urge the revitalizing of internationalist solidarity, give priority to the just and peaceful solution to regional conflicts, the economic development of poor countries and their liberation from dependence, the tackling of hunger and destitution and the protection of our planet from ecological catastrophe.

The 18th Congress expresses the solidarity of our Party to the people fighting for peace, independence, democracy, for their human rights and for a just and happy future. We express our solidarity to the peoples of Eastern Europe and we wish that their struggles would have a successful end, the overcoming of the particularly difficult conditions they face today. Especially, we express our full-hearted solidarity to the neighbouring Palestinian people and we wish that it attains its own state, peace and prosperity. We express full solidarity with the peoples of former Yugoslavia and we hope that the fratricidal conflict, which was instigated by the imperialist forces be terminated and that a peaceful, just solution to their differences be found. We demand the immediate ending of the embargo against Serbia.

We greet the victory of the people of South Africa and we wish them every success in the difficult road to complete the non-racist society.

We join our voices with those of the international community, expressing our full support to the people and government of Cuba and we demand the immediate ending of the inhuman US embargo.

We condemn the French nuclear tests, which pollute the environment, put into danger

the health of the people in the region and open the road for a new round of competition in nuclear arms which will put life on our planet in danger. We demand the immediate termination of the French nuclear tests and the complete banning of every nuclear test as a step towards nuclear disarmament.

From the forum of the 18th Congress the members and cadres of AKEL express their deep conviction that the universal and timeless values of Peace and Democracy, as well as, the need to implement the rules of International Law are gaining all the more ground and that they shall prevail in the end.

No retreat from these principles can be lasting, no matter how powerful those that seek this retreat are.

AKEL greets the international reformation of the forces of progress and reaffirms its intention to contribute with all its forces to the struggle for a world of Peace, Democracy, Freedom and Social Progress.

RESOLUTION TO THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Your Excellency,

The 18th Congress of AKEL which took place in Nicosia between the 16th and the 19th of November, 1995 - the year of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the UNO, which we greet -has the honour to submit the following:

1. It reiterates its attachment to the UNO resolutions and to the high level agreements as a basis for the solution of the Cyprus problem.
2. It is concerned about the tendency to divert the Cyprus problem away from the UNO framework and it insists on the search for a solution within the framework of the International Organisation with the involvement of all the permanent members of the Security Council.
3. It detects unwillingness on behalf of the Security Council to take measures so that the Turkish side may abandon its intransigent attitude and abide by the resolutions of the United Nations and the agreed framework for the search of a solution.
4. It ascertains that possible application of the concrete package of the confidence building measures without parallel progress on the essence of the Cyprus problem may create the danger of these measures constituting the final "solution" to our problem.
5. If progress is to be achieved on the essence of the Cyprus problem the Turkish side must accept the conditions which was put to it both by you, in your Report S/24830, and the Security Council, which adopted the Report in question in its resolution 789.
6. It expresses its deep concern about the continuation of the drama of the relatives of the missing persons, about the living conditions of our enclaved people and at the fact that for 21 years now human rights and basic freedoms have been violated, including the rights of the refugees to return to their homes and property.

16-18 November 1995

ADDRESSES OF FOREIGN DELEGATIONS AT THE OPENING SESSION

ADDRESS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE C.C. OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE - ALECA PAPARIGA

The C.C. of the Communist Party of Greece warmly greets the work of your Congress. It strongly believes in co-operation between our two parties, between our two peoples and between our two countries.

The people of Cyprus can count on our steadfast determination to support the problem of Cyprus with all our power, always having as a guideline the top level agreements and the correct resolutions which the UNO has, in the past, repeatedly adopted.

We make no secret of the fact that in the recent past we have been particularly worried as to what lies ahead for the people of your island, as Cyprus lies at the heart of the wider plans of NATO with regard to the so-called area of the South, which includes the Balkans, Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.

A few years back even the most biased friends of Turkey were reluctant openly to play down the Turkish invasion and to ignore its consequences for the independence of the island. Today things have changed for the worse, following the collapse of the socialist regimes in Europe and the expansionist experiment which is being conducted by NATO and the EU in the Balkans.

The peoples of these areas are once again drinking the wine of market distribution with the exception that it is now being offered in new bottles. New boundaries are being marked out while old ones are being questioned, federal states are being dissolved, new states are being split up even before they have been properly constituted, peoples are losing their independence. All sorts of minorities are suffering more and more. And the most dangerous thing is that the NATO action plans provide, as one of its main missions, for the exercise of control in all spheres, from the economy to defence and to the evacuation of national minorities and the transfer of population.

We have criticized the notorious "defence dogma" and instead we have supported a defence co-operation between two independent and friendly states. Apart from the fact that the dogma is based on rotten foundations, in our opinion it objectively moves towards a logic which facilitates all those who want a divided Cyprus, a district which will act as a springboard for foreign powers, in both its separate parts.

In parallel with NATO's military action we also witness the economic probing by the EU towards the vital area of the so-called South. These two "probing" will lead inexorably to the "Balkanization" of the wider area. The peoples of the Mediterranean will be at the mercy of a many-sided war - economic, political and military.

One of the priorities of our Party is the preparation of a plan for progressive area development which will include the Balkan peninsula and the counties of the Mediterranean, both European and North African. Of course we know that such organized area co-operation is not easy nowadays, yet it is the only way that the area will shield itself against the interference that is taking place and that tomorrow will become even more crude. If the idea of self-sustained, independent area co operation does not win support as a coun-

ter-weight to the expansionist policy of the EU and NATO the future will be even more difficult and more painful.

The CPG believes in the close co-operation of the communist parties of the area, in the co-ordination of their activities with regard to the major problems of area development, in the repulsion of the imperialist order of things, of military intervention and the partitions that are being planned. Such co-operation will open the horizons and possibilities for wider co-operation with progressive, left-wing and anti-imperialist forces, whose dreams for the future cannot be accommodated in the present order of things.

The unfavourable development of the recent years do not, in the least, change our belief in the socialist and communist perspective. The decay of capitalism has gone very deep, its power is not invincible, and above all it is not unquestioned and everlasting. Our Party has made a small effort, which it will continue, in order to draw lessons and experience from the attempt to build socialism in Europe - its achievements, the difficulties and also the mistakes that were made. We do not claim to have become wiser; nonetheless it is a necessary step for our times: a time that warrants the unity of everyday struggle for topical problems with the struggle and devotion to the cause of socialism for which millions of fighters in Greece, in Cyprus and all over the world have given their lives.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED SOCIALIST PARTY OF TURKEY-HALDUN AREN

I convey to you the brotherly greetings of our Party. I hope that the work of your Congress for the strengthening of peace, freedom and socialism in your country, in the wider area around us and in the whole world will be crowned with success.

After the collapse of the Socialist system in the Soviet Union and the other East European countries, capitalism has imposed, without any obstacle, its domination world-wide and in each country separately. This domination has not brought about happiness among men, material or spiritual: wars, hunger, deprivation, unemployment and so many other evils have continued, while some of them have been accentuated. The spread of moral decay and the decay of human values in all society has been added to the above evils.

The working people are in desperation as regards the solution of their problems. At the same time, however, socialism has begun to regain its credibility and powers in all countries.

Our Party sees the new socialism as an attempt at democratization in all fields of social life which will mean as much participation by the working people in the management of work, so that they will have a say in decision making. In this way we shall be led to a continuous weakening of capitalism which will finally be overcome. According to his idea of socialism, which we see as an evolutionary process, the working people can solve their problems even when they haven't taken over full authority. This position is not only creditable - it is also realistic.

Of course, societies may be faced with problems that do not stem from exploitation and capitalist rule. Such problems are those related with national and religious differences. These problems must be solved on the basis of their very characteristics. The Cyprus problem is one such problem. It must be solved in a peaceful way and this is quite feasible. It is my conviction that the communist and socialist parties of the four parties involved can play a positive role in the pursuit of a peaceful solution. For us the solution must provide for a bi-zonal, bi-communal, united and federal Cyprus. I wish to stress that the longer these problems remain unsolved the more they make the solution of other problems dif-

difficult, while they also provide an excuse for imperialist intervention. If we do not solve our own problem, others will come and solve it for us.

