

Bureau adopts disarmament appeal, affirms faith in UN

Ponomarev said that the point about the role of SS-20s in relation to the Netherlands was that missiles deployed in the Asian part of the Soviet Union could not reach the Netherlands. With regard to the missiles that were being withdrawn from combat duty, the launchers were being dismantled. And concerning verification, there was no doubt that everything was monitored from outer space.

Karsten Voigt (SPD, Federal Germany) asked Ponomarev how close the Soviet government was to the Socialist International's views, especially on SDI and medium-range missiles?

Ponomarev expressed his country's willingness to promote cooperation with the parties of the SI and all those who wanted a reduction of nuclear weapons. The speeches to the conference by socialist leaders had contained important proposals. But the US representative had said nothing on these proposals. He had merely insisted on star wars. It was clear that the US insistence on SDI was a drive to ensure domination.

Ed Broadbent (NDP/NPD, Canada) asked Ponomarev whether the Soviet Union would be prepared to accept on-site verification of existing weapons if the US indicated willingness to alter radically its budget for star wars research and to adhere strictly to the ABM treaty?

Verification, answered Ponomarev, however important it might be, must play an ancillary role. The most important thing was to agree on curbing the arms race. The amount of verification must correspond to the amount of reduction; otherwise it lacked meaning and became a means of reconnaissance. However, when necessary, additional measures could be taken, and commissions could be set up to clarify the claims made and carry out on-site verification on a voluntary basis.

The Soviet Union was of the view that an agreement on arms reduction should be achieved first, and that verification be discussed subsequently. But it had never in principle rejected the necessity of verification.

The SI Bureau held its second meeting of the year in Vienna on October 15-16, at the invitation of the Socialist Party of Austria (SPÖ). The venue was the imposing Hofburg, the headquarters of the old Imperial Austrian administration, where one of the three main East-West arms-control fora, on reductions in conventional arms in Europe (MBFR), has been meeting regularly since 1974.

Thus the Hofburg — the Bureau met in the very room where the MBFR talks are held — provided a highly symbolic background to two of the issues which figured the prominently in the discussions, disarmament and multilateral cooperation. In preparation for the SI Disarmament Conference held at the same venue immediately following its meeting, the Bureau adopted the Vienna Appeal on Disarmament. In addition to the appeal, the Bureau adopted resolutions supporting the efforts to establish a chemical-weapons-free zone in Central Europe and a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific (*for full texts, see Documents, page 36 and 38; for full report on the conference, see pages 27-29.*)

Vienna, host to a number of specialist agencies of the United Nations, was a no less appropriate venue to discuss the meeting's main theme, 'The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, and multilateral cooperation'. The Bureau adopted a major statement affirming the SI's intention 'to remain one of the main international forces in support of the United Nations' (*for full text, see Documents, page 36.*)

Major resolutions on the environment, Southern Africa, Central America, Chile and finance and development were also adopted (*for full texts, see Documents, pages 36-38.*) The Middle East and Latin America

were important parts of the agenda as well.

Among its decisions, the Bureau accepted an invitation from the Peruvian Aprista Party (APRA) to hold the 1986 congress in Lima; recommended the Democratic Labour Party (PDT) of Brazil for membership of the SI; and set up a Study Group on Africa (*see reports on page 35.*)

A short text condemning terrorism was also adopted. It states that 'Democratic socialists ... affirm that under no circumstances can acts of terrorism, whether performed by individuals, groups or governments, be justified.'

Opening the meeting, Leopold Gratz, the chairman of the Viennese SPÖ and Austrian foreign minister, said that the Socialist International gave the lie to the impression, fostered by right-wing forces in recent years, that the democratic left had lost its dynamism. There was ample evidence — not least growing popular support for member parties the world over — of the fact that 'people recognise and value the efforts and intercession of the democratic left'.

It was imperative that the left continue its struggle to achieve the objectives of social justice, the participation of all men and women in decisions which affect their future, the eradication of

hunger and unemployment, and above all the preservation of peace. Although there were no miracle cures, socialists 'must show, not only in our manifestos, but above all by practical example, that we will deal with the challenges of the present; not only as "doctors at the sickbed of capitalism" but also as pioneers of a more humane society"'.

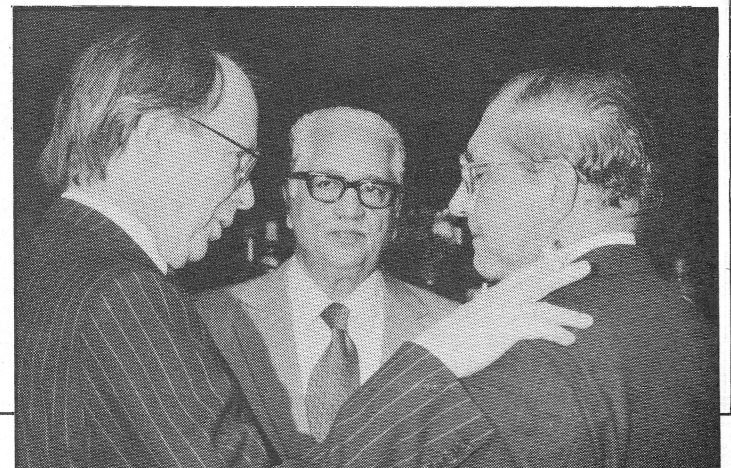
In his opening remarks, SI president Willy Brandt thanked the SPÖ for its invitation to the Bureau and for its efforts in organising the SI Disarmament Conference.

Brandt emphasised 'a very important mission we have to fulfil', namely that of realising human rights, a struggle which was indivisible. 'We must fight for them everywhere on our planet. That is why we adopted in recent years commitments towards Chile and Afghanistan, Central America and Eastern European countries, the Middle East and South Africa.'

