

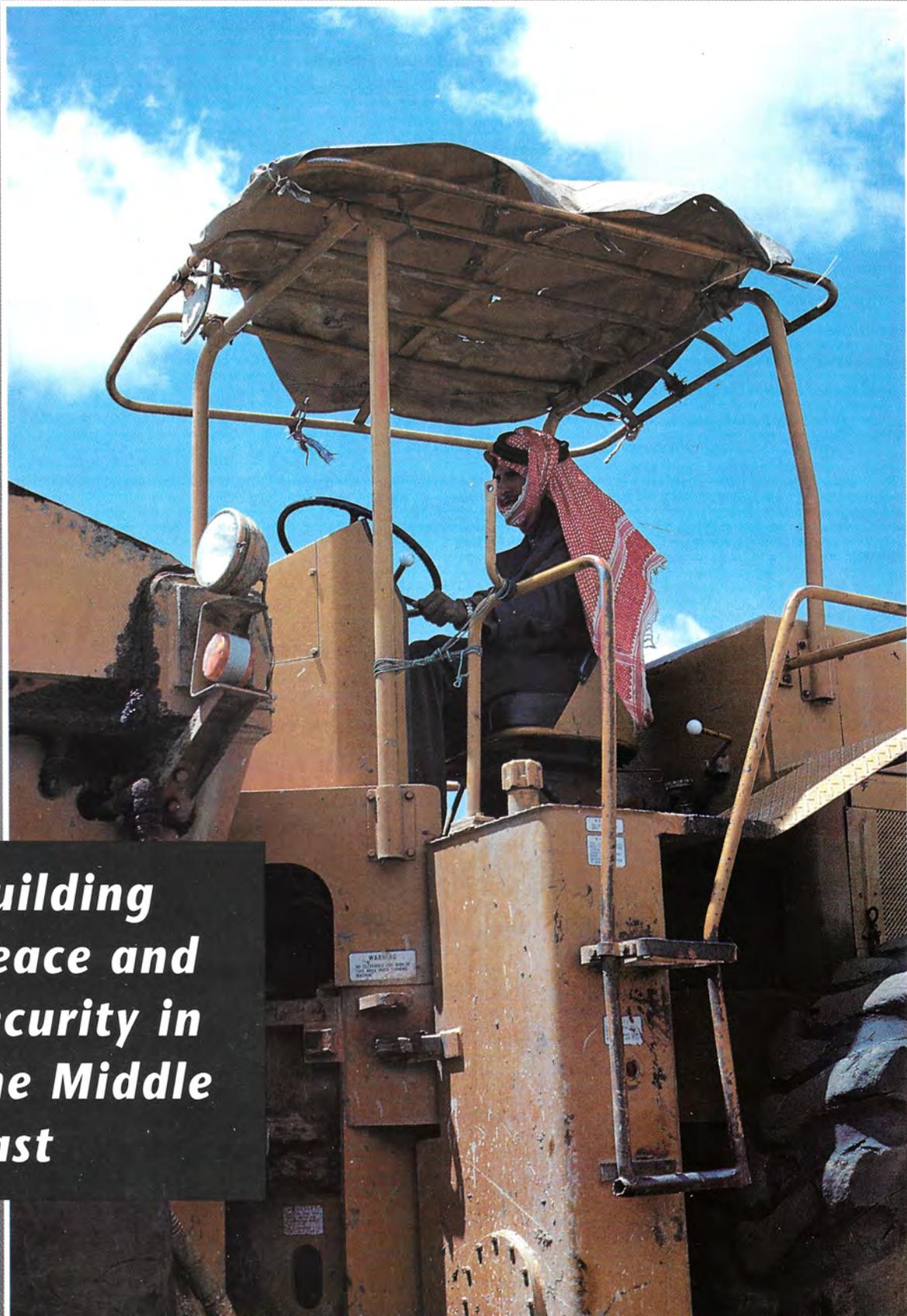


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# Socialist Affairs

AND WOMEN & POLITICS



**Building  
peace and  
security in  
the Middle  
East**

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## ***THE MOMENT FOR REFORM***

The end of a bloody but mercifully short war waged to eject the forces of Saddam Hussein from Kuwait has been seen in many parts of the world as the moment to promote a new world order.

The Socialist International, as an organisation which since its very foundation more than a century ago has sought a new and more just ordering of the affairs of nations, and which for many years has devoted great efforts to the promotion of peace world-wide and in the Middle East in particular, is well placed to contribute to the debate on the nature of this new world order.

A durable and politically acceptable new order will not materialise without a broadly-based effort by all the countries of the world for disarmament, development and the establishment of the rule of law. The principal channel for this effort must be the United Nations Organisation. For this to be effective however the United Nations has to be reformed, strengthened and re-invigorated.

## ON THE ROAD TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

*SI President Willy Brandt gives some pointers for the way ahead.*

No-one would be so presumptuous as to state that he or she held the blueprint for peace and security arrangements for this vast and important region which were acceptable to all sides and which could be put into effect. It is good to realise that work is being undertaken on this subject in different places, my own country included. The following observations are merely pointers which could be elaborated by the interested parties, particularly by the states within the region.

The first of my pointers is concerned with procedure. The frequently voiced idea that the many diverse problems of the region could be resolved once and for all at one conference seems pretty naive to me. What we should do is hold conferences with numerous preliminary talks, i.e a series of conferences of the sort with which we Europeans have become familiar within the processes of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

I would remind readers that the CSCE officially began in Helsinki in 1975, but had already been set in motion some years before. What was formalised at the end of 1990 at the Paris Summit, after a decade and a half, obviously did not represent an end to a process, but was no more and no less than an important intermediate stage in the achievement of common security and close cooperation on economic, political and cultural affairs.

My second point is that we should not have any false ideas of the timescale involved, especially since under no circumstances are all of the states in the region convinced of the desirability of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East - even if the title of such a conference might be different.

The question of the participation of states from within the region and from outside the region gives rise of itself to a multitude of problems. This is especially so since undoubtedly communities which do not enjoy statehood, as well as multilateral organisations, would need to be taken into account. On the one hand I am thinking of representatives of the Palestinian people, and indeed perhaps the Kurds as well, and on the other hand of the United Nations and perhaps, too, the European Community.

Thirdly, it may be possible to transfer the idea of 'negotiating baskets' used in the CSCE process to discussions about the Near East and the Middle East, but the relative weight of the 'baskets', at least, will not necessarily be the same as in Europe.

In fourth place come the questions of security in the Middle East which are directly linked to territorial disputes, not only concerning Israel and its neighbours. It is illusory to think that rational politicians can ignore Israel.

The arbitrarily drawn-up colonial frontiers date back, for the most part, only a few decades. These boundaries take little account of the peoples' right of self-determination. In many cases military force, including weapons of mass destruction, has been ranged against not only external threats, but also 'internal enemies'. Disarmament, or at least arms control, is therefore crucial for the survival of the peoples of the region.

My fifth point concerns the common cultural factors of language and religion which bind the Arab states. These appear greater than in a Europe long divided in many ways. Admittedly, however, looking at the Middle East as a whole, one cannot overlook the division between the Sunnis and the Shi'ias, not to mention the conflict between the Moslems and the Jews. In the light of the recent political history of the region, it will not be easy to find common ground on basic questions of democracy and human rights.

In addition to this, economic cooperation in the region is not well developed. The wide disparity in resources is a matter of constant friction and had been long before 2 August 1990. The fact that the oil-producing countries, which are small in population terms, are able to live royally, whilst countries with low oil resources or which have scant energy or water potential are at a comprehensive disadvantage, may tempt leaders to take dangerous risks.