Once more, I wish success to your Congress and to express my respect and love for all the participants and the delegations of the parties invited.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF PASOK- MILTIADES PAPAIOANNOU

I convey to the 18th Congress of AKEL the warm, brotherly greetings of the Prime Minister of Greece and President of PASOK, Andreas Papandreu, as well as the greetings of our Executive Office. I convey our sincere wishes for success in your work and achievement of your targets. For the PASOK cadres it is a pleasure and an honour to be among our Greek-Cypriot brothers; and our joy becomes greater when we take part in congresses of parties that ideologically and politically are close to us. This is how we feel today.

The positions of PASOK on Cyprus and the overall future of the Greek-world are well known. We are unshakeable in our conviction that Cyprus forms the vanguard of our nation. We stand steadfastly at the side of the fighting people of Cyprus, we struggle for support every effort for a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem. These positions lead us to believe and hope that a solution is not unfeasible. Definitely the experience of the past twenty one years has taught us a lot. The future, however, lies with historical truth and justice.

The international community must effectively impose by peaceful means, of course, the observance and respect for international justice and for the resolutions of the United Nations. It is significant that all the possibilities and mechanisms afforded by the European Union and our Mediterranean position should be made full use of within the framework of the UN resolutions, the principles regarding the respect of the territorial integrity and the unitary nature of the Republic of Cyprus. The European and Mediterranean orientation followed by Cyprus is of great significance in the hands of the political forces of Greece and Cyprus, provided this is properly made use of and provided that the opportunities offered are not allowed to be lost. We believe that in this way we are building the necessary structure upon which we shall shortly be called upon to build a new reality. We believe that the European framework offers a series of opportunities that lead on the new perspectives for Cyprus. The government of Cyprus becomes the sole and natural interlocutor with the European Union, while Cyprus' membership of the Union is a decision already taken and one that has repeatedly been confirmed by European Councils. At the same time, the Dogma of the United Defence Area, in spite of certain doubts, in our opinion strengthens our powers to negotiate an early solution to the problem of Cyprus and creates a feeling of security.

We have noted, through Mr Christofias' speech, all your ideas and thoughts, your new approaches concerning your ideological base, your political positions and your present strategy. The fast developments of recent years on a world-wide basis, especially in Eastern Europe as a result of the fall of a concrete model, have made it necessary for left wing forces on a national and on a European level, to look for new solutions, modern approaches and convincing answers. The renewal of thought and action by the socialist parties in order to express, in their own and effective way, freedom and democracy their struggles for world peace, for social solidarity, for a society of citizens, for social and political democracy, for the quality of life, for the environment, for social movements: all this is the positive response of the socialists and communists to the citizens of the earth, of every country. If you like this is also an additional answer to all those who have tried to con-

vince us that the end of ideologies has come, i.e. the end of history. The socialist, the communists, the progressive citizens are all actively present, we are here so that we may work out, on a new basis, our new dreams. in order to turn dream into reality, in order to give a continuous perspective to the working people, to the citizens who do not belong to social and economic oligarchy.

Today socialism is as topical as ever before. It is the ideology of the year 2000. I therefore wish, dear comrades, every success to your Congress and assure you that we shall always be at your side. We shall continue to support your just struggle and we promise that we shall fight with all our forces for the final vindication of your dreams, our dreams. PASOK stands by the Greek Cypriot people of Cyprus. It stands by the left-wing and progressive forces of the island. Greece stands by you.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION- VALENTIN KUPTSOV

The C.C. of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation sends heartfelt and brotherly greetings to the Congress delegates and all the members of AKEL.

We greet our Cypriot comrades who, for almost 70 years, have been fighting for national independence and for the improvement of the conditions of life of the working people.

Being a consistent Marxist party, AKEL actively proceeds with the renewal of the content and forms of party work. We are happy at every one of your successes.

We would specially like to greet the veterans and the young members of your party. The blending together of the experience of the old generation with the liveliness of the younger generation makes your party a party of respectable and one that enjoys the support of the people of Cyprus. The Russian Communist Party is proud of its friendship with AKEL. We felt your support at the most difficult moment for the communists of Russia.

We thank you, comrades from Paphos, Limassol, Nicosia and Larnaca, from the suffering towns of Kyrenia and Famagusta for your solidarity and sincere friendship.

The action of those who have created the so-called "New World Order" has created new centres of tension, wars and conflicts among peoples. These same people have imposed their hegemony, they have strengthened and widened NATO, they have united their forces against the rights and hard-won benefits of the working people.

It's in such difficult circumstances that AKEL is successfully mobilizing the communists, the left-wing and progressive forces of the world towards common action. The Russian Communist Party whole-heartedly supports these initiatives.

Today the Russian Communist Party has risen from the ashes. It has become a political force that everyone has to take into account. The people of Russia is beginning to realize what has happened to our great country and where the present regime is leading to .

Our renewed Party is taking part in the elections with a programme that is clear and with a slogan that can easily be understood by all: "Russia - work - popular power - socialism".

We wish every success to your Congress. We are sure that the decisions that will be taken will bring even closer together all the Cypriot communists and will strengthen AKEL's role in the struggle for a just solution of the Cyprus problem and for the defence of the basic rights of the working people.

Long live AKEL!

Long live the friendship and fraternal solidarity between the Russian Communist Party and AKEL!

United we will win!

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF NEW DEMOCRACY CHRISTOS VALTADOROS

With great pleasure I convey to you the warm greetings of the President of our Party, Miltiades Evert. Our presence here is not only self-explanatory because of the tight relations - blood relations between Greece and Cyprus which have been forged through our struggles for independence and freedom. It is also a presence that is necessary because the political parties are the expression not only of the various social forces but of the interests of the nation as well because they constitute the cells of any democratic system, and as such it is their duty to co-operate for the progress of society. This is the more so when it's a question of attending the Congress of a party, which is the supreme expression of democracy within the party.

At a time of fast changes we politicians have the duty of offering to the people the necessary inspiration and guidance and also to build a modern social and economic structure for the most effective facing of the challenges of our times. It is our duty to inspire a spirit of national dignity and self-confidence. We, in New Democracy, believe firmly that the united efforts of the Greek nation will be crowned with success. Greece and Cyprus constitute the nation's moving force "par excellence" for facing our big national challenges and for the creation of the pre-requisites that will allow the Greek nation to proceed to the 21st century strong and creative.

It is certain that in the near future, Cyprus, as a member of the European Union, will be a significant factor in promoting the relations of the united Europe with the countries of South Eastern Mediterranean. At the same time, however, we are called upon to fight with one heart and one voice of the political and moral vindication of the national rights of the people of Cyprus; so that a lasting and just solution will be found for the problem of Cyprus. So that the foreign troops will leave Cyprus; so that the Greek-Cypriot refugees will return to their ancestral homes - and so that the fate of those of our brothers who have been missing for 21 years will be verified.

You will allow me, here, to point out that the blood relations between Greece and Cyprus in all fields, including defence, will help to deter any future threat, and will also help ensure peace and stability in the area.

With the conviction, Mr. General Secretary, ladies and gentlemen, that the speaker, with their political experience, will contribute to the success of the aims of the Congress, I once more ask you to accept our warmest greetings.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF BULGARIAN SOCIALIST PARTY-TONCHO KONAKTSIEV

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Bulgarian Socialist Party I would like to salute the delegates and guests of the 18th Congress of AKEL.

Our two parties are linked with fraternal relations for many years. We are especially pleased to note that after the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe the relations between

the BSP and AKEL were kept and even mark a new development.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party went through hard years - its property was confiscated, we were in a relative political isolation and in an opposition to the government of the right.