Socialists should fight for human rights with unflinching courage, in particular in cases where conservatives had paid lip service but had done nothing else — South Africa offering most glaring example of this.

The main theme was introduced by Peter Jankowitsch (SPÖ, Austria), a former Austrian ambassador to the UN.

Peter Jankowitsch, Fernando Vera, Guillermo Ungo





Shimon Peres, Maarten van Traa

The United Nations was today under increasing attack from a phalanx led by neo-conservatives from North America and old conservatives from Europe, and other traditional enemies of internationalism. And it was no doubt true, he said, that the United Nations had disappointed many hopes and that there were many factors within the UN system which had greatly reduced its effectiveness over the years. He mentioned 'bureaucratisation and ritualisation of the multilateral process as real problems'.

But much of the criticism levelled at the UN could be attributed to the fact that the organisation had never really developed as intended. The transformation of a largely colonised world into a polity of at present 159 sovereign members of the UN had never been considered by its founders. 'The world as seen in 1945 from San Francisco was essentially white, western and christian; now it is a much more colourful place'.

Among the achievements of the United Nations, Jankowitsch mentioned: the avoidance of general war; democratisation of international relations; creation of peace-keeping forces; promotion of economic development; elaboration of an international political machinery; and heightened awareness of human rights issues.

The UN should be open to new realities, aspirations and paradigms, he said. It could do more, for instance, to monitor both the environment and societies through the collection,

analysis and dissemination of relevant information; facilitate the sharing of experiences and ideas; promote mutual understanding and education through dialogue and negotiation among countries, cultures and societies; and formulate alternative policy options for steering a world society in transition, Jankowitsch concluded.

Jan Pronk (PvdA, Netherlands) noted the link between the role of the United Nations and multilateralism and the world economic crisis. The economic, financial, and environmental problems of today could not be tackled by individual countries, but only at a global level, he said. People were still overly attached to the solutions of the 1960s and 1970s, which were no longer appropriate because the world had changed since then.

The chairman of the Committee on Economic Policy, SICEP, Michael Manley (PNP, Jamaica), reviewing the work on a strategy to overcome the economic crisis, said that *Global Challenge* — the committee's report adopted at the last Bureau and launched on September 25 — represented the first major challenge by the democratic left to the ideas of the radical right that had gained ascendancy in the early 1980s.

Introducing the Middle East discussion, Shimon Peres (Israel Labour Party) said that the main issue today was how to proceed and build the momentum for peace.

Concerning the Israeli raid on the PLO headquarters in Tunis on October 1, Peres said that although an act of violence, it



Rui Mateus, Elena Flores

was also an act of self-defence against a terrorist organisation which, he underlined, had not given up the covenant calling for the destruction of Israel, nor had it renounced violence.

Support for peace must include three points, Peres said: the peace process should be set above all other considerations, in order to maintain the momentum for peace; support for direct negotiations between Israel and Jordan; and the renunciation of terror.

Elazar Granot (MAPAM, Israel) suggested that, in addition, the Socialist International should declare the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian national problem could not be solved through the use of arms, and that it should call for a mutually agreed-upon end to the vicious circle of bloodletting in order to expedite the beginning of negotiations.

Other speakers stressed that the PLO would have to recognise the right of Israel to exist. At the same time, the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including a Palestinian state, would have to be accepted by all parties. Several speakers urged the Israeli government to negotiate with the PLO, for 'peace, if it is to be lasting, must be made with one's enemies, not with one's self-appointed partners', according to Karl Blecha (SPÖ, Austria).

Commenting on the issues raised in the discussion, President Brandt said that 'most of us belong to states which owe their existence to violence; this is a fact of history'. In the Middle East, however, violence could not offer a solution. 'The condemnation of violence is not enough and will not lead to

peace; we must add other elements which might lead to negotiations and perhaps to final solutions', he said.

The Austrian minister for health and the environment, Kurt Steyrer, introduced the discussion on environmental problems.

It should be borne in mind, he argued, that security policy as envisaged by socialists was not just a military or defence question but a comprehensive strategy aimed at achieving a humane existence for all people. In this understanding of the term 'security', the destruction of the environment, which affected nearly all countries, was also a problem of security. Moreover, 'environmental destruction is also a security problem because it can affect political and economic stability and thus spark off military threat or even military conflicts'.

Carlos Andrés Pérez (AD, Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICCAC), said that the fundamental problem of the region was still that of indebtedness, with its serious implications for the democratisation process.

Regretting that there were few positive developments to report from Central America, he emphasised the need for European parties to increase their support for parties in Latin America and for the Contadora effort to end conflict in the region.

In the debate on Southern Africa, speakers reported on their parties' and governments'

contribution to the liberation struggle. Olof Palme (SAP, Sweden) noted that outside pressure on the apartheid regime was becoming ever more important — although even stronger action was of the greatest importance — and the

contributions by socialists in this effort were impressive. He cited the meeting of members of the business community with the ANC in Lusaka in September as a typical example of the effectiveness of outside pressure.

The Bureau also heard reports from the Asia-Pacific Socialist Organisation, APSO, in which it was noted that the region would no doubt become an area of expansion for the SI in future, if only because it was gaining in importance in global economic

and strategic terms; from the Chile Committee on its meeting in Madrid (*see report on page 35*); and from the New Declaration of Principles Committee, SINDEC, which will hold a major meeting in Madrid on February 14, 1986.

List of participants

Socialist International Bureau Meeting Vienna, Austria, October 15-16, 1985

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Robert Kredig

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Socialist International Women
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Irmtraut Karlsson
Maria Rodriguez-Jonas

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