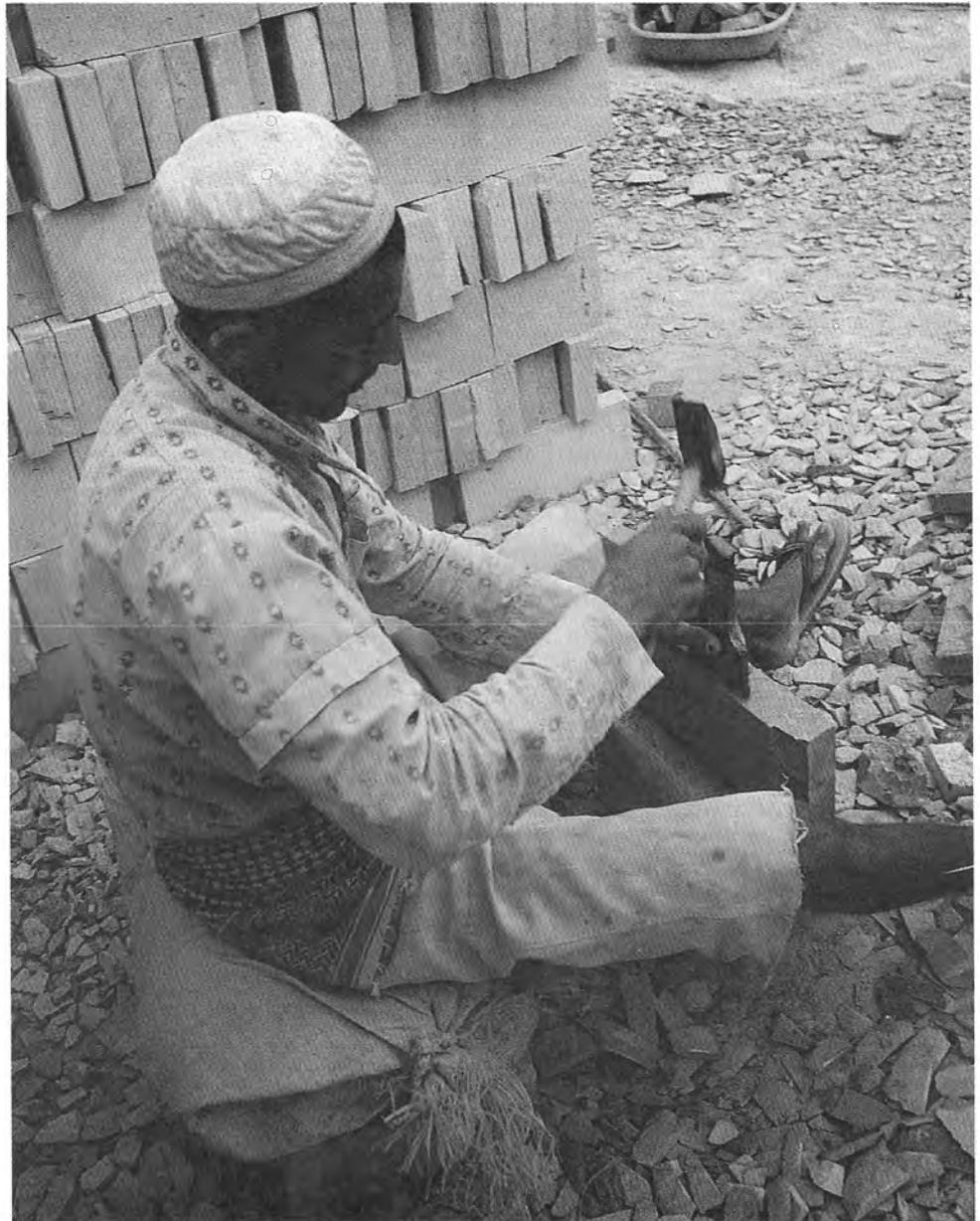
We Europeans should not forget that disputes concerning iron ore agreements between Germany and France have led to bloody conflicts. It was just four decades ago that, with the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community, the right lessons were learnt. Even now, however, debates which concern the Community's regional and social funds are still the occasion for sharp controversy in Europe.

My sixth point concerns the Middle East requirement for assistance, either by way of support from the European Community or through a regional bank with multilateral participation, as recently proposed by the US secretary of state. It is, incidentally, easy to understand why James Baker held out little hope of transfers of American finance, given the US budget problems.

I here take the opportunity of issuing an early warning about unrealistic expectations. If there is talk of reconstruction and development, then there is a great deal for Europeans to do in the East and the South. I would add that the oil regions of the Middle East do not belong to the most needy areas of the world. There must be no rash promises of 'Marshall Plans'; the EC should offer instead, as a matter of priority, technical and organisational expertise for regional economic cooperation.

My last point concerns trade and structural change in the region as a whole. Close collaboration between the Arab states - and Iran - and Israel could open up unbelievable advantages for both sides. There is no question but that economic cooperation and hence a greater degree of regional inter-dependence, meaning mutual dependence, should

*A long timescale for reconstruction*



place cooperation in terms of politics and security on a firm foundation. This is especially the case since common security is not possible without confidence-building steps and verification procedures.

6 These few elements - and there are many others - should alert us to the long-term perspective necessary for a peace plan in the Near and Middle East, although we need not necessarily think in terms of the time it took for East-West relations to progress from Helsinki to Paris.

It is in the interests of all the states concerned in the CSCE process, not only the Europeans but also the North Americans and of course Japan, to extend their good offices in the task of achieving peace in the Middle East. The powder keg must be defused in order to prevent further wars. This cannot be achieved without self-restraint, particularly in terms of the export of weapons and the transfer of sensitive technology with military applications. The common interest in avoiding crises and preserving the supply of oil should of itself bring about policies which are both well coordinated and strictly monitored.

Europe's interest in a mutually beneficial collaboration with our neighbouring region extends further. The awareness of this is acute, particularly in the Mediterranean countries of the EC, given that the slow pace of development in the Maghreb is producing northward migrations from those countries. In a number of places latent fears and real problems have already led to dangerous tensions.

Against this backdrop, the war in the Gulf gave cause for concern about emotional reactions whose effects could not be calculated. There could, at moments, have been an impression that a Christian West was at war with a Muslim Orient. As we saw, even governments in the region who are interested in a close European-Arab collaboration were put under pressure. Europe must take note. It will certainly not be possible to fill widening gaps in political credibility by financial aid alone. Instead, the spirit of the UN Charter must be respected and all UN resolutions affecting the Middle East should be carried out.

Anyone who has had an opportunity in recent weeks and months to talk to representatives of the so-called South knows that there is great scepticism in most of the developing countries about the 'new world order' following the events of 1989. Our hopes and expectations, built up by the peaceful end to the East-West conflict, are understood in Africa, Latin America, Asia and in other places more as hopes than as realistic prospects.

For my part, I see the efforts made by the Soviet Union to work with the West, thanks largely to Mikhail Gorbachev (whatever else may be said about him), as a generally positive development. This turnaround however is perceived with some anxiety by several governments of developing countries. The so-called North, in the meantime, appears to them as a bloc, with shared economic and political interests which are at variance with those of the South. This appearance is strengthened by the fact that eastern Europe is perceived as a rival for financial and technical aid from the West.

Until a year ago it was still possible to argue that the structural changes in the East would benefit in the medium term the developing countries of the South, but this prospect has receded. Furthermore, references to releasing resources from military activity, and hence the new potential for financing global environmental and development activities, have lost much credibility in the aftermath of an expensive war.

Whether we like it or not, we have to deal with the reproach levelled by the Islamic world that the Gulf region is the focus of western hegemonic pretensions. In this context the US appears as the dominant player - the 'world police force', as some refer to it. Europe on the other hand appears as an economic giant without the appropriate independent political profile.

In the meantime the EC member states have recognised that there is much still to be done in order to achieve clarity in European foreign and security policy. The developing regions are expecting that Europe will speak out loud and clear for a peaceful compromise, not least in the United Nations, which is itself in desperate need of reform and which must become more effective. The election of the next UN secretary-general, which is to take place this year, should be seen as an opportunity.

What is on the agenda in the Middle East is not much different from what we generally expect from international cooperation: disarmament and peace, development and economic welfare, and the rule of law.

*Takako Doi, chair of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, sets out an agenda.*



Popperfoto

## TOWARDS AN ASIA-PACIFIC COMMUNITY

We are witnessing a new development in Asian history, a movement to create an economic community where even those countries and regions without formal diplomatic relations can participate.

Recently there have been many international conferences in Asia, where not only economic questions, but also politics, culture, national security and other topics have been actively discussed by participants from countries including the USSR, China, both Koreas, Mongolia and Japan. The Social Democratic Party of Japan, SPDJ, organised an international conference of the countries surrounding the Japan Sea.

I believe that all these conferences and symposia drew their inspiration from the atmosphere of detente in the world, whose origin was the *Ostpolitik* of Willy Brandt.

This movement in Asia has in my view been encouraged by such developments as the increasing unification of the European Community, the liberalisation of the Chinese economy, the direct talks between North and South Korea and the success of the Newly Industrialised Economies (NIEs).

Dr Karl Deutsch, a renowned political scientist from Harvard, points out that the minimum prerequisite for the formation of a community is agreement on political, economic and cultural values. The European Community certainly satisfies this prerequisite. However in the north-east Asian countries there are many different political systems, there are different levels of economic development and there is cultural diversity. In view of this, they may not be able to form a community automatically. However, political parties, academic organisations, local government, economic and business organisations are making efforts towards the formation of at least some kind of association in the region where cooperation can become a reality.

One goal of such an association is economic exchange and cooperation, taking advantage of the financial and technical strength of Japan and Korea, the abundant resources of the Soviet Union, and the huge labour force available in China.

The Social Democratic Party of Japan has worked over the years towards re-establishing diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union, and between Japan and China, as well as towards the normalisation of relations between Japan and the People's Republic of Korea. We are pleased to see that our efforts, together with improvements in various objective conditions, have helped create new cooperative relations. As is well known, military tension has long existed in the Korean peninsula. However, even in this region we have begun to see an easing of that tension, with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Republic of Korea; increasing economic cooperation between China and the Republic of Korea; and the signing of the Tri-partite Mutual Declaration by the Social Democratic Party of Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan - the Japanese ruling party - and the Korean Labour Party. This last triggered the start of inter-governmental talks on the normalisation of diplomatic relations between the two Koreas, including one meeting at prime ministerial level, on confidence-building measures, disarmament, mutual non-aggression, and unification.

We have no intention of impeding this process. Of course, we are concerned about the problems of democratisation in China and the future of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union. However, the crumbling of the East-West Cold War structure and the current of detente will grow, overcoming considerable obstacles, such as the Persian Gulf war. I also believe that the age of 'borderlessness', of regionalism backed up by cooperation between different regions, will be born. In order to accelerate this process, I believe it is important

8 that the more than one hundred and fifty countries of the world abandon narrow nationalism which seeks the benefit of one country and one country alone. Instead, we should all respect the guiding principles of the United Nations Committee on Trade and Development, UNCTAD. These are: fairness, equality, justice and human rights. Furthermore, we should adopt international trade policies based on the principle of permanent sovereignty over natural resources, and the fair international redistribution of wealth.

Even more important is international peace. By strengthening the functions of the United Nations, we should make sure that important principles such as the equality of sovereignty, self-determination, denial of acquisition of territory by force and non-intervention are upheld.

The establishment of comprehensive security systems, including the creation of nuclear-free zones and CSCE-type structures will be very important.

Not only relations between one nation and another, one government and another, but direct relations between local governments, people-to-people understanding, friendship and solidarity and activities by NGOs should be encouraged and promoted.