Today we can say that this period has passed and our Party maintained itself on the Bulgarian political scene as the most prestigious and constructive democratic force, able to solve the difficult problems of the country. The BSP won a convincing victory at the parliamentary elections in December 1994 and at the just recently held local elections. Now we'll have to work even harder to justify the confidence of the people and to implement the governmental programme for economic stabilization and growth, for structural reform, war against crime and building of a clear conception for national security and foreign policy.

I would like to assure you that the BSP follows attentively the political situation in Cyprus. We express our complete solidarity with the successive policy of AKEL on the Cyprus problem, for defending the positions of the working people and wish you success at the forthcoming parliamentary elections. We believe that the cooperation between the BSP and AKEL makes a serious input for the comprehensive development of the relations between Bulgaria and Cyprus and for security and stability in our region.

We highly appreciate the approach of your party for renovation with keeping the continuity in your party.

I would like once again to wish fruitful work to the Congress and successes to AKEL.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SYNASPISMOS OF THE LEFT AND PROGRESS - NICOS JUNTIS

I convey to your Congress the most heartfelt and fraternal greetings of SYNASPISMOS of the Left and Progress.

In you we greet AKEL, a responsible and patriotic force and a significant factor in the struggle of the people of Cyprus for progress and democracy and for the solution of the Cyprus problem.

We are in solidarity with your struggle. We believe that the problem of Cyprus must take pride of place in the foreign policy of Greece, and that the normalization of relations between Greece and Turkey depends on the finding of a joint and viable solution. A solution that will guarantee the unity, independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus in which there will be no foreign troops and where human rights will be respected. This solution must be based on the resolutions of the United Nations and on the principles of International Law which, in the past 21 years, have so nakedly been violated. Indeed the credibility and effectiveness of these principles is being tested in Cyprus. This is the time for a new international campaign for the solution of the problem of Cyprus.

The unsolved problem of Cyprus is one more proof that the new world order under American domination is not a harmonious, just and peaceful world, as it has been advertised.

We support the peaceful solution of the problems of the Balkans and we are striving to create international institutions of understanding and co-operation in the Balkans and the Mediterranean, without foreign interference, and without "guardians" and "mediators" who only serve their own military interests.

Synaspismos, a party of the modern radical left, in co-operation with other left-wing and progressive forces, is trying to give a new inspiration, coupled with democracy, social and economic content to the economic and political fulfilment of Europe.

The present route for unity, tied to the neo-liberal directives of Maastricht as it is, creates serious inequalities, sharpens social problems; it does not respond to the needs and the dreams of the working people and of its peoples. We want to change this route. We demand the radical revision of the treaty of Maastricht. The united Europe must be a Europe of equal economic co-operation, of democracy, without nationalism and racism, a Europe that will respect national identity, political pluralism, man and his environment.

We belong to the Confederal Group of the United Left in the European Parliament and we strengthen the common action of the forces of the Forum of the European New Left, so that we may create a Europe of the Peoples and the Citizens, a Europe that will be a decisive factor in world peace and security.

Dear Comrades, The future of mankind does not lie with the domination of the forces of neo-liberal capitalism, of the conservative political options, of the negation of man and the plundering of nature.

History has not come to an end! Developments bring back the necessity of Socialism. The dreams of social equality, freedom, justice and solidarity are being revived.

The ideas of the left are again coming to the front. The need for understanding and common action by the left-wing and radical forces on a world basis becomes steadily more obvious. The ground is being prepared for the strengthening of the role of the Left in the struggle for a better future in a just and peaceful world.

I wish every success in the work of your Congress and in the fulfilment of your party's objectives.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA - SI ZHONTKIUAN

Dear Comrades,

I feel greatly honoured that the C.C. of the Communist Party of China has asked me to represent the CPC in the 18th Congress of AKEL. On this occasion and on behalf of all the members of the CPC and of the Chinese people, I would like to express our sincere congratulations to the 18th Congress of AKEL and through the Congress I would like to convey our warm greetings to all the members of your Party and to all the people of Cyprus.

The summoning of the 18th Congress is a significant event in the history of your party which will acquire experience from the past and will open new avenues for the future, the successful conduct of your Congress process, once more, the unity and development of your Party. We believe that led by the new general line of policy, that will be laid down by the 18th Congress, you will be able to make even greater progress.

The CPC and AKEL are bound together by a traditional friendship. In their long struggles there was always mutual understanding and support among the two parties. In recent years the friendly relations between our two parties have been developing steadily even further. In March 1992 the general Secretary, comrade Christofias, was invited and he visited China. During the visit the leaders of our two Parties held fruitful talks, something that further promoted the friendly relations that exist between our parties. We heartily hope that the relations of friendship and co-operation between our two parties, our countries and our peoples will continued to grow.

You will allow me to read to you the congratulatory message of the C.C. of the CPC to the 18th Congress of AKEL.

"To the 18th Congress of AKEL. Dear Comrades, On the occasion of the official sum-

moning of the 18th Congress of AKEL the C.C. of the CPC expresses warm congratulations.

AKEL is a party with a glorious past. It is with great joy that we note that since its founding some 70 years ago, your Party has greatly contributed not only to the independence, welfare and social progress of Cyprus but also to the defence of the area and world peace, and generally in the progress of mankind. We sincerely hope that you will have more successes in your future struggles.

We hope that the relations of friendship and co-operation between the CPC and AKEL, based on the principles of independence, autonomy, complete equality, mutual respect and the non-interference in each other's internal affairs, will grow steadily.

We hope that the bonds of friendship and co-operation between our two countries and peoples will be steadily strengthened. We wish every success to your Congress. Thank you.

The C.C. of the CPChina 12 November, 1995 Beijing"

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF "POLITIKI ANIXI"-ANDREAS LENTAKIS

Your Congress is being held at the rime of rapid changes in the world. Europe is searching for its identity through the completion of the European Union which is an inspiring but difócult target. In the Balkans, the war in Bosnia and instability, threaten peace in the wider area, while the assassination of Rabin emphasizes the difficulties in the pursuit of peace in this fragile part of the world. At the very moment when the international community - the UN, the European Union and NATO supposedly promote human rights, freedom and democracy as their creed, this very community remains deaf and blind to the drama of the Serbs, the Kurds and the Cypriots. It uses double-talk and double standards as regards, on the one hand, the war in Bosnia and, on the other hand, the genocide of the Kurds by the Turks and the inadmissible occupation of half of Cyprus, a member-state of the UN.

I think your Congress is being held at a time which is sealed by a symbolism which I can't but mention. Yesterday, Attila celebrated the anniversary of the creation of the pseudo-state of Denktash and the Turks of the occupied Cyprus caused a series of provocations. Yet, these provocations, ostensibly at the expense of the Greek Cypriots, constitute a mockery of the international community which simply looks on with apathy, both on the settling of the occupied lands and the trampling upon of the Security Council resolutions.

"Politiki Anixi" believes, first, that Cyprus's accession to the European Union delays unduly and for this reason we have put decisive pressure upon the Greek Government for the fixing of a clear date for the start of pre-accession negotiations because we believe that Cyprus' accession into the EU constitutes a significant strategic target. second, it believes that there can be no restoration of our relations with Turkey and that there can be no upgraded dialogue with that country unless a just and viable solution is promoted on the question of the occupation of half of Cyprus by the Turks and the settlers, who, in this way, aim at the ethnic cleansing of this area and its eventual annexation to Turkey in an attempt to revive the Ottoman Empire. Thirdly, it believes that it is the duty of Greece to stand actively and decisively at the side of the Greek Cypriots and not allow the creation of further faits accompli. We strengthen every move in this direction and we believe that Cyprus must belong to a common defence dogma with Greece. This question must be discussed at a national conference with the participation of the Greek and Cypriot political

leadership in order to work out a common strategy within which the united defence dogma will be developed.

Dear friends, I convey to you the warm militant greetings of the President of "Politiki Anixi", Antonis Samaras, as well as the promise that we shall help in every possible way so that these aims will meet with success. From this rostrum we greet all the people of Cyprus and remind him of what the poet has said, "Oh, tyranny, oh tyranny, while you strike I feel the pain, But you are dying".

