

1990 presidential candidate) Mario Vargas Llosa. Paz says that socialism in underdeveloped countries swiftly turns into despotic "state capitalism." Vargas Llosa, once an enthusiastic backer of Fidel Cas-

tro, has since concluded that sacrificing freedom is not the way to overcome injustice. Perhaps there may be something to the heroic image of the Latin American writer after all.

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## OTHER NATIONS

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### *Going Halfway*

"The Vietnam Communist Party Strives to Remain the 'Only Force'" by Charles A. Joiner, in *Asian Survey* (Nov. 1990), Univ. of Calif., Room 408, 6701 San Pablo Ave., Oakland, Calif. 94720.

Communist leaders in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have taken two big steps toward revitalizing their moribund economies. One is to move toward free markets, the other is to surrender the communist monopoly of political power. Many analysts believe that both steps are essential for the nations' economic health. But not everyone has agreed. Kim Il Sung in North Korea and Fidel Castro in Cuba have refused to take either step. Others have not been quite so steadfast in their Marxist-Leninist faith. In Vietnam, Nguyen Van Linh and his colleagues, like their counterparts in China, have decided to go halfway—they're taking the economic step, but not the political one.

Since the Sixth Party Congress in December 1986, says Joiner, a Temple University political scientist, Vietnam has tried to free up the command economy. "The 'new way of thinking' (*doi moi*), 'renovation' (*canh tan*), and 'openness' (*cong khai*) have become the entrenched party line," he says. Despite some limited gains, however, the country's enormous economic difficulties remain. Among them: low productivity, inadequate public services, and continued dependence on subsidized loans and trade with the Soviet

Union and the nations of the former Soviet bloc. Declines in the loans and trade are sure to worsen Vietnam's problems.

Overcoming them requires political, as well as economic, reform, one member of the party's Politburo dared to suggest last year. Tran Xuan Bach, who was a leader in party ideological affairs, warned that "You can't walk with one long leg and one short leg and you can't walk with only one leg." His "erroneous views" were not well received by his colleagues. He was expelled from the Politburo and the party's Central Committee. Linh, the party's general secretary, said in a major address in 1990 that the Vietnam Communist Party must remain the "only force" because "ours is a party of the people, by the people, relying on the people and for the people."

Vietnam's "ubiquitous security system" is, of course, "a major deterrent to most forms of dissenting behavior" by the 67 million Vietnamese, Joiner notes. Perhaps it and "renovation" will be enough to enable the party to maintain its monopoly of political power. Still, he says, "whether it is possible to walk with one long leg and one short one throughout much of the 1990s is far from being definitively resolved."

### *A Swedish Dilemma*

"Sweden: Social Democrats in Trouble" by Stefan Svallfors, in *Dissent* (Winter 1991), 521 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

During the early 1930s, when the United States and Europe were trying to cope with the Great Depression, many progres-

sives looked to Sweden's social democracy as a successful "middle way" between dogmatic free enterprise and doctrinaire so-