I am focussing here on political and economic cooperation in the Pacific and Asian area. North-east Asia is part of this area and the Japan Sea initiative could become a model for cooperative relationships in the region.

Today, economic activities in the Asian and Pacific region surpass those in the Atlantic region. Within this framework, Japan's overseas cooperation and overseas business activities have overtaken those of other countries, or at least those of one of the world's leading countries. As a result, the role which Japan can play in securing economic development and peace for this region has also become very important. In the 1970s, every government of Japan announced the so-called 'Pan-Asia-Pacific' initiative and made clear the direction of Japan's Asian diplomacy. However, we cannot deny the fact that this tended to address only US foreign policy in Asia.

At just about the same time, numerous international conferences and symposia of specialists sponsored by non-governmental organisations were held, symbolising the active interest in the expanding market and natural resources of the Asia-Pacific region. In 1989, the first ministerial conference on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, APEC, was held in Canberra, Australia. The important role of Australia, as the host country, and of Prime Minister Hawke, cannot be over-emphasised.

In South-East Asia, ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) has been playing an important role. I believe that APEC will broaden and deepen its activities.

Although the Social Democratic Party of Japan expects a great deal of APEC's role and activities, neither Japan nor the United States should take the leadership role within it. One reason is that Japan has a history of invading this area in World War II. During the 15-year war started by the Japanese invasion of China, Japan killed 20 million Asian people and did incalculable damage to property. The scars of war have been left in the bodies and minds of many Japanese, including those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But deeper and more serious wounds have been left in the Asia-Pacific region and the people of that region.

Accepting this responsibility, Japan decided to declare in its constitution that our country would renounce the threat or use of armed force, would forever renounce war as a means of settling international disputes. We also declared that Japan would possess no armed forces, and that the right to wage war was not recognised. Forty years have passed since the establishment of this constitution. The Social Democratic Party of Japan has been central in preserving the constitution and what it embodies. I believe that the direction of Japanese Asian policy should continue to be based on this constitution.

We have supported the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific area, and when Australia and New Zealand suggested an 'Asian version' of CSCE, we supported the idea. We have launched an effort to make this a reality.

Our political, economic, cultural and welfare cooperative activities will have to be supported by such a nuclear-free zone and such national security measures.

Japan has tended to be one-sided in its policy on trade, seeking to further establish its presence economically and to tap the natural resources available in the region. In the allocation of foreign aid, Japan has been a tool of American strategic economic policy. In addition, we must realise the environmental problems which Japan has caused, for example by cutting down the rain forest. We deplore Japan's role in this. With respect to all these problems, I believe that the SDPJ will have a role to play in the common security of Asian countries and in establishing the basic rules for economic cooperation.

We hope that our cooperative relations with our fraternal parties, including the Australian Labor Party, will be further enhanced.



## THE ROLE OF GATT IN WORLD AGRICULTURE

Who could benefit from free trade in agricultural produce? Probably the traders. If they were the only beneficiaries there would be no strong case for uni-, bi- or multilateral free trade agreements. But there are strong reasons to believe that a large number of developing countries will benefit extensively. And there will also be evident and undoubted benefits for consumers in the industrialised and strongly protectionist countries. That was already recognised by the early working class movement in Europe which heavily attacked protectionist policies like the Corn Laws in the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century.

The consumer ought to be the focus of food policy. This is a political principle that indicates a breach with the tradition of centring all serious political aims in this area on the farmer and rural policy.

GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) governs trade between about 100 nations, accounting for about 90 per cent of world trade. Rules and disciplines on trade applicable to all are of interest to all nations, but of course particularly to the smaller and more vulnerable. Through successive rounds of negotiations, GATT has contributed to increasingly free trade. Agriculture is a major exception. Here the development has been the reverse.

Today world trade accounts for about 20 per cent of total GDP on average, or about 25 per cent if services are included. For some countries like my own, Sweden, the share is considerably higher. Furthermore, this share and the importance of trade is increasing. It is a strategic factor in economic growth. The newly industrialised countries are obvious examples, but it is also true for the least developed and the heavily indebted countries.

The first rounds of negotiations were limited to tariffs and a few non-tariff barriers. The latest round, the Uruguay Round, which we are currently negotiating, is the most complex and ambitious ever, reflecting a number of new challenges: the increasing inter-

*Swedish minister of agriculture Mats Hellström argues that the present round of negotiations must not be allowed to fail.*

*Common interests at the silos . . .*



dependence between nations and firms, globalisation of capital markets, demand for technology and investment, emerging service economy, de-regulation and economic reform in developed as well as developing countries are but a few examples. The major immediate impetus for launching the Uruguay Round in 1986 however was the strains on the trading system in the eighties, which were plagued by poor economic performance, financial disturbances and an increasing use of trade measures that violate the letter and spirit of GATT.

GATT is now approaching full globality. A number of developing countries have joined in recent years. China is attempting to rejoin and the Soviet Union is also knocking at the door. In the Uruguay Round the developing countries are for the first time active partners in the negotiations. These countries' willingness to integrate into the global trading system is in their own interest as well as in that of the industrialised countries. The benefits of trade are well known: incomes grow and debts can be repaid, investment will be much more effective if markets are open and people will not be forced to leave their countries for lack of opportunities. In fact, the biggest threat to the developing countries is that a failed Uruguay Round might result in a disintegration of the world trading system into blocks governed by bilateral or regional agreements. A fragmented system of this nature is most detrimental to countries with little unilateral trading power.

Agriculture is being seriously negotiated for the first time in this round. It has even become the main controversy between the United States and the European Community and it is the main issue for the majority of the developing countries.<sup>1</sup>

This is no surprise. Direct and indirect subsidies in developed countries have resulted in great over-production in relation to demand, creating havoc in world markets. Competitive producers, not least in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), have lost international and sometimes domestic markets and face lower and increasingly fluctuating prices due to subsidised export from developed countries. Trade disputes have occurred more frequently in agriculture than in other areas of international trade. Agriculture is therefore a key area in the Uruguay Round and a result in agriculture negotiations is in the interest of all, not only those with a particular stake in agriculture.

But agricultural reform is not only something which must be undertaken because of the Uruguay Round. Considerable consensus now exists on the effects of agricultural support. Not only from the perspective of how support and protection harm those with a competitive advantage in agriculture but also, and perhaps more importantly, on how agricultural support policies in most countries, particularly the most common form – price support – very often fail to fulfil stated objectives such as maintaining farmers' incomes, giving consumers good quality food at reasonable prices or regional and environmental goals. A re-instrumentation of support to forms more directly targeted to objectives is necessary to ensure that food policy objectives are also fulfilled in the future:

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested that a one-dollar transfer to developing countries from agricultural liberalisation is equal to or more than two dollars' worth of direct foreign aid (Loo and Tower).

*... and in the paddy fields*



Rex Features

something which is not possible with present support forms.

Reform is necessary also because agricultural support is becoming too costly to consumers and taxpayers. The OECD measures the value of the monetary transfers to farmers from consumers of agricultural products and from taxpayers resulting from agricultural policy. The measure, called Producer Subsidy Equivalent, covers the most important products in the OECD countries. The estimate for 1990 is about 170 billion US dollars. The subsidy was 44 per cent expressed as a percentage of the value of production, valued at the farm gate.

It is clear that while agricultural reform would make sense for the individual country, it would be much easier and could be more far-reaching if done multilaterally. Farmers would not feel left out compared with colleagues in other countries, market openings in one country would be reciprocated by openings in others, etc.

With this in mind, it is obvious that something has to be done. This was also clear to ministers in Punta del Este, when the Uruguay Round was launched in 1986. It was agreed that agriculture support and protection should be substantially and progressively reduced.

In spite of the good arguments and statements in favour of reform, the aspirations and urgency of those who want fast, radical steps do not easily accord with those who have come only reluctantly to the negotiating table. There are those who want essentially full liberalisation within ten years and those who want more modest reductions of 30 per cent or less in support and protection. The former group consists mainly of the so-called Cairns Group<sup>2</sup> and the USA. The latter include the European Community, Japan, most EFTA countries and a few others.

The positions were too far apart to strike a deal in Brussels in December last year. The USA and the Cairns group very soon focused all negotiations on progress in agriculture and demanded that the EC improve its offer to reduce overall support by 30 per cent over ten years from 1986. They insisted that undertakings be made separately for internal support, border protection and export subsidies. The EC, after a while, showed willingness to do that, but simultaneously insisted on some other issues which were not acceptable for the USA and Cairns, *inter alia* an increase in border protection for some feedstuffs (although fewer than they had previously demanded). This led to a deadlock in agriculture negotiations. Because of agriculture's key position, negotiations in all other areas were called off and the ministerial meeting was adjourned.

The secretary general of GATT was given the task of undertaking consultations in order to get negotiations going again and they have indeed re-started.

There is always a moment of uncertainty in international negotiations. In that sense - and in that sense only - there is a possibility that GATT negotiations could collapse. But the cost would be terribly high.

A failure, if we limit our discussion to the area of agricultural produce, would have a strong negative impact on the economic possibilities for a number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Countries like Argentina, with a competitive agriculture providing important revenues from other countries, would be deprived of one of the best opportunities to lessen the burden of foreign debt. The consumer and undoubtedly the taxpayer in most industrialised countries would have to pay higher prices and meet a more restricted market in the area of foodstuffs.

There are many reasons to believe that we are moving into an economic recession on a world scale. The duration and depth of the economic downturn would be aggravated should the trading climate deteriorate as a result of a failure of the Uruguay Round. An economic recession and a GATT failure could lead to a tendency towards massive unemployment and a very deep economic downturn. That ought to be avoided. On the other hand, a Uruguay Round success would give a positive signal to the world economy which would shorten the recession and stimulate investment and employment.