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF SERBIA-VLADIMIR KRSLJANIN

Dear Comrades, It is my great honour on behalf of the Socialist Party of Serbia to greet the 18th Congress of AKEL and convey wishes for its successful work. the Congress of the Party with which we are linked by fruitful co-operation and profound understanding. My first duty is to express once again the profound feeling of gratitude to AKEL, to comrade Christofias and to the entire friendly people of Cyprus for the solidarity and humanitarian aid. This solidarity has give us the strength to endure.

Dear Comrades, Following the brutal logic of force, under the label of assistance to democracy, some imperialist circles have aided and armed the most regressive chauvinist forces in form Yugoslavia and have then offered support to the regimens which would in these out times look ridiculous and operatic if their character was not a criminal one. In this way, the attempt was made to disintegrate former Yugoslavia, to support the bloodshed of the civil war in all of its former republics in which chauvinists are in power, while those who have opposed these processes, in principle and decisively but by peaceful means, were subjected to the strongest sanctions recorded in the world history. Yugoslav crisis is the symptom of a global crisis and the lack of democracy in international relations. The entire region was thrown into regression and became the scene of conflicts of foreign interests, of brutal and hypocritical manipulation with international organizations and public opinion. At the sometime an obsolete block and regional military organization has created for itself the excuse for continuing to exist and attempt to expand.

Dear Comrades, even under such extremely difficult conditions, the independent and principled policy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia led by the Socialist Party of Serbia and our President of the Party and of the Republic of Serbia Slobodan Milosevic, could not be broken down. The policy of peace and equality which we have supported from the very beginning of the crisis, is being built toady in the foundations of the peace process. The most influential international factors are now forced to accept the reality, because only through such politics the crisis can be resolved, which has shaken up Europe and because the growlingly unisonous stand of the states and peoples in the region has to be respected, the stand of people who in this policy are justióably seeing the only guarantee for protection of their own interests and security.

Even the forthcoming hours may being the agreement at the negotiations in the United States, which mark the triumph for the policy of peace and equality, policy of independence and freedom.

As never before in history, the conscience and political life in the Balkans is dominated by the left and progressive forces, and they are having today their historical chance to heal the wounds of the humanitarian catastrophe and economic crisis caused by the way, and to build a new Balkans. The Balkans limed by class ties of equitable cooperation, so that the independence and security of every one of these peoples would be stronger, the Balkans of a democratic socialism which is the only guarantor fro stable development as opposed to the neo-liberal colonization which has suffered a failure.

Our country and its leading force the Socialist Party of Serbia condemn the occupation of the part of Cyprus, fully supporting the preservation of the independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Republic of Cyprus. The Socialist Party of Serbia and our people express total solidarity with the people of Cyprus, supporting resolutely the right of Cypriots on peaceful unification.

With the most profound emotions, once again I wish to convey to you the gratitude of all our members and the wish for successful completion of your project of united, prosperous and just society in your beautiful county.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA - ARMANDO GARCIA LUIS

It is with great pleasure that I address to you in order to convey to the 18th Congress of AKEL the warmest and fraternal greetings of the Communist Party of Cuba and of our entire revolutionary people.

We wish every success in the work of this significant event, the results of which will undoubtedly contribute to the materialization of the just expectations of the Cypriot people.

We appreciate the efforts of AKEL to deal with the situation that has been created by the artificial division of your country, and in order to put an end to occupation and secure the peaceful reunification of your island and your people through negotiations that will lead to a just solution. You have our full support in your just struggle.

Perhaps today more than ever before there is the need for co-operation and solidarity among the revolutionary and progressive forces throughout the world. The new world order which they want to impose on us, as a result of the monopoly world that has been created after the dissolution of the USSR and of socialism in other countries of Europe, has brought about a period of confusion in the course of international relations.

The spirit of hegemony which, in the present conditions, the imperialist forces led by the USA, are trying to enforce has received a serious boost. At the same time the inequality in the distribution and redistribution of wealth is growing rapidly, thus causing a dramatic increase in poverty.

From the beginning of its revolution our people has had to face the aggressive and hostile policy of the USA, which today is hardening the unjust, criminal and unlawful embargo with actions that aim to bring the Cuban revolution to its knees. Such actions include the so-called Torricelli Law, and the new and even harder one, the Helm-Burton Bill.

Cuba, however, has learnt to stand up to the repercussions of this policy to which were added the terrible economic blows dealt on us by the collapse of socialism in the USSR and in East Europe. Our people has forged the will to fight which brings together the desire to defend the achievements offered by socialism to our people and the will to maintain our independence within the framework of a great social solidarity and a broad political understanding.

This will of our entire people has been accompanied by a series of economic plans which allow our country to survive, secure the continuation of development and adapt the Cuban economy in the direction in which it must develop. The measures and reforms taken cannot be mistaken for the restoration of capitalism or for any neo-liberal plan. In Cuba there are no mass dismissals from work, nor are there workers abandoned to their fate. In these difficult times not one school, not one hospital has closed down.

It was the results of these measures that have allowed us to face this decisive period and to obtain economic advance which will grow even further at the end of 1995.

At the same time, we are witnesses to the development of a very large movement of solidarity with Cuba's just cause and which denounces the USA embargo - a movement that embraces the most diverse forces, sections of people and personalities. Only very recently the Ibero-American meeting of Heads of States and Governments, of the Non-Aligned countries and the UN General Assembly, have supported an end to this unjust policy.

Before finishing, I would like to thank AKEL, its cadres and its members for their many examples of solidarity with revolutionary Cuba and with its people who is daily fighting for a society of justice, freedom and independence, knowing that there is no other choice but victory.

ADDRESSES BY FOREIGN DELEGATES AT LOCAL MEETINGS

1. COMMUNIST PARTY OF ARMENIA
2. SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA
3. AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY
4. NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF BAHRAIN
5. COMMUNIST PARTY OF MORAVIA AND BOHEMIA
6. COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE
7. PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM OF GERMANY
8. WORKERS' PARTY OF HUNGARY
9. COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)
10. JUDEH PARTY OF IRAN
11. COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAQ
12. COMMUNIST PARTY OF ISRAEL
13. PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC LEFT OF ITALY
14. PARTIDO DELLA RIFONDAZIONE COMUNISTA OF ITALY
15. JORDANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY
16. WORKERS' PARTY OF DPR KOREA
17. NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF KURDISTAN
18. LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY
19. PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITIES
20. PALESTINIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
21. PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY
22. COMMUNIST PARTY OF SLOVAKIA
23. IZQUIERDA UNIDA OF SPAIN
24. COMMUNIST PARTY OF SPAIN
25. COMMUNIST PARTY OF SUDAN
26. ARAB SOCIALIST PARTY BAATH OF SYRIA
27. SYRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY
28. COMMUNIST PARTY OF SYRIA

29. COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN
30. COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM

**GREETINGS TO THE CONGRESS WERE SENT
BY THE FOLLOWING PARTIES**

1. COMMUNIST PARTY OF ARGENTINA
2. MOVEMENT OF COMMUNISTS OF BELGIUM
3. COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRAZIL
4. PEOPLE'S PARTY OF CAMPODIA
5. COMMUNIST PARTY OF CANADA
6. COMMUNIST PARTY OF DENMARK
7. COMMUNIST PARTY OF FINLAND
8. FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY
9. GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY
10. DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF GUINEA
11. PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF THE PEOPLE OF GYANA
12. COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
13. COMMUNIST PARTY OF JAPAN
14. SOCIALIST PARTY OF KAZAKHSTAN
15. LAO PEOPLE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
16. COMMUNIST PARTY OF NEPAL (UNIFIED MARXIST-LENINIST)
17. PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF OMAN
18. DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE
19. COMMUNIST PARTY OF PHILIPPINES
20. SOCIAL DEMOCRACY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
21. SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY
22. DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF SOUTH KOREA
23. COMMUNIST PARTY OF SRI LANKA
24. NEW COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN
25. COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE USA. . .
26. COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE OF THE USA
27. ZANU PF -ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION - PATRIOTIC FRONT

