pense of the many. The role of the peace activist is to unmask these mechanisms, to understand how they work, to see what impact they have at the micro-level, and to determine what techniques and tactics must be employed to undermine them.

MARIO BORRELLI

EDUCATION FOR PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

The need for a quantitative and qualitative improvement in education in support of peace is acutely felt in these days of thermonuclear weapons. It is necessary to bring about a rapid increase in the intellectual capacity of peoples and to raise the general level of consciousness and education of mankind as a whole. Appropriate instruction in schools, promoting greater mutual familiarity and understanding of peoples, is also an important prerequisite for bringing about a closer integration of nations in accordance with the principles of mutual respect and assistance, democracy and freedom.

The geographical situation of Bulgaria and its desirable physical characteristics have meant that for more than 1,300 years the country has often been fought over, occupied and dominated by foreign rule. As a result of this bitter experience, the Bulgarian people cherish a deep love of that peace and freedom for which in the past they have had to fight.

It is a prevalent and well-established idea in modern Bulgaria that peace has to be won by struggle. Hence, education for peace is essentially the education of ‘fighters for peace’, who may be described as politically enlightened individuals, well aware of the economic, scientific, technical and cultural relationships between peoples, which, together with political and ideological links, constitute the complex network of interdependence among nations in the world. Being so informed and having a well-developed social and humanistic sense, the ‘fighter for peace’ is prepared to take an active part in the movement for international understanding, solidarity and mutual assistance, for disarmament and the prevention of military conflicts.

Bulgaria needs peace as an essential condition for pursuing the major reconstruction drive in which its people have been engaged since 1944. At that time, the socialist revolution led to a deep ideological transformation whereby, under the guidance and instruction of that great son of the Bulgarian working class, Georgi Dimitrov, all bourgeois nationalistic and chauvinistic elements in foreign policy and education alike were repudiated and removed. All territorial claims with regard to neighbouring countries were abandoned; a policy of peaceful coexistence among the Balkan states was adopted; and efforts were made to turn the Balkan peninsula into a zone of peace. Likewise, the State and Party Leader, Todor Zhivkov, has also proposed turning the Balkan peninsula into a nuclear-free zone. And in a speech before the National Assembly in 1979, Todor Zhivkov said, ‘We have a hundred reasons for wanting peace in the world and have not a single reason for wanting international tension, mistrust, hostility, “hot” or “cold” wars among peoples.’

In socialist Bulgaria the pursuit of peace, including through education, has the status of a constitutional requirement. The preamble to the Constitution states that, ‘We, the citizens of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, . . . are firmly resolved to assist the strengthening of world peace, to work for understanding among all peoples of the world’. Article 3 of the Constitution points out that ‘we are pursuing
a policy of peace and understanding'; and Article 53 contains a more extended formulation, as follows: 'It is the duty of every citizen to help in the preservation and strengthening of peace. The instigation and propaganda of war are prohibited and shall be punished under the law as grave crimes against peace and mankind.'

The implication of these constitutional provisions for education is that a peace-loving orientation must be maintained not only in matters of policy but also in the work of instruction and education in schools. The Ministry of Education may not allow any course of instruction which creates in students distorted ideas about countries and peoples, near or far, nor any education that tends to encourage the instigation of war. Educational workers at all levels are obliged to assist in the conduct of education in a spirit of peace and international understanding.

The Bulgarian government’s policies in the field of education harmonize well with the goals and programmes of Unesco for promoting education for international understanding and co-operation. The Unesco project for the establishment of a network of associated schools, for example, is set against the perspective of a new world order, based upon the principles of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence— a world order towards the creation of which the efforts of the Bulgarian government are also directed. There is therefore keen co-operation in this country with Unesco’s Associated Schools Project, as detailed below.

The life of the Bulgarian people consists primarily in peaceful constructive labour, and preparation for participation in that labour forms the main content of school instruction and education in the compulsory course of the general 12-year secondary school, in accordance with the ‘Theses on the Development of Education in the People’s Republic of Bulgaria’ (1979). An essentially optimistic perspective of the future of the country and of mankind as a whole underlies this policy; war is seen as a negation of constructive labour which forms the core of peaceful life: it is in our own time that most is being done to explore and utilise the vast reserves of ability in both the younger generation and adults with a view to their contribution in socially useful work.

In addition to education for work, much emphasis is laid in contemporary Bulgaria on international education. This, properly conceived, is the very essence of education for peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among nations. Furthermore, in the conviction that the 21st century, when today’s students will still be living and working, will be much more internationalised than the present, a solid international education now will both assist in progress towards the future and help to prepare the rising generation for it.

International education, like education for peaceful coexistence among peoples and the training of active participants in the fight for peace, is a permanent concern of the state leadership and the public at large. Earlier and more recent writings have treated the question not only in a general, theoretical way but also on a didactic and methodological plane. In a collection entitled *The School and the Fight for Peace*, there are indications of what can be done towards maintaining and strengthening peace both through instruction and through the students’ extracurricular and extra-mural work. Curricular possibilities are identified in the teaching of history, geography, the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, psychology and logic, literature, the Russian language, modern Western languages, physics, chemistry, the natural sciences and mathematics. The underlying idea of the publication is the democratic concept that it is possible and necessary to further education for peace, mutual understanding and co-operation in the lower as much as in the higher school grades, and at vocational as well as general educational establishments. Grad-