The price is too high to permit a failure. The prospects of success are too obvious to avoid an agreement. That is why we should all join forces and rally support for the Uruguay Round.

<sup>2</sup> 13 export-oriented countries: Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Canada, New Zealand, Hungary, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Uruguay. (Canada has presented a separate proposal).

Mats Hellström chaired the agricultural negotiation group at the Brussels ministerial meeting in December 1990.

Socialist Affairs looks at the career of the  
leader of the Brazilian Democratic Labour  
Party

It is decades since Leonel de Moura Brizola gained his first place in the history books. No account of Brazilian politics of the early 1960s and the military putsch of 1964 is complete without an account of his activities as one of the major players on the scene.

Brother-in-law of President João Goulart, Brizola - while still in his thirties - was governor of Brazil's powerful southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul. He had become a leader of the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro, the Brazilian Labour Party, created somewhat under the inspiration of the British Labour Party as a vehicle for trade union and working class action by President Getulio Vargas a few years before.

In Brizola's hands the party became a powerful force in the south of Brazil. In 1961 the threat of a coup hovered over Brazil when President Janio Quadros decided to resign from the presidency, 'beaten', as he said, 'by reaction ... corruption, lies and cowardice.' Brizola's defiant organisation of civilian groups to defend the constitution and usher in the succession of the then vice-president was a key element at that time of the defeat of the military. As governor, he started to issue arms to civilians to counter any possible putsch.

During the Goulart administration, Brizola won his colours as a nationalist in Rio Grande do Sul by nationalising the local subsidiary of the US ITT concern, a company which in 1973 was to be involved in the overthrow of democratic government in Chile.

In November 1961 in a speech in the town of Presidente Prudente, Brizola set out his views: 'Servitude all over the world', he said, 'is one; it doesn't matter if it's baptised with the name of capitalism, communism, liberalism, nazism or anything else presented under the form of political terror or economic cruelty.'

The threat of military action still continued in a country which was watching closely the development of events in Cuba. Brizola for his part continued his opposition to the idea of any coup d'état, allying himself in his home state with those senior officers who opposed the unconstitutional plans of their colleagues.

It was at this time that Brizola forged the relationship with Luiz Fernando Bocayuva Cunha, the congressional leader of the PTB who presented a series of far-reaching bills which aimed at real land reform, voting rights for illiterates, worker participation in industry and other measures which



**LEONEL  
BRIZOLA**

were looked upon with horror by the Brazilian oligarchy. Bocayuva Cunha remains close to Brizola and is a frequent figure at SI gatherings.

As the threat of military action grew closer Brizola called in his newspaper *O Panfleto* for the organisation of 'Groups of Eleven' civilians who would resist an unconstitutional right-wing takeover.

On 2 April 1964 the military and their civilian supporters forced the departure of Goulart from Brasilia. In his last hours in office Goulart was still defiant. Two days later resistance was shown to be impossible and the president crossed the southern frontier into Uruguay.

Uruguay, where he went a month later, was to be Brizola's home, he thought for a few months, until the revolting military was ejected from power. In fact Brizola was to stay there for years till in 1977 the Uruguayan government, itself now a military regime, out of the blue gave him five days to quit the country.

He was granted entry to the United States on the instructions of President Jimmy Carter.

With the abandonment of power by the military in Brazil in the early 1980s the way was open for Brizola to resume his career, this time based in Brazil's former capital Rio de Janeiro. After some disagreements with Ivete Vargas, the aging niece of the late President Vargas, about the PTB, which had been formally banned by the military dictatorship in 1965, Brizola built up the PDT or Democratic Labour Party as a vehicle for democratic socialism in Brazil.

More than a decade ago, he commented, 'I'm not a Marxist. On the other hand I don't accept any form of McCarthyism as a policy.'

In November 1982 he topped the poll in the gubernatorial elections in Rio de Janeiro; in October 1990 he triumphantly won the governorship of Rio de Janeiro once more and, now in his late sixties, is again as influential as he ever was in his own country.

As one Rio newspaper said, here was one man from Rio Grande do Sul who had been completely adopted by the people of Rio de Janeiro. Amidst the festivities, however, he struck one solemn note. He warned that he would not pay the outstanding bills of his predecessor before he had had them thoroughly checked.

As a vice-president of the Socialist International, Brizola's international influence is probably stronger than it ever was.

## GLOBAL OR REGIONAL?

The claim has been advanced that the world is falling into three regional blocks: Europe, the Americas and the Pacific Region. Within these broad areas, one is seeing the specific creation of the integrated west European single market, the free trade pact between the United States and Canada, soon perhaps to be joined by Mexico, and the Japan-Little Dragons grouping in Asia.

The discussion is animated on whether this regionalisation process will lead to greater intra-regional trade, and whether it will impose protectionist barriers to outside countries. Experts dispute whether the differences within the economies making up these claimed regional groups (including now the wide gap between eastern and western Europe) are not so great that it is too broad-brush a description to make any sense. Nevertheless when former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher can talk about Dollar, D-Mark and Yen zones the discussion has left the seminar room and become part of daily political discourse.

For the future work of trade unions it is useful to consider whether the world is heading in the direction of regionalisation and whether, thus, future transnational union activity will be regional rather than global. This has important implications as the East-West conflict, one of the ideological motor forces for international labour engagement since 1920, and particularly since 1947, dies down.

Will future transnational labour activity switch to North-South solidarity or will it be orientated principally to North-North activity in a regional context? Will the normative universalism that has, at least in formal terms, guided international trade union activity since the creation of the International Working Men's Association in 1864, and enshrined notably in the conventions laid down by the ILO, now be replaced by regional trade union values which could be crudely defined as business unionism in the United States, company unionism in Japan, and social reformist unionism in western Europe?

It would require considerable scientific study to establish the evolving nature of international trade union activity, in terms of resources expended, effectiveness and proportion of overall union work. But there is a strong *prima facie* case to be made for seeing an increase in regional trade union activity axed on a North-North basis and a relative decline in North-South interventions, or effective interventions to sustain the universal norms of trade union rights.

There has been an extensive widening of trade union presence worldwide. In 1991, independent and active trade unions exist in countries as far apart as South Africa, Brazil, Korea, Czecho-Slovakia, where no unions, or pliant pro-government unions, existed only fifteen years ago. But there has not been a deepening of trade union presence and power. On the contrary, over the same period most countries in the North report a decline in union members and density as well as a weakening of union strength and influence.

The cause of the latter has been the rapid internationalisation of economic, social and political relations which have caught unions - essentially national institutions - off guard. But, like any social organism, a trade union prefers to adapt than to die. So latterly there has been a marked increase in discussion about transnational labour movement activity as well as many concrete activities.

Yet these are often focussed on the regional rather than the global level. The most obvious case is that of Europe. Since the signing of the Single European Act followed by the drive to create a Single Integrated Market, there has been an unprecedented burst of Euro-union activity. European unions are forming transfrontier councils, establishing links between workers and between unions, and seeking energetically to insert themselves

*Denis McShane looks to the future of international trade unionism.*



### *Taiwan: a social pressure cooker*

into the process of European integration. The union confederations of non-EC member countries such as Norway and Sweden have opened offices in Brussels to make sure they participate fully in this increased Euro-union activity.

Since the beginning of 1990, a new European labour dimension exists in eastern Europe which is also absorbing massive international activity resources of west European unions. Everyone is busy setting up European company councils while dwindling in importance, or in resources allocated, are global company councils which provide the South with a seat at labour's international get-togethers within a company framework.

Similarly, in North America, the most pressing international labour issue is the problem of Mexico, notably the 'maquiladora' plants and the millions of low-paid or jobless Mexican workers. The major international bone chewed over by Canadian unions in recent years has been the free trade pact signed between Reagan and Mulroney. Meanwhile, considerable US transnational union activity can be seen in Central America and the Caribbean.

As with the work of west European unions to help their colleagues in east Europe, the orientation of US-Canadian labour towards Mexico can be described as North-South solidarity within a North-North geographical context. Similarly, the generous efforts by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's London bureau to encourage European work and thinking by the British labour movement is a generous solidarity initiative by rich Germany to an increasingly impoverished off-shore country.

In Asia, Japanese capital is seeking to impose its vision of appropriate labour organisation on other Asian countries. A large number of exchange visits take place within the Asian context to expose unionists from Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and anywhere else that Japanese capital seeks to invest, to Japanese union systems. Japanese companies work patiently to transform and tame indigenous and independent trade union organisation in Asian countries.

This is done, not for the purpose of introducing Japanese wage levels, but with a political goal of suppressing the social force of collective organised labour. The result is particularly painful in Asia, where the export-orientation of all the NIEs has led to badly skewed internal distribution and, in the case of Korea, a political explosion still far from over.

Take the case of Taiwan, for example. With US\$75 billion in reserve, Taiwan's reserves exceed those of West Germany. GNP per head is now estimated at US\$10,000 - about the same level as New Zealand. In contrast, mainland China GNP per capita is US\$350. This wealth is spread evenly. The top twenty per cent has 4.7 times the income of the bottom twenty per cent, half the ratio in the United States. In Latin America, for example, the top quintile has income up to twenty to thirty times what the bottom twenty per cent enjoys.

Despite this, Taiwanese workers do not have sufficient purchasing power to buy what they produce. According to the International Metalworkers Federation Purchasing Power Study, it takes eight and a quarter minutes to earn sufficient to buy a kilo of rice for an electronics industry worker in New Zealand, but forty one and a half minutes in Taiwan. A Taiwanese has to work 262 hours to buy a refrigerator, while his New Zealand equivalent works only 69 hours.