THE IDENTITY OF THE CONGRESS

1223 delegates were present at the 18th Congress as a whole:

- The 1st day - delegates were present (public opening)
- Friday-2nd day 1032 delegates were present
- Saturday-3rd day 1155 delegates were present
- Sunday-4th day 948 delegates were present

MEN: 1041 WOMEN: 182

THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DELEGATES WAS:

Up to 30 years **88**
31 - 40 years **372**
41 - 50 years **353**
51 - 60 years **204**
61 and above **206**

THE EDUCATION DISTRIBUTION OF THE DELEGATES:

Elementary **401**
Secondary **450**
High (further) **117**
University **255**

THE SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE 18TH CONGRESS WAS:

White and blue collar workers **846**
Peasants **40**
Middle strata **180**
Pensioners **97**
Housewives **54**
Students **6**

THE PARTY AGE OF THE DELEGATES WAS:

Up to 5 years **75**
6 - 10 years **160**
11 - 20 years **395**
21 - 30 years **203**
31 - 40 years **197**
41 years and above **193**

Attending a congress for the first time **400**
Members of the old C.C. **100**
Members of District Committees **132**
Members of Town Committees **55**
Members of Regional Committees **20**
Local cadres **444**
Cadres of Mass Organizations **305**
Members of Social Bodies **219**

18TH CONGRESS OF AKEL - LIST OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE

1. CHRISTOFIAS DEMETRIS
2. KAZAMIAS KIKIS
3. CHRISTOU ANDREAS
4. KOLOCASSIDES YIANNAKIS
5. CHRISTODOULOU PHANIS
6. KATSOURIDES NICOS
7. ZANNETTOU VENIZELOS
8. YIANGOU KIKIS
9. VALANIDES YIANNAKIS
10. MAVROCORDATOS CHRISTOS
11. CHRISTOFIA ELSI
12. KONTIDES DEMETRIS
13. KOUKOUMAS ANDREAS
14. CHRYSOSTOMOU ANTONIS
15. KYPRIANOU ANDROS
16. IOSIF LENIN
17. CONSTANTINIDES COSTAKIS
18. TSIELEPIS TOYMAZOS
19. CHRISTODOULOU ANTONIS
20. KARAYANNIS DEMETRIS
21. KYRITSIS PAMBIS
22. DEMETRIADES NICOS
23. MANORAS COSTAS
24. CHRISTODOULIDES DOROS
25. GIOUROF ANDROULLA
26. DEMETRIADOU CHRISTINA
27. THEODOULOU LAKIS
28. MAVROU ELENI
29. ZAMBAS THEORIS
30. LAMARIS YIANNOS
31. MATTHEOS MATTHEOU
32. AVRAAM MELIA
33. LAPITHIOTIS PANICOS
34. MOISEOS ANDREAS
35. EVAGOROU STAVROS
36. SKOUROUPATHI YIANA
37. KOURTELLARIS KYPROS

38. PETROU NICOS
39. FELLAS MICHALIS
40. KOUMPAROU CHRYSTAKIS
41. VIOLARIS CHRYSTAKIS
42. CHRISTOFIDOU VERA
43. ALEKKOU CHRISTOS
44. STAVROU MEMNON
45. KLEANTHOU E. KLEANTHIS
46. KOUSOULIDES KOKOS
47. ZOUKOF GEORGE
48. ZAOURAS YANNAKIS
49. MELISSOS NICODEMOS
50. PANATOS ANDREAS
51. CHRISTOU ANDREAS (KOKKINOS)
52. ALETRAS LOUKAS
53. KOUKOUMA SKEVI
54. KASOUMIS STAVROS
55. MICHAELIDES THASOS
56. SERAFIM DOROS
57. HADJICONSTANTI VASILIS
58. VASSILIOU STELIOS
59. AVRAAM TAKIS
60. YENETHLIOU CHAMBIS
61. FELLAS SOTERIS
62. SYLIKIOTIS NEOCLIS
63. NICOLAIDES KYRIAKOS
64. IOANNOU STELIOS
65. CHRISTOU CHRISTIA
66. ANTONIOU ANDREAS
67. CHRISTOFOROU TAKIS
68. SAVOULLIS ANDREAS
69. IOANNOU LAMBROS
70. LAZAROU DEMETRIS
71. COSTI ELENI
72. PASCHALIS CHRYSTAKIS
73. NICOLAIDES COSTAKIS
74. TIMOTHEOU KYRIAKOS
75. PAPAEVSTATHIOU MICHALAKIS
76. IOANNOU NICOS (POLEMOS)
77. FACONTIS ANDREAS
78. STYLIANOU CHRISTODOULOS

79. CHARITOU MICHALAKIS
80. PALIOS LEONTIS
81. PAPACONSTANTINOU NICOS
82. KOUZOUPIS NICOS
83. CONSTANTINOU COSTAKIS
84. STEPHANOS STEPHANOU
85. YEROLATSITIS STAVROS
86. CONSTANTINOU CHAMBOS
87. GEORGIU TASOS
88. GEORGIU T.GEORGIU
89. CHRISTOFI ANDREAS
90. PAPANICOLAOU MICHALIS
91. KALLICAS NICOS
92. MICHAEL ILIAS
93. CHAMBAS PANAYIOTIS
94. CHRISTOU TAKIS
95. LIVADIOTIS MIKIS
96. TYRIMOS KYRIAKOS
97. CHARALAMBOUS SOTEROULA
98. KYPRIANOU NITSA
99. KAPPA LOIZOS
100. HADJINICOLA DINOS

THE IDENTITY OF THE NEW C.C. OF AKEL

AGE

23 members between **30 - 40 years**

43 members between **41 - 50 years**

27 members between **51 - 60 years**

7 members above **61 years**

The average age of the C.C. is 46,8 years

EDUCATION

53 members : University education

13 members : High (further) education

22 members : Secondary education

12 members : Elementary education

COMPOSITION

25 comrades were elected to the C.C. for the first time. 12 C.C. members are women, 41 are professionally working in the C.C. and the District Committees of the Party. 16 members are trade unionists, 4 members work in the Women Movement, 2 members in

the Youth Movement, 5 members in the Peasants' Movement, 17 are employees in the private sector, while 6 work in the state and semi-state sector. 8 are self-employed and one is a pensioner.

18th CONGRESS OF AKEL-LIST OF THE CENTRAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

1. GEORGE ARISTOPHANIS
2. CHRISTOFINIS DONIS
3. ANTONIADES COSTAKIS
4. KOUKKIDES LAMBROS
5. KAZANTZI ANGELOS
6. SALLOUMIS ANDREAS
7. MYRIANTHOUS DIOMEDIS

THE IDENTITY OF THE NEW CENTRAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

AGE

Average age 57,5

30-40 years **1 member**

51-60 years **4 members**

above 61 **2 members**

EDUCATION

University education: 3 members

High (further education): 1 member

Secondary education: 2 members

Elementary education: 1 member

COMPOSITION

From the members of the C.C.C. 2 work in the Party mechanism, 3 are trade unionists, 1 is self-employed and 1 is a teacher.

EXTRACTS FROM THE CLOSING SPEECH OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE C.C. AKEL DEMETRIS CHRISTOFIAS

The feast that is called the Congress of AKEL, always changes our lives to the better. That is why, comrades, we are today moved, as the time has come for the closing of the 18th great feast of AKEL, of the 18th Congress. We declare that it is a feast, for the whole society and the whole world to hear. Because we, the men and women members of AKEL, have behaved during the past four days as people in real feast. Responsible, solemn people, with a mature say, to put it in a nutshell "beautiful". Beautiful as the contemporary Communists should be.

