

BUREAU MEETS IN LONDON

The Bureau of the Socialist International at its meeting in London on 13-14 September called for the immediate release of Orlando Cantuarias, Minister of Mining in Salvador Allende's Popular Unity Government, who has been held in a Chilean concentration camp for almost two years for his role in bringing about the nationalisation of the Chilean copper mines.

The Bureau also called for the release of Anibal Palma, another Radical member of President Allende's Government, as well as other political prisoners in Chile.

The Bureau further expressed its utter condemnation of the death sentences pronounced in Burgos and Madrid by the Spanish authorities against the anti-fascist activists José Garmendia Artola, Angel Otaegui Echevarria, Manuel Blanco Chivite, Vladimiro Fernandez Tovar and José Baena Alonso.

The Bureau, under the chairmanship of Karl Czernetz of Austria in the absence due to illness of the International's Chairman Bruno Pittermann, in addition reaffirmed its concern at the abrogation of civil rights in India and protested against the refusal by the Indian Government of Socialist International representatives to visit India to meet Jayaprakash Narayan, the detained socialist leader.

The Bureau further discussed the situation in Portugal and requested the General Secretary of the Portuguese Socialist Party, Mario Soares, to represent the Socialist International at the forthcoming conference of the British Labour Party.

The Bureau which was attended by representatives of the Austrian, Belgian, British, Chilean, Danish, Finnish, French, German, Israeli, Italian, Dutch, New Zealand, Maltese and Swedish member parties of the Socialist International, as well as by representatives of the International Council of Social Democratic Women and the International Union of Socialist Youth, welcomed in a statement the conclusion of the interim agreement between the Governments of Israel and Egypt.

The following are the full texts of the statements adopted by the Bureau on Chile, Spain and the Middle East:

Statement on Chile

'Two years after the violent overthrow of the Popular Unity Government of Chile and the assassination of the democratically-elected President Salvador Allende, the Bureau of the Socialist International reiterates its total condemnation and abhorrence of the present military régime which, having usurped power by force, continues to maintain itself in power against the wishes of the Chilean people by a systematic policy of terror and physical repression, including the use of torture.

'Basic civil liberties have been overthrown in Chile and even greater numbers of the Chilean people are suffering from poverty, unemployment and actual starvation as a result of the reactionary policies pursued by the Chilean dictatorship.

'The Bureau calls upon parties, governments and international organisations to work to ensure that the isolation of the Chilean military régime is increased and that all possible diplomatic and economic pressures are applied with the aim of bringing about the restoration of democracy in Chile.

'The Bureau calls for the immediate release of Orlando Cantuarias, Anibal Palma and all other political prisoners in Chile and appeals for the greatest possible assistance to be given to Chilean political refugees and to relieve the hardship and suffering of the persecuted and their families in Chile.

'The Bureau expresses its full support for all those Chilean democrats struggling to restore democracy in Chile and in particular for its Chilean member party, the Radical Party of Chile.'

Statement on Spain

'The Socialist International at its Bureau meeting in London expresses its utter condemnation of the death sentences pronounced on 28 August in Burgos against the anti-fascist activists José Garmendia Artola and Angel Otaegui Echevarria and also of the death sentences meted out on 11 and 12 September at the court martial

in Madrid against Manuel Blanco Chivite, Vladimiro Fernandez Tovar and José Baena Alonso.

'The Socialist International denounces the fact that there is now a permanent state of emergency in Spain following the promulgation for two years of a so-called anti-terrorist law which in reality is the means for the Franco régime to continue its indiscriminate and brutal repression of political and trade union opposition to the régime.

'The Socialist International expresses its complete solidarity with and support for the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) and other progressive forces in their struggle against the death sentences, the repression and for the establishment of democratic rights.'

Statement on the Middle East

'The Bureau of the Socialist International extends congratulations to the Governments of Israel and Egypt on the conclusion of the interim agreement and expresses the hope that this agreement will prove to be the first step towards a just and permanent peace throughout the Middle East.

'The Bureau extends its best wishes to its affiliate, the Israel Labour Party, for further successes in the cause of peace and socialism.'

VIETNAM COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Socialist International's ad hoc Committee on Vietnam was held in London on 12 September. The Committee had before it a report from the Vietnam Socialist Party (a member party of the Socialist International) and submitted recommendations to the Bureau of the Socialist International for material support for the Vietnam Socialist Party.

The following representatives of member parties and associated organisations of the International attended the meeting: Bui Kien Thanh, Assistant General Secretary, Vietnam Socialist Party; Giampiero Rolandi, London representative, Italian Social Democratic Party, and Vera Matthias, Secretary, International Council of Social Democratic Women. Hans Janitschek, General Secretary of the Socialist International, also attended.