Another way of examining Taiwanese purchasing power is to compare Taiwan with Eastern Europe.

	Telephones	Televisions	Cars
16 Czecho-Slovakia	226	122	173
Hungary	134	275	145
Taiwan	360	275	53

(per 1,000 population.

source: The Financial Times and The Economist)

So Taiwan, like South Korea, is a social pressure cooker waiting to explode. The creation of industrial working classes in these NIEs brings with it major difficulties of trade union activity requiring consistent attention. This is mainly provided by the Japanese unions, who have now set up the Japanese International Labor Fund to help carry out this work. This of course is an important initiative within the framework of transnational labour work, but it strengthens the Asian regional orientation of such activity.

More worryingly, there is evidence from inside Asia that some union organisations are supporting the case for Asian exceptionalism at the expense of universal labour norms. At the central committee of the International Metalworkers' Federation in 1988, where the subject for discussion was support for a GATT Social Clause, the Singapore union was quite hostile and clearly supported the line of ASEAN labour ministers which calls for an Asia-wide derogation from ILO conventions, a position which, if accepted, would significantly undermine the formal claims and purpose of international trade unionism.

At one level, this increase in trade union regional transnational activity is to be welcomed. Any step beyond the confines of the nation is educative - for all parties concerned - and marks a useful development in the process of building up trade union internationalism.

Other developments are still needed. The vertical organisation of the national unions may be ill-equipped to counter the horizontal linkages driving capitalism forward internationally. The procedural formalities of inter-union contacts may need to become more flexible to build networks, especially within the multinational company, needed to lift the information level and capacity for trans-frontier initiatives of workers and unions.

Capital, it should be noted, is not operating in sealed-off regional blocks. The most powerful force for de-unionisation in Europe is probably the Japanese multinational. American electronic multinationals are the biggest barrier to union rights in Malaysia. Capital is seeking to operate wherever it can produce most effectively, which means cheap or, if not cheap, pliant and obedient labour, and sell where it can most profitably. (The paradox of the increasing number of workers who cannot buy what they make is a problem that will confront everyone increasingly in the 1990s, but that is another tale.)

Capital is not seeking to transfer production to the third world, but to bring third world labour conditions into the industrial North, as could be seen by Matsushita's bussing in of low-paid hourly workers from villages (kampongs) in East Germany to its West German plants, thus reproducing Asian modes of production on the Elbe. A clever publicity campaign by IG Metall, the German metalworkers' union, stopped that nasty little practice but scattered throughout western Europe, North America and Japan are workplaces (textile, industrial cleaning) or work practices (home working, short-term contracts) which differ little from third world operation. Honda has announced publicly that it will open a union-free car plant in Swindon, England. If the car industry becomes de-unionised then a central pillar of organised trade union strength disappears. But Honda has opened a non-union assembly plant in the United States, so why should Britain be different?

Thus, and at the expense of repeating an earlier point, the main international activity for unions may be to create North-South solidarity intervention, not just in the regional but in the national context. Put differently, the best contribution that US labour could make to unionising the Malaysian employees of US electronics multinationals would be to unionise the parent companies in America.

In that sense, the regionalisation of the world economy may prove a dangerous false road for trade unions, if they opt for regional transnational activity at the expense of effective North-South dialogue and meaningful global solidarity.

It is not an either/or question for unions. International labour values have to be universal and activity has to be global and based on defending the weakest everywhere in the world. Regional trade union internationalism should complement, but not replace, global labour solidarity.

Denis McShane, who writes here in a personal capacity, works for the Geneva-based International Metalworkers' Federation. His book 'International Labour and the Origins of the Cold War' will be published early next year.

*Adi Kuini Bavadra and Navin Maharaj outline the struggle facing the Fiji Labour Party.*

## **RACISM AND DICTATORSHIP IN FIJI**

The Fiji Labour Party, FLP, was founded in 1985 as a multi-racial party owing no allegiance to any one race, region or religion in Fiji. For several generations politics and political power in Fiji, an island country of almost 750,000 in the South Pacific, had been characterised by racial allegiance, with only marginal support across racial lines.

In parliament since 1970, the Alliance Party, dominated by the aristocracy of the Eastern islands of the country, ruled without a break. Although the indigenous Fijians were slightly outnumbered by ethnic Indians (each having just under fifty per cent of the population) the support of minor racial groups through their coalition within the Alliance umbrella effectively kept the poor Indians, Western Fijians and the rapidly growing urbanised working and middle classes (of all races), out of the government. Under the 1970 constitution all parliamentary seats were allocated on a racial basis with all voters registered by race.

The Labour Party was formed in opposition to the two party blocs then in parliament and immediately several sitting MPs joined and the party won the Lord Mayoralty of the capital, Suva. The party championed the cause of the poor, the urban worker and trade unionists, the Western Fijian villagers and Indian cane farmers, the urban professionals and other social groups in opposition to the ruling party and its influence. Its outlook was modern, secular, multi-racial and democratic, with special emphasis placed on reform and opposition to corruption and nepotism.

The leadership of the party went to Dr Timoci Bavadra, a well-known physician and administrator who was also president of the country's largest trade union, the Fiji Public Service Association. The trade union movement played a major role in the establishment of the Party and this was reflected in the 1987 general elections when a considerable number of the Labour candidates were union officials and activists.

Prior to the 1987 elections, the party forged a controversial coalition with the National Federation Party, NFP, which had been the traditional opposition party drawing almost all of its support from the Indian community. This was necessary primarily due to the first-past-the-post voting system which in by-elections had allowed the Alliance to win with minority support.

The new Labour/NFP coalition won the April 1987 election with Labour's leader, Dr Bavadra, forming a government. For the first time Fiji had a Cabinet in which there was no preponderance of one race or class. In fact, the coalition government was evenly balanced, as was the allocation of ministerial posts between the two parties.

The defeated Alliance immediately started a campaign of destabilisation, whipping up racial feelings amongst groups of Fijians. The claim made at the time was that the cabinet and the coalition was 'Indian-dominated' although the Labour Party with a strong Fijian component was the senior coalition partner.

On 4 May 1987, the army's third ranking officer, the then Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka, stormed the parliament whilst it was in session arresting the entire coalition government present at the time. Four months later when it appeared that the old Alliance Party under Ratu Mara was prepared to form a national unity government with the ousted coalition ministers, Rabuka moved in again, this time taking over the government himself and abolishing the 1970 constitution. He later declared a republic and re-appointed Ratu Mara as prime minister without coalition support.

There have been no local or national elections in Fiji since 1987. All administration has been by presidential decree. The interim government has even refused to allow elections in such organisations as the Sugar Cane Growers' Council.

Since 1987, Fiji has been administered by several governments led by Ratu Mara with

the support of the army. These are almost exclusively governments composed of aristocratic and conservative Fijians, with a preponderance of ministers coming from the politically powerful eastern provinces. The Indian community has been largely ignored whilst a very large number of urban and western Fijians suffer discrimination, particularly in the allocation of goods, services, education and infrastructure even though the West is the economic force in the country.

In November 1989, the Labour Party leader, Dr Bavadra, died after a long battle with cancer. His funeral, attended by about 50,000 people was the biggest gathering of any kind in Fiji's history and shook the regime's confidence for some time.

There are no guarantees of human rights in Fiji. Late last year we witnessed the first terror squads being used against dissidents since the days of the coups. A well-known academic scientist and human rights campaigner, Dr Anirudh Singh, was kidnapped and tortured by a group of soldiers led by an army officer. These five men were given suspended sentences for their crimes, yet Dr Singh and seven colleagues are currently charged with sedition. Three journalists are also charged with publishing seditious material. These cases have been well-documented by Amnesty International.

Every time that dissent starts to grow in Fiji, the police or the army steps in. Only recently the regime used the excuse of the Gulf War to suspend all fundamental rights, to ban meetings and conferences and to bring in a series of draconian measures by decree.

Fortunately the intervention of the international trade union movement, particularly the Australian and New Zealand union councils, soon after the coups in 1987 forestalled Rabuka's plans to turn our independent unions into Singapore-style unions under threat of transport bans similar to those after the May 1987 coup.

This has helped to protect our unions from the worst excesses of the regime and today the unions remain a potent force in Fiji although they do have problems. At present the country's gold mine is at a standstill as 800 miners are on strike against racial discrimination, the appalling conditions at the mine site and the refusal of the government and management to recognise their union.

Trade unionism remains an important area for bringing people of different races together in unity. The Labour Party has vigorously opposed the regime's unsuccessful attempts at establishing ethnic-based trade unions.

In 1990 however the regime promulgated a new racially-based constitution without a referendum and without any regard to the thousands of submissions from the public that opposed its major tenets. The document is intended to cement chiefly power and has been characterised by the coalition as racist, feudal and authoritarian. It legalises racial discrimination in such areas as government employment and education whilst being a vehicle for the domination of one race over another. Human rights are heavily restricted and the constitution contains all the provisions for a rapid slide into dictatorship once again. It goes so far as providing that the army is the guarantor of the well-being of the people of Fiji.

The constitution introduced a huge electoral gerrymander on the people of Fiji in which the sparsely-populated eastern provinces, who currently enjoy power, will retain power unless the coalition can win over 70 per cent of the popular vote.