We have discussed issues on which we had absolute agreement, as are in essence the Cyprus problem and its handlings, home administration, the socio-economic aspects. This agreement was expressed both through the thesis and the discussions that had preceded the Congress and through the delegates' contributions. However, we have also discussed issues on which we were not fully in agreement. Such were the issues concerning certain constitutional changes and the major issues of the review of our Party's position on the course of Cyprus' accession to the European Union.

The unbeatable strength of this Party

Comrades, we showed our strength, the unbeatable strength of this Party, on the points we were unanimous. We showed the unbeatable strength of this Party on the issues we had disagreements.

Because we all spoke with one and only thought in mind: the welfare of our country, above all the welfare of our country, the welfare of the working people, the good of our Party. No one spoke having in mind other self-interested aims. No one spoke in a malicious way, nor faced the opposite view in an uncouth and tough way. During these days we gave lessons of democracy; as a Party as individuals, as comrades. This was so because for three months we had been talking issues that, I repeat, were not at all simple. We came to the Congress and discussed our views with fervour, took our decisions and, even before we took them, the comrades, and particularly the younger ones, who disagreed with the change of our position, stressed something very important. I shall refer, as to a characteristic example, to comrade Aristos', a student in London, contribution. He disagreed with the change of policy (on the European Union). Which was Aristos' touching statement? We shall decide and whatever we decide for all of us without exception, yesterday's disagreement will be forgotten and we shall get into battle as one man for the materialization of the Congress resolution. This is what Democracy is! This is what AKEL Democracy means! It means Communist Democracy, our democracy. Not bourgeois democracy and false-liberalism, a pretence of democracy.

The Youth and Women

I am obliged to say a few words on the role of the youth and the role of women. The Party has clarified after serious research, that the circumstances under which the youth is today obliged to develop, be educated and struggle for its rights, even to contribute to the struggle of the people of Cyprus, are a lot different from those we knew a few years ago. Today these circumstances, comrades, are even more difficult. They are particularly difficult for the Left-wing youth, and even more difficult for EDON that is mandated to work amongst the youth and to educate it in a progressive spirit, to inspire in it the socialist ideals.

Why are these circumstances more difficult? I had the honour to lead EDON for quite a few years. Then, there were two or three significant factors, which by themselves, objectively, helped EDON's work, helped EDON to become strong, militant, to influence broad masses of youth even beyond our political space. These factors were: The strong international position of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries in Europe; the very friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Cyprus; the fact that in the consciousness of the Cypriot people the Soviet Union stood out as one of the most fundamental supports of Cyprus in the struggle it waged for the completion of its independence. Moreover, we should mention our close, friendly relations with the communist parties of the above mentioned countries.

A second factor, though contradictory, but still a factor, was the tragedy of 1974. The members of EDON were the very first to joint the resistance. They stood up against the tanks driven by the Greek Junta and EOKA B'. EDON honours a large number of resistance heroes against the coup d'etat and the Turkish invasion. The same goes, of course, for our Party. This situation, where the extreme-right in Greece and Cyprus caused a bloodshed of our people and paved the way for the Turkish invasion, quite naturally brought about feelings against Imperialism and the right-wing among broad masses of the youth. These feelings were used in a correct way, and EDON succeeded to gather in its ranks a lot of people, give them political, ideological and cultural food. In a word, EDON succeeded to mobilize a lot of people.

At the same time we should say that, gradually, the very bad socio-economic conditions, created by the fascist coup d'etat and the Turkish invasion improved thanks to the struggles of the class-based trade union movement. This should not escape our attention when evaluating the work of the class-based trade union movement even if we believe that it should have been more dynamic. Today, we should not be forgetting the role of the class-based trade union movement. Today too, we should be supporting its effort to defend the rights, gains and interests of the working people.

The improvement of the living conditions, along with the five-year plans and above all the contribution of the working people and gradually of the whole Cypriot people, led to high rates of development, to the improvement of the standard of living but, at the same time, to the import of the so-called western way of life. This was unavoidable. Cyprus is in the path of capitalist development. Therefore, we couldn't but have this "fruit" in Cyprus too. We are talking about subculture, the import of subculture and the development of individualism through the way of life offered by society as a whole. Beyond this, there is some weariness that comes about due to the continuous stagnation, for 21 years now, due to the lack of solution to the Cyprus problem.

We, communists, should never be forgetting the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the socialist community, and we, the mature communists, should not disregard the fact that the youth is, quite naturally, a more sensitive receiver of both bad and good. They, quite naturally, become enthusiastic over successes, more than we do, but they can also be disappointed by failures more easily and to a greater extent than us. When in recent years we ourselves went through a period of search, fortunately without losing our course, it was natural that this search would be more intense and more difficult for every young man and woman. It was more difficult for the youth as on a daily bases the mass Media brained-washed them that socialism was lost, had failed, that the socialist ideals had been buried along with the Soviet Union.

You would tell me that this was a distortion. Of course it was a distortion. But it was heard in our homes every day. The young men and women also witnessed the distraction of the statues of Lenin, of the dismantling of everything in these countries. It is a natural consequence, hence, that these events influenced them and caused disappointment.

Present day youth, does not think in the same way we do due to all these situations

and due, of course, to its own development. The youth we are going to have tomorrow is not going to think like the present day one. If we proceed to "excommunicating" them for not thinking like we do, we are in fact "excommunicating" ourselves, and we have to understand this.

Nor is it possible, comrades, that the Party undertakes the guiding of the youth. Such a move would have been wrong and beyond reality. It would have also been a political mistake of enormous dimensions. There are able, very able party cadres, that are in the leadership of EDON. What is needed from the Party is to help these comrades still more. I would also like to tell you something else, taking advantage of our gathering here. It is neither the Central Committee nor the 15 members of the Political Bureau that are going to solve the problem of developing our work in the youth movement. It is up to us all. We shall either stop facing EDON at the local level as an organization that takes care of the practical work of the movement and give EDON and its role a political significance, or, because the objective factors now are not positive and do not help, do not create spontaneity, we shall have problems.

One of the Party's main political duties is to help our youth organization to recover, to become still stronger and more powerful; to regain its significant prestige among the broad masses of the youth, because it is in this way that we shall transfuse blood into the Party for the future.

Approximately the same is true for the work among women. Yes it has become annoying that many women comrades are forced to parade from the podium of our Congresses and repeat the same appeal, the same criticism. We have to take measures, at last. It should be clarified, of course, that the problem cannot be solved by administrative measures. Neither by the appointment of women comrades to the various posts; nor is the issue, and this should be said, centred in the election of certain women comrades to the Central Committee or to the House of Representatives. The issue is to uproot this mentality that is deeply rooted in the consciousness and souls of all of us: The woman is, should be taken and seen as equal. If this is done, the result is going to be the opposite of what we have today. In result, without any pushing or appointment, women comrades will be elected to both public and party posts.

It should be noted here that in this Congress, having slightly less delegates as a whole, we have more women than at the previous congress. Of course, in order to stop doing self-criticism all the time, fortunately more women comrades have been elected to the new Central Committee of our Party.

I would like to congratulate our women comrades who claim their equality to the rest of the citizens, and I would like to stress that if this does not become a cause of all of us and we leave women to fight this struggle alone, things are not going to change. This should become a cause pursued by all of us.

The organizational slackness

Before I move to other issues, I would like to refer to a very serious issue of organizational nature. It is the issue of the so-called slackening. Slackening is not due to our ideological slackening. It is due to all those factors that we have mentioned as making our work among the youth difficult; to the objective circumstances and the blows inflicted upon us.

The ideological work should become one of our priorities. It is "sine qua non", an indispensable condition. We have clear, correct ideological approaches, and a correct ideological search, to put it in a different way. We should make all comrades participate in these searches. The view expressed here about organizing a central party school and regional schools is a positive view and attention should be paid to it. However, we should not repeat what we do in many other cases. We talk about a lot of things that should be

done in this or other way. We conclude the Congress and we go back to our homes, and when the time comes we respond saying "... but I have a wedding to go to, a christening, a birthday party, I have this or that obligation", and we do not respond to the duty. Many comrades from the organizational cadres, come out now and say that the ideological work should be among or priorities. However, when discussions are carried out in the Secretariats and District Committees, many times priority is given to other duties and the ideological work is left at the lowest level. Consequently, a turn should be made in our ideological work.