It is also designed to make certain that the Labour Party cannot win Fijian seats. For instance, although urbanised indigenous Fijians comprise 33% of all Fijians they have been allocated just 5 urban seats out of a total of 37 provided for Fijians. It was in the towns and amongst urban Fijians that the Labour Party won the seats that gave them victory in 1987. The intent of the constitution is to allow the coalition a minority grouping of seats (just 27) in the proposed parliament but solely as an Indian-based party without any Fijian MPs. Not surprisingly the party has commenced the steps necessary to launch a case against the constitution at the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the World Court since it clearly breaches international covenants and instruments to which the Fiji government, under the current leadership, were signatories.

The regime rejected the Labour-led coalition's call for a referendum. Consequently last year the Labour Party and the coalition decided to boycott any elections called under the constitution and this remains our party's policy. It is the leadership's view that there is



Frank Spooner Pictures

***Rabuka: no elections, not even little ones . . .***

no sense in taking part in a system in which racial discrimination is legitimised in law and in which there is no practical chance for a change of government. Neither is there any chance of achieving worthwhile amendments to the constitution. It is unlikely that many social democratic parties would be prepared to put up with an electoral system in which they needed 70 per cent or more to win.

To take part in this system would relegate the Fiji Labour Party to the opposition benches forever. Based on our experiences between 1970 and 1987, those people out of power have no influence and hence to be a 'loyal opposition' would make the party almost irrelevant. On top of that, the party leadership rejects the constitution in principle for its racism and its attempts to maintain the vestiges of feudal power and influence within the Fijian community. It is a regressive document more suited to the early 19th century.

At a time when people all over the world are liberating themselves from dictatorship, the Labour Party sees no good reason why it should accept this constitution. To do so would be suicidal both for the party and for the people of Fiji. Instead later this year the party will publish an Alternative Constitution. This will be a major weapon in our campaign against the 1990 constitution and in seeking support for the electoral boycott.

The Fiji Labour Party seeks the support of fraternal and like-minded parties throughout the world. We have received a great deal of support from the Australian Labor Party as the major social democratic party in the region. We also have support groups, composed predominantly of Fiji expatriates, in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA and the United Kingdom. We have in addition established relationships with other like-minded political movements in other South Pacific countries where the struggle for democracy and the cause of Labour are also being waged. One of the areas where affiliates of the Socialist International can help is in the allocation of aid from their governments. Unfortunately aid does not always end up doing the things that well-meaning politicians and administrators in the developed world first intended.

In Fiji aid is used to prop up the military-appointed regime. We know that aid from the French government is being used almost solely for military purposes. More than four dozen trucks for instance, originally intended for rural development are used exclusively by the military as military transport. Helicopters meant for emergency and rescue are the possession of the military's Air Wing and are now rented out at F\$1,000 an hour.

Aid from other countries is often used to juggle the books. Aid is used to relieve the budget of normal demands for civilian sector financing and allows money to be diverted to the military. It is also used by politicians and government agencies to buy support for the regime and to reward political support. Local newspapers regularly feature military-appointed cabinet ministers giving cheques to welfare, farming, sports and other organisations even though the money has been made available from overseas aid funding. Much of the funding is racially biased.

The FLP is concerned that the EC is now providing direct capital revenue aid programmes to the regime in Fiji. In 1989 this aid was just over F\$2 million and in 1990 just under F\$1 million, although initially the EC had planned to provide over F\$5 million in aid in 1990. A very considerable amount of money is in the pipeline.

Aid is an important component in Fiji's budget and within society at large. The Fiji Labour Party believes that aid from the chief donors such as Australia, New Zealand, the EC, France, and the United Nations programmes should be granted only under specific conditions. The Australian Labor government did this in 1988, holding back an aid grant at that time as the regime was making no effort to move towards democracy.

The FLP believes that aid should be provided to countries such as Fiji but with the primary purpose of relieving injustice, suffering, poverty and the lack of resources and infrastructure. The aid should, we believe, be very closely monitored by the funding authorities and should be channeled through appropriate NGOs in Fiji, not the government agencies and not the regime itself. It should very specifically be allocated with consideration of racial balance, its impact on the political structure, any military application directly or indirectly, and the extent to which the aid will ameliorate social injustice.

We very specifically believe that no overseas government should provide direct funding to the regime or its agencies until parliamentary democracy is re-introduced in a form that is acceptable to all of Fiji's major communities and political organisations.

Adi Kuini Bavadra is the president of the Fiji Labour Party and Labour/NFP Coalition leader. A former journalist and active trade unionist, she is the widow of the deposed Labour Prime Minister Dr Timoci Bavadra. Kuini Bavadra's title of 'Adi' is a hereditary chiefly title.

Navin Maharaj is the Fiji Labour Party's secretary general and held the industry and commerce portfolio in the deposed Labour-led coalition government of 1987. He has been detained without charge by police on three occasions since the 1987 coups.

## AN OLD PARLIAMENT IN THE NEW WORLD

Last year the parliament of Barbados celebrated its 350th anniversary. Celebrations included a visit from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Barbados holds the distinction of having the third oldest parliament in the Commonwealth, preceded only by Bermuda and Britain. It is reported that Captain Henry Howley summoned a meeting of parliament in 1630, placing on historical record an identifiable date heralding the start of administration through parliament.

The growth of the Barbados parliament from 1639 to 1990 has followed a systematic pattern. To quote Sir Alexander Hoyos, a renowned Barbadian historian, 'In the early days it (parliament) could claim a measure of democracy because it represented the view of small land owners'. But slavery became more and more widespread and parliament had to adjust to dealing with the large slave population which came to outnumber the white population by 80,000 to 5,000. Hoyos again stated, 'when Barbados became a slave society, the House of Assembly could in no way be regarded as democratic. Indeed, it had become oligarchic'. It could only claim the status of dubious Athenian 'democracy', where a handful of persons enjoyed the privilege of the city state while the mass of the people were slaves and had no part of that democracy. But even with this imbalance the framework was assembled which gave the inspiration and drive to the masses to become a part of the law-making process.

It was not until 1951, during the tenure of the Barbados Labour Party, the SI member party on the island, under Grantley Adams (later Sir Grantley Adams) that parliament passed the act which paved the way to the enfranchisement of thousands of potential voters. This was only the beginning of a series of events which ensured that power was passed from the minority to the masses. Ministerial government heralded the way to full internal self-government. The culmination of the process was when, on 30 November 1966, Barbados gained independence from Britain.

The Democratic Labour Party won the election in May of 1986, scoring a massive victory of 24 to 3 over our Barbados Labour Party, but lost ground this year (see Socialist Notebook, page 51).

Since 1976, under J.M.G.M. 'Tom' Adams, the Barbados Labour Party administration had been systematically removing lower-income earners from the income tax roll, whilst developing a policy of

### O'Brien Trotman

shifting the burden of taxation from incomes towards consumption. The then opposition DLP seized the idea and vigorously campaigned for an even greater number of lower- and middle-income earners to be freed from personal income tax immediately. The result of this campaign was their stunning 24 to 3 victory over our party, then led by H. Bernard St John, who took up the mantle of leadership after the death of Tom Adams in 1985.

The first business of the new parliament was the granting of tax relief on a scale which the BLP considered too generous. Shadow Finance Minister Owen Arthur (BLP) warned that if the government persisted with its financial programme it would have serious adverse effects on the country's foreign reserves. One year later, the government began to reverse its policy, imposing a budget which raised an additional BD\$ 50 million. This was the biggest tax effort by any budget in the country's history.

One year after the election victory of 1986, Prime Minister Errol Barrow died suddenly in office. Immediately cracks began to show in the DLP structure and in February 1988 Finance Minister Dr Richard 'Richie' Haynes left the Democratic Labour Party and - along with three other members - formed the National Democratic Party, NDP. Since the National Democratic Party thus had four members in the House of Assembly, compared with the BLP's three, Dr Haynes became leader of the parliamentary opposition, replacing Barbados Labour Party leader Henry Forde - until, that is, the BLP regained ground this year.

The Democratic Labour Party government, because of its large majority in the lower house, easily fought off two votes of 'no confidence'. In the first of these, BLP leader Henry Forde sought to table a 'no confidence' vote against the minister of foreign affairs, Sir James Tudor. Forde informed parliament that the diplomatic bags of the foreign affairs ministry were being used to import drugs into Barbados. The DLP speaker of the house, Lawson Weekes, disallowed the motion and the government mocked Forde's charges. The government was, however, eventually forced to hold a public enquiry into Forde's allegations. A commission of enquiry was set up and the commissioners confirmed that the Barbados mission in Caracas had in fact been used to send drugs into Barbados.

Subsequently, National Democratic Party MP Edgar Bourne tabled a motion of 'no confidence' against the agriculture minister, Warwick Franklin. Bourne's

resolution claimed that Franklin had failed to institute policies to prevent, alleviate, arrest or reverse the serious decline in agricultural output, and that the incompetence of the minister had placed the future of that entire sector of the Barbados economy in jeopardy. The resolution was defeated, but Minister Franklin was soon under pressure again.

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 Despite these hiccoughs, parliamentary life continues to be healthy. Barbados is a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and members of both houses of parliament are active in the work of its Caribbean regional branch.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is but one of the avenues used by parliamentarians in Barbados, and indeed the wider Caribbean, to further the cause of Caribbean integration. The integration movement began in 1948, with outstanding parliamentarians taking centre stage, among them Grantley Adams (Barbados), Norman Manley (Jamaica), Robert Bradshaw (St Kitts) and Eric Williams (Trinidad and Tobago). After ten years of dialogue between the island legislatures and the Colonial Office in Britain, first efforts at Caribbean regional integration were made, with the launching of the Federation of the West Indies in 1958. The federal experiment was shattered and collapsed in 1962, when Jamaica was allowed to withdraw from the federation. Trinidad and Tobago immediately followed.

Efforts were made to mould the remaining eight territories into a smaller Federation. Negotiations were slow and the then premier Errol Barrow made it clear that he was not prepared to be left sitting on the doorstep of the Colonial Office long after Britain had closed that department. The 1966 general elections were fought over the question of regional integration. Throughout that campaign of 1966 the Barbados Labour Party made it clear that if elected it would reopen the federal negotiations in a last effort to salvage the integration movement.

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 During the 1960s and 1970s, the various island states got their independence from Britain. The Caribbean integration movement, however, was always a matter of high priority for all Caribbean parliamentarians.

The Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) was founded in 1968 by the three states of Antigua, Barbados and Guyana. Parliamentarians on all sides saw this small beginning as the seed that would grow

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 Trotman is  
 general  
 secretary of  
 the  
 Barbados  
 Labour  
 Party*

into the present Caribbean Economic Community (CARICOM) which embraces all the English-speaking territories.

The countries now known as the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) did not join CARIFTA immediately. They wanted first to establish their own Eastern Caribbean common market, before entering the wider regional grouping of CARIFTA. In 1981, the OECS was established as a sub-regional grouping which consolidated and deepened efforts at economic integration. The OECS treaty also provided for the harmonisation of foreign policies and joint diplomatic representation among member states.

Since the demise of the West Indies Federation in 1962, several Caribbean leaders have been applying their minds to the formation of the smaller Federation of the Eastern Caribbean. The preparatory work seems at last to be bearing fruit. All indications are that the Eastern Caribbean will soon be launching its assembly, which will include representatives of the church and the trade unions. This may well be the beginning of a new integration movement which will not stop with the Eastern Caribbean, but hopefully will eventually become a project of the whole Caribbean.

It is probably logical to start the process of renewed attempts at West Indian nationhood through the creation of a single nation state among the countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. According to William Demas (former governor of the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank), there are three reasons for this. In the first place, the OECS countries are smaller in population and lack human, financial and natural resources to a greater extent than the other, larger West Indian countries; they therefore need political and economic integration even more than the so-called 'more developed' countries of the Caribbean.

The OECS countries are more similar in population, size and level of development than the other countries of the wider Caribbean community.

Finally, the sense of unity and a shared destiny seems to be stronger among the people of these countries than in the countries of the larger CARICOM grouping, although many in the latter are by no means lacking in this sentiment. In recent years considerable strides have been made in building a sense of OECS togetherness, particularly in the field of cooperation on administrative matters and all forms of sporting and cultural activities.

Kirsten Jensen reviews ...

**Dubcek Speaks**

London, 1990, I.B.Tauris,  
ISBN 1850 43 2082

The Dubcek interviews for Hungarian television with András Sugar are rightly famous. They were broadcast in the spring of 1989 in Hungary, but an audience in Czecho-Slovakia was able to watch. This was before the migration of autumn 1989 and the removal of the Berlin Wall and border fences between central European states.

When broadcasting in spring 1989, Alexander Dubcek was ex-

but the government should govern. Previously, the party had no programme and party and government were one.

'I would say that if someone is a Marxist, he has to understand that other phenomena - which are non-communist or which do not comply with the policy of the party and the state - must also exist. This has to be. This is not accidental; it is the rule of natural law. They have to exist. So if somebody demands that they should not exist, it means that you have to grab a whip. But I cannot do that...', Dubcek said.

Brezhnev considered Dubcek a right-winger or revisionist and in fact it can be said that Dubcek thought the same way about Brezhnev. Today, it may seem to-

merely a way of saying that he, like everyone else, has dirty hands or that his actions and those of his fellow leaders did not make a difference.

The European Parliament made a good choice in presenting Alexander Dubcek with the Sakharov Prize in January 1990. This was the first time I met him. I was one of his hosts when he came to Strasbourg, accompanied by his wife and some close friends. Since then I have been lucky enough to meet him again.

In January 1990 he wanted to talk about how a society can build the right basis for democracy. He felt that the involvement of women in society and politics was crucial and he was the one to broach this subject, which we discussed at length.

He asked for written documentation on Scandinavian experiences in this field and he returned to the subject at our subsequent meeting in June 1990, when I was an observer of the first free elections in decades in Czecho-Slovakia. I saw him then in his home-town of Bratislava when people were still discussing the question of whether he would be re-elected chair of the Federal Assembly or whether he had exhausted his role in politics. He has not!

I must confess that I am biased in favour of Alexander Dubcek. He is such a thoughtful, informed, lively and smiling person and I was charmed - both as an individual and on behalf of the European Parliament - when he said, upon receiving the EP delegation in Prague in September 1990: 'I always become so optimistic when I see you!'

Like other democrats and former dissidents, he is keen to 'come back to Europe' and we have every reason to say: 'You are welcome.'

*Kirsten Jensen is a member of the European Parliament and chair of the EP delegation for relations with the Federal Assembly of the CSFR.*

Alexander Dubcek

Network Photographers/Leighton



tremely straightforward, considering the circumstances; but even now it is thrilling to read his memoirs of the events of August 1968. You get to know a brave politician who in the late sixties was concerned about the growing paralysis of communism.

Dubcek and others in the leadership of the communist party wanted to suggest a re-definition of the role of the party. An Action Programme was introduced. Its thrust: that the party should lead,

tally irrelevant to review this close conflict between two communists, since communist parties are collapsing everywhere, together with the border fences. But the heart of the matter is that Dubcek tried to relate to the reality of his day in a way completely different from that of any of his fellow communist leaders in that historic period.

So any discussion today of whether Dubcek is still a communist or of when he ceased to be one - if he did so - is careless if it is

**Nick Butler**

***The General in his Labyrinth***

By Gabriel García Márquez

(English translation by Edith Grossman)

London, Jonathon Cape Ltd., 1991, ISBN 0224 030 833

This is a fine book which does not deserve the sharp criticism which has greeted its publication in English translation. The carrion of the literary establishments of London and New York, who make their living by picking at the bones of better writers have decided - it appears collectively - to label García Márquez's latest novel 'disappointing'.

Disappointment in books, as in life, is a function of expectations. Too many, it seems, have had false expectations as they opened this book.

The General in his Labyrinth is about Simón Bolívar, the man who succeeded in liberating half of Latin America from the Spanish in the 1820s and in uniting, for a few brief months, the countries which are now Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia into a single nation state.

It is not however a biography, nor a place to read the history of early nineteenth century Latin America. What facts there are emerge incidentally and most are unverified.

There are almost no politics in this book. In particular there is no discussion of Bolívar's unfulfilled dream of unifying the whole continent - from Mexico to Cape Horn - or of the ironies of a liberator who did not recognise that those who wanted independence also wanted diversity and a taste of local power.

But these omissions are deliberate and not accidental. Latin America is the setting for the story; it is not the subject matter.

A second, and equally mistaken

source of disappointment to some is that this is not a novel of magic realism in the manner of *Love in the Time of Cholera*. There is only the thinnest narrative thread and little or no surprises as the book progresses. The end - Bolívar's death - is anticipated from the opening sentence. Above all, there is no hero.

But to judge the book by such false expectations is wrong. García Márquez has written a novel about failure and about hope betrayed. In some ways this sets a neat balance to the triumph of hope over reality which made *Love in the Time of Cholera* so popular.

The book is the story of Bolívar's last journey - from the presidential city of Bogotá to Santa María on the Caribbean coast, between May and December of 1830. It is a journey of a broken and unwanted king - a man who, like Franco, would not go and would not die (*ni se va ni se muere*).

The scenes of his earlier life, scenes of hope and triumph both physical and military, are replayed as tragedy against the reality of his present physical decline. The new world and the new leaders whirl and move on around him, making the once all-powerful liberator irrelevant. By the end, Bolívar is a symbol of that cruellest of all truths: that all political careers end in failure and defeat. Given his achievements, failure and rejection are all the more difficult to accept, as is the loyalty of those who remain true. There is more than a hint of Lear in this story of a man lost and pushed out in the rain (*perdido en la lluvia*).

Seen for itself, without the false expectations, *The General in his Labyrinth* will stand as one of García Márquez's finest novels. It is spare and almost always unelaborate in its description of human decline. It is in no sense cheering, unless you rejoice in the fall of the mighty.

The book confirms García Márquez as a novelist of the first order and one of the very few people writing today who can transcend national cultural boundaries.

***Nick Butler is the Treasurer of the British Fabian Society.***

**James Murphy**

***Mary Robinson - a President with a Purpose***

by Fergus Finlay

Dublin, 1991, The O'Brien Press, ISBN 0 86278 257 0

To know Ireland these days is to feel at once an admiration and a frustration. In many important, enviable ways, this is a society at peace with itself, confident and aware. But this is also a society where, even its fondest supporters would concede, the state requires a much more modern definition and purpose. Irish people sing lustily; but they can sing too many old songs. And their politics have been moulded and sometimes mangled by conflicts and alliances left forlorn and inexplicable by time. Even a young country can have too much history. Against this background, for all those devoted to Ireland and occasionally dismayed by her choices, the election of Mary Robinson to the presidency has been unquestionably the best news we have ever heard.

In an act of far-seeing and far-reaching audacity, Dick Spring and his senior Labour Party colleagues decided early in 1990 that the Party's nomination for the Irish presidency would go to someone who had actually left the Party: a radical lawyer who seemed to have spent her professional life in the service of every decent, sensible, modernising cause to hit Ireland. Mary Robinson was a woman of principle; she had resigned from the Party because she could not - for very interesting reasons - endorse the Anglo-Irish Agreement. But the Party found the nerve to pick her and the campaign to back her. The result was a stunning victory against the force of tradition and the entrenched might of Fianna Fail. A dead hand that had gripped too long was lifted; and a new age begun.