Certain basic issues should be clarified

Comrades, I think that we should clarify certain things regarding rapprochement, defence, the Dogma of the United Defence Area, our approach to chauvinism and national nihilism. Whatever our Party converts into absolute, it will later find in its way. Defence was judged by all of us as necessary to face a possible new adventurist attack from the Turkish occupation army. This position was adopted by several Party Congresses and is now being reiterated.

Defence is necessary

From that point on, we have to decide the way we face the issues of implementation of the correct defence policy. We cannot face it as pessimists. I wish we didn't have to buy even one weapon. I wish we could dismantle the National Guard yesterday! I wish that strongly. However, in the conditions of Cyprus this is a utopia. It is a mistake for us to develop this utopia to ourselves. Unfortunately, defence is necessary. At the same time, we have correctly adopted a decision saying that Defence is not an aim in itself. It is a means through which we will reach a goal. Which is the goal? The goal is only one: the peaceful, I underline, the peaceful and just solution of the Cyprus problem. In order to pass the correct messages any exaggeration on defence issues should be avoided. Both in words and in deeds. Because I agree that the greatest exaggerations are in words and not in deeds. We vote for the relative budget items because we have a policy on the issue. We support defence. If we are against voting in favour, then we have to decide that we are against Defence. The C.C. and the Political Bureau of the Party have to pursue and materialize the Party decisions on every occasion. Three years ago, under the previous Government, we had adopted a Defence plan, that includes also specific items that the present government has not materialized, despite its boasting on achievements in the field of Defence. It has not materialized them in order to be able to cover other deficits and present other numbers on indices that concern Maastricht. This is explained by the fact that the present Government wants to present, by any means, the best indices as if the European Union has its arms open for Cyprus to enter. This represents nothing less but an effort to convert the EU and the possible accession of Cyprus to a panacea for the present Government to hide its deadlocks both on the internal problems and the handling of the Cyprus problem.

Coming back to the issue of defence, I would like to point out that our Party should pay attention not to have any exaggerations both on the point of the kind of armaments that are proposed for purchasing and the aim they are going to serve, but particularly to the so-called Dogma of the United Defence Area. Our Party, comrades, disagreed, disagrees and will continue to disagree with the philosophy of the Dogma of the United Defence Area. And there is no contradiction when our Party states that Cyprus, as an independent state, could conclude, if it wished, a defence agreement with another state called Greece. There is no contradiction whatsoever. We are not saying that it should do it, but that it could. Because our position is that on the basis of the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance Greece is fully covered to defend Cyprus in case of an adventurous action by Turkey.

However, we disagree with the Dogma of the United Defence Area and our disagree-

ment has been explained repeatedly and we shall continue explaining it to Greek Government officials, including the Prime Minister of Greece, to the National Council and the President of the Republic as well as in public. The Dogma of the United Defence Area turns the independent Cyprus into a defence area of another independent state, Greece, no matter how friendly this state is towards Cyprus.

Those who have concluded it refuse, from my point of view, to accept that this action, the turning of Cyprus into a defence area of Greece, inflicts a blow, whether they want it or not, to the entity of the independent Republic of Cyprus. We have a common view, reiterated also in the most recent joint meeting in the presence of the Greek Prime Minister, that this entity is the largest weapon we have for the salvation of Cyprus.

Hence, any actions that concern Defence or the handling of the Cyprus problem, or the way this handling is decided, should be subordinate also to the maintaining of the entity of the Republic of Cyprus. We should not give any arguments to those who desire to question the entity of the independent Republic of Cyprus.

The messages we send to the Turkish Cypriots

Comrades, this issue is exactly related with the messages we send to the Turkish Cypriots on the solution of the Cyprus problem. The messages we send out to the Turkish Cypriots should constantly be messages of a peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem. These should be messages of rapprochement. It should be a message that we are absolutely disposed to guarantee fully the security of the Turkish Cypriots within the framework of a Federal Republic of Cyprus.

We, therefore, should be twice as careful. Rapprochement exists thanks to AKEL. Rapprochement should be included in the assets of this Party, both as a declaration and in action. I would like to remind you that in 1974 and in the beginning of '75, when the Turkish occupation army was looting our country and, of course, the "anti" feelings were very intense, at that difficult time, this Party had the strength, the perspicacity, because it is guided by the ideology you know, to say "the Turks of Cyprus are not our enemies". It had the strength to raise the voice of rapprochement. We were badly insulted and called names. After many persistent and wearisome struggles, rapprochement eventually became the official policy of the state under Vassiliou's administration. Of course, all parties accept it and to a certain degree materialize it, each one in its own way.

Criticism has been made from the Congress podium that our work on rapprochement is deficient. I shall not reject, comrades, this criticism. The work on rapprochement is deficient; as long as there are dividing walls and objective and subjective difficulties, it will be deficient. There is always going to be a need for something more. It was said here that we should follow the example of our comrades in London (NOTE: Cypriots in London and UK in general). I congratulate our comrades in London, but it is not on their own that they work on rapprochement there. It is with the help and guidance of the C.C. of the Party too, as the necessary conditions exist there.

Why were we not able, for two years in a row, to meet with the Republican Turkish Party here in Cyprus?

When we face the issues of rapprochement and chauvinism, that form the other side of the same aspect that I wanted to put forward, we should see the responsibilities of both communities. The responsibilities of the democratic and progressive forces in both communities. We should not load the whole responsibility exclusively onto AKEL. I wish we could do everything on our own. For certain things to be done there should be a partner too. And at times, the partner may face greater difficulties than we do.

Chauvinism and national nihilism

Now I come to the issue of chauvinism and national nihilism. It was said here that we can balance chauvinism and national nihilism. It is a mistake. Based on the lessons of history, and particularly of recent history, it can be stated that national nihilism contributed to the loss of a whole camp: of the socialist camp. It was one of the factors used by the enemies of socialism.

Do Turkish Cypriots accept national nihilism? Since it is the smaller (in size) community we should be careful in our approaches. Since it is the smaller community and it desires to safeguard itself and its entity from the threat of the larger entity, it stresses even more its entity as a Turkish Cypriot community. This is normal. These are facts of life and we should respect them.

Let us not think that national nihilism would serve our common case with the Turkish Cypriots. The views that we are simply Cypriots and nothing more, on that we are, some say Phoenicians and other things, help neither us nor the Turkish Cypriots. They do not help the whole of the Cypriot people. The correct position is, and we should be stressing it (because we should be giving the correct messages both to the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities), that we have the one Greek and the other Turkish origin. Which is the difference of our position with the others? We recognize the same rights to the Turkish Cypriots too to say that they are Turks, as to the Greek Cypriots to say that are Greeks. And we are struggling for this; this right should be recognized to the Turkish Cypriots, and it is this tight that the chauvinist want to prohibit, even by the use of force. This is why some people appear now and want to form legions. There are people in the Greek Cypriot community that have not accepted that the Turkish Cypriots have rights, and first of all that they have the right to be Turkish Cypriots. At the same time, we differ from the rest because recognizing the right of the Greeks of Cyprus to be Greek Cypriots and to the Turkish Cypriots to be Turkish Cypriots, recognizing their right and duty to develop their traditions, language, customs and habits that derive also from their national origin at the same time both communities stress that we have more that are common and characterize us as Cypriots.

This Party comrades, was, is and will remain the Party of the Cypriots; of the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and not just abstractly of the Cypriots. Of the Cypriots who are Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, of the Armenians and Maronites and Latines too. Of all Cypriots. It should be obliged to find the golden middle. Presently it mainly contacts its activities among the Greek Cypriot community but it should, however, respect the common feeling. Respecting the common feeling it can influence, even counteract chauvinism, that is a destroying element, a sorrow, and if it becomes domineering again, it will lead to the complete destruction of this country.

Therefore, above all AKEL is the main fighter against chauvinism and such it will remain. Let us not forget that fighting chauvinism in both communities we have given heroes to our people: Dervis Kavazoglu and Costas Misiaoulis.

However, if we do not take the correct stand, then we are not acting in the correct way towards our Turkish Cypriot compatriots. We should take into account the fact that there are dangers originating from the development of nationalism and chauvinism also within the Turkish Cypriot community and we should be sending the correct messages that are able to fight chauvinism not only within the Greek Cypriot community but also in the Turkish Cypriot community.

We shouldn't be forgetting that as time passed by they have created certain so-called state structures; we shouldn't be forgetting that as time passed by the Turkish Cypriot progressive forces too have altered positions. It is not pleasant that they have altered them. Hence, in Cyprus as a whole, AKEL is the only remaining most consistent political force, that stands against chauvinism and is fighting for the reunification of Cyprus on the

basis of recognition of both human and communal rights.

This Party cannot but stand against any position, taken by anybody, which wants a solution of the Cyprus problem with the safeguarding of the rights of one community to the detriment of the rights of the other. This is true for the Greek Cypriots, but also for the Turkish Cypriots. There cannot be a correct and just solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of a bi-regional, bi-zonal Federation when at the same time prohibiting the right of refugees to return. As a Turkish Cypriot acquires the right to live with his community accumulated under the roof of the bi-regional Federation in the northern part of Cyprus, much in the same way, a Greek Cypriot originating from that area, should at least have the right to choose whether or not to return.

Otherwise, the solution shall not be just. And above all it shall not be viable, as it would not be based on justice that is imposed by the present conditions created by the coup d'etat and the invasion.

Fully respecting the equality of all forces, irrespective of size

Comrades, I shall conclude my closing speech with the following fundamental issue. We have discussed and adopted the Party's strategy for the electoral contests ahead of us. The party's strategy, as formulated and declared, for change in the 1998 presidential elections, has caused reactions in the whole society. Is that unpleasant or pleasant? I think that it is undoubtedly pleasant. Had society heard our proposal and showed no interest, letting it go without paying attention to it, then it would mean that we had achieved nothing, that our proposal had no meaning whatsoever. Our proposal, however, has meaning since it has caused both positive and negative reactions.

I do not think that it would have been fair from anyone to expect that the government spokesman or the parties in the coalition government would applaud AKEL for wanting them out of office. The issue is to what extent they give a negative response in a correct and documented way to our proposal. To what extent they wage their expected counter-attack in a correct and documented way.

When the Government says that AKEL is seeking to form a front for change and that this takes us back to long outdated times as they claim, this only demonstrates how outdated the mentality of the authors of this position is. Two or three years ago, the Democratic Rally formed a front with the Democratic Party to oust President Vassiliou from office. Was that not an outdated mentality? Things are not conducted in this way in the framework of a correct political life. Within the rules of the democratic game every party has the right to address anyone he considers he should address and ask from them to carry consultations in order to conclude any kind of cooperation. I remind you that, when the Democratic Party proceeded in concluding cooperation with the Democratic Rally, we did not criticize it for proceeding to this cooperation or that it was dishonour to do so. We stated that it was the right of the Democratic Party and of the Democratic Rally to conclude a so-called unity of the Centre-right and the Right-wing. We characterized it as unity of the Right-wing and Extreme-right wing. We had stated, however, that this action of the Democratic Party did not express the will of the democratic people of the centre who, for many years had supported with us in common struggles the Republic of Cyprus, democracy as such from the conspiracies of the extreme-right elements that were, unfortunately, sheltered and continue to be sheltered in the Democratic Rally. To avoid any misunderstandings, we clarify that we are not saying that the Democratic Rally as such conspired or is conspiring against the Republic of Cyprus and democracy, though the present right-wing government of the country, is, unfortunately, taking measures and carrying actions that constitute blows against the democratic institutions and we have repeatedly documented it.

Therefore, it is AKEL's and any other party's democratic right to put forward its propo-

sals fully respecting the other forces, with humbleness and without any intention to domineer anyone. AKEL is addressing everyone with openness, doing, we consider, a correct appreciation and analysis of the facts of the present condition in Cyprus.

Reaching the conclusion that the democratic, progressive forces have the duty that emanates from the present condition and the problems that the present administration has created, we propose this cooperation. Cooperation to overcome the problems that torture this country; cooperation on the Cyprus problem, the internal administration of the country, on the socio-economic situation. Is it possible that we all have identical stands on all positions? Of course, no. If things were so, then we would all be in one party and have no problems.

The golden middle can be found when the different views are respected. I believe that the golden middle is going to be found. Some have said that AKEL's proposal was rejected by everybody. We have not perceived something of the kind. We have understood that various forces, various parties, wish us all to talk concretely on these issues after the parliamentary elections. We respect this position, and that is how we are going to act.

I repeat that we are going to talk respecting fully the equality of all forces, irrespective of size. Some say "what about the Democratic Party (DIKO)? Isn't it included in the democratic forces?" Our invitation, in a sense, is addressed to DIKO too. However, the Democratic Party cannot on the one hand, be in government, and on the other, and at the same time, form part of the Front for the change of this administration. It is up to the Democratic Party and its leadership. If and as long as, the leadership of that party decides to separate its position from the Democratic Rally, from the present government, we shall welcome such a move. And, of course, we would gladly discuss with the Democratic Party too.

Life imposes the need of change

Comrades, the need of change is something that life itself imposes. The simple people, I am sure, with the passing of time, want change even more strongly. I believe that it will be up to the political forces of the broader democratic and political space to respond to the feelings and wishes of the simple people. I want to repeat the appeal for everyone of us to place ourselves beyond party, personal or any other ambition. We can do it! We should discuss with an open mind and on an equal basis whatever is needed to put on the table for discussion. I want to repeat, comrades, that AKEL has a serious role to play in this effort. For the party to be able to play its role in the struggle for change in the better possible way and as effectively as possible, AKEL should emerge from the forthcoming parliamentary elections even stronger and surely with higher percentage of the votes.

At the Congress we have spoken well. As from tomorrow we should prove all that. The new Central Committee should promote the implementation of procedures for the election of the Political Bureau, which in its turn should be formed as a body and immediately give the mandate to all competent organs to establish the canvassing committees, on a central, district and local level and right off set into the electoral battle; having broadened lists. We should clarify that having broadened lists does not mean we are going to broaden the party too. The Party is one thing and the parliamentary group another. No comrade should worry as though there will be no party members in the House of Representatives. Most of our MPs will be, for sure, party members. We should wish to have "comrades in struggle" from the broader space on our lists and wish they are elected. This would only serve the good of the country and the common cause.

Comrades, I have tired you and I ask you to forgive me! Congratulations to everyone, sincerely and full-heartily, for the communist stand we have kept during the whole procedure of the Congress, as well as before the Congress. I also congratulate you all for the stand we are going to keep as from today.

Let us look at ourselves again. Let us all make our self-criticism and let us strengthen even more the qualities of unselfishness, faith to the ideals of Democratic Socialism, our faith to Marxism Leninism and Internationalism. Let us all together get to work for a still stronger Party, better tight together in its organization, able to lead this people to happiness and prosperity.

Let us realize our Party's mission and the role it plays through the words of the foreign comrades who spoke at the Congress. We are not going to get arrogant, but we ourselves should not underestimate the role of this beautiful, large in quality, history, contribution and sacrifice Party. Its role in the salvation of our country, in the freeing of the working people from the sufferings of exploitation, for brotherhood between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, even for brotherhood among peoples.

I believe that this Party, as the foreign comrades describe it, a thousand times deserves to have our better selves.

Let it not be taken as a selfish statement. I am sure that what I am going to say is true for all of us. Personally, if I die a thousand times, I will be reborn as many times a member of AKEL!

Long Live the honoured AKEL!

Long Live Marxism-Leninism and Internationalism!

Long Live Peace and International Solidarity!

Long Live Cyprus!

Long Live our People: Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots!