Fergus Finlay here provides a

tion who will follow this lead and re-fashion the definition of patriotism in a country where it has sometimes been too regressive, too distorting, too inebriating a force. Mary Robinson's election victory has already refocussed important debates about individual rights, equality, Northern Ireland ('a place close to my heart') and Ireland's place in Europe. A fine radical tradition has won a unique chance.

There will be more books about Mary Robinson, the achievements she records and the symbols she creates. For now, Fergus Finlay has produced a thoroughly readable narrative which conveys the excitement of a roller-coaster of a campaign. But you cannot discharge the sense that the story is only begun. As the president herself says: 'I want this presidency to promote the telling of stories - stories of celebration through the arts and stories of conscience and social justice'. Her success in recasting and re-directing the myths that Ireland lives by will be an enduring fascination to monitor. A fascination now and the best kind of folklore for times to come.

In her inaugural address, President Robinson said that she wanted to sing out an old Irish refrain: 'I am of Ireland ... come dance with me in Ireland'. She will probably be relieved if we do not all come at once. But perhaps it will satisfy her to know that millions of Ireland's far-flung sons and daughters must have danced in their far-flung homes but never-too-distant hearts the night she was elected.

Political language is strangled by caveats and conditionals. We are all, for fear of being mistaken or deceived, nervous with our superlatives and economical with our praise. So let's just say it out loud: everyone responsible for Mary Robinson's election to the presidency of Ireland deserves to be immortal.

*James Murphy is the editor of Socialist Affairs' Books Section*

**Burkina Faso: New Life for the Sahel?**

by Robin Sharp

Oxfam, 1991, ISBN 0 85598 130 X

An excellent introduction to the people of Burkina Faso and their daily struggle for a better life. Nearly nine million souls live with few natural resources, a life expectancy of 48 years and the indifference of much of the rest of the world. Typically, this is an unsentimental but deeply committed piece of work. The photographs are all excellent; each one an intentional image of activity and hope.



**Crime in Europe**

Ed. Frances Heidensohn and Martin Farrell

London, Routledge, ISBN 0 415 05072 3

It may seem a strange thing to say, but in many ways Europeans are still finding out about themselves. Comprehensive, comparative studies of European life and culture are still relatively rare. Written against the backdrop of 1992, this is a fascinating review of crime and punishment in a crowded, multicultural continent that is only now beginning to realise how complicated and far-reaching the process of political integration will be.

The section on ethnic minorities and the particular problems they face throughout Europe is especially revealing.

## **SI MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE MEETING IN ADVANCE OF UNITED NATIONS DATE**

*A meeting of the SI Middle East Committee, SIMEC, was held on 11 January in London, in advance of 15 January, the date set by UN Security Council Resolution 678 in relation to the invasion and occupation of Kuwait by Iraq.*

The meeting was chaired by Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, Social Democratic Party of Germany, and was attended by the SI secretary general and by representatives of member parties in Austria, Belgium (PS), Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Israel (Israel Labour Party and MAPAM), Italy (PSI), Lebanon, Malta, Netherlands, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia

(RCD and MUP) and of Socialist International Women and the International Union of Socialist Youth.

The Committee's deliberations centred on the United Nations resolutions on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and on the importance of exploring every possibility for a diplomatic solution.

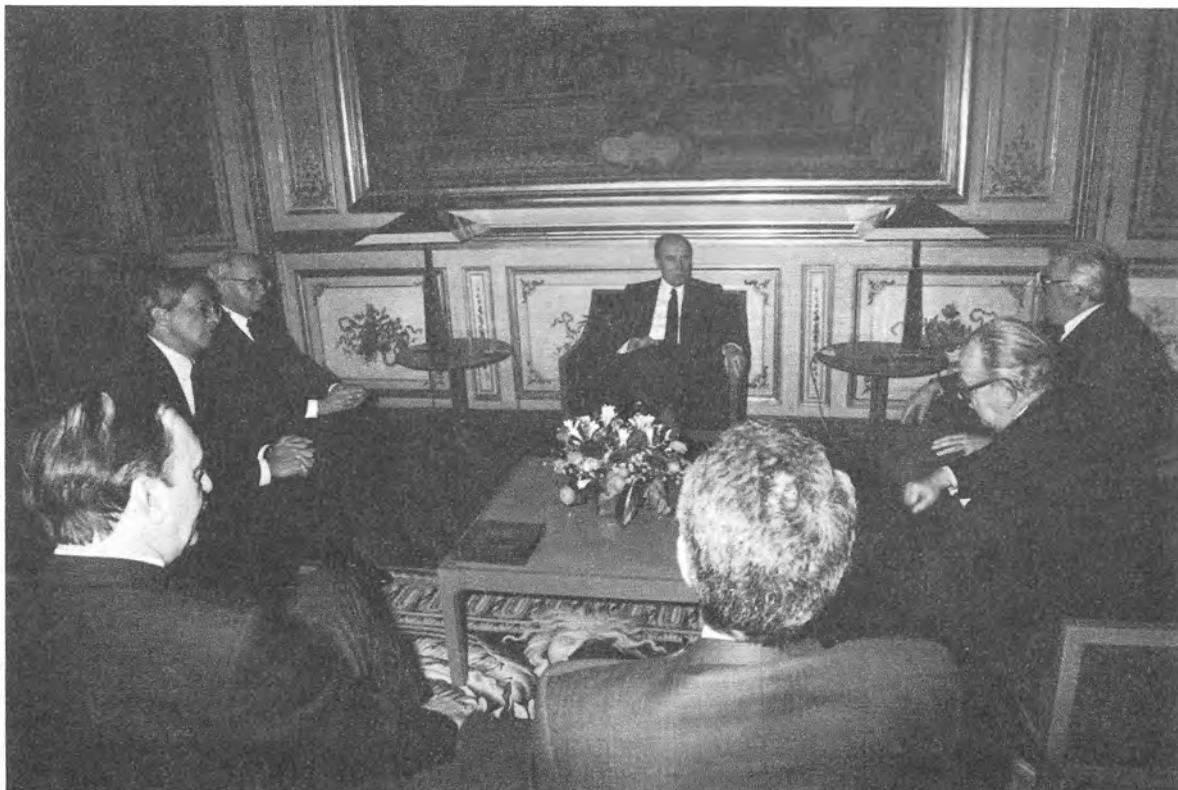
Participants welcomed all proposals to this end. There was

discussion in particular of the French initiative, involvement by Arab governments and other initiatives being analysed.

### **DISCUSSIONS WITH MITTERRAND**

Shortly after the meeting in London, representatives of SIMEC held discussions in Paris with President Mitterrand on the French government initiative to bring about agreement on a peaceful solution. Taking part in these discussions were Pierre Mauroy, first secretary of the French Socialist Party; Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, chair of SIMEC; Luis Ayala, SI secretary general; Guy Spitaels, president of the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European Community and a vice-president of the Socialist International; Pierre Guidoni, French Socialist Party; and Abderrahim Zouari, general secretary of the Constitutional Democratic Assembly, RCD, Tunisia.

*With  
President  
Mitterrand at  
the Elysée*



## **SI PRESIDIUM: SPECIAL MEETING ON GULF CRISIS**

*An urgent meeting of the SI Presidium convened in Vienna on 1 February to enable leaders of the Socialist International to hold an exchange of views on the crisis in the Gulf.*

The meeting was chaired by SI President Willy Brandt and hosted by Franz Vranitzky, chancellor of Austria and an SI vice-president.

The following SI vice-presidents and other members of the SI presidium were present: Svend Auken, chair of the Social Democratic Party, Denmark; Leonel Brizola, leader of the Democratic Labour Party, PDT, Brazil; Gro Harlem Brundtland, chair of the Norwegian Labour Party, DNA, and prime minister of Norway; Ingvar Carlsson, chair of the Social Democratic Party, SAP, Sweden, and prime minister of Sweden; Bettino Craxi, leader of the Italian Socialist Party, PSI; Boutros Boutros Ghali, National Democratic Party, NDP, minister of state for foreign affairs, Egypt; Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour Party, Great Britain; Wim Kok, leader of the Netherlands Labour Party, PvdA, and deputy prime minister of the Netherlands; Karel van Miert, Socialist Party, SP, Belgium, Commissioner of the European Communities; Shimon Peres, leader of the Israel Labour Party; Enrique Silva Cimma, leader of the Radical Party, PR, and minister for foreign affairs, Chile; Kalevi Sorsa, Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP, president of the parliament of Finland; Hans-Jochen Vogel, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD; Alfred Gusenbauer, IUSY; Guy Spitaels, president of the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European

Community; and SI secretary general Luis Ayala.

Also attending were: Antonio Cariglia, general secretary of the Italian Democratic Socialist Party, PSDI; Jean-Pierre Cot, leader of the Socialist Group, European Parliament; Elena Flores, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE; Erdal İnönü, leader of the Social Democratic Populist Party, SHP, Turkey; Audrey McLaughlin, leader of the New Democratic Party, NDP, Canada; Jorge Sampaio, general secretary of the Socialist Party of Portugal, PS; and Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, chair of the SI Middle East Committee.

Discussions focused both on the Gulf situation at that date and on the need for a future just and stable order in the Middle East.

The participants concurred in condemnation of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait and renewed their commitment to the full implementation of all relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council to restore Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The SI leaders agreed that all possible efforts should be undertaken to continue, even during the military confrontation, the search for a political solution and to ensure full and unqualified respect for the Geneva Conventions and their provisions relating to the protection of civilian populations and the treatment of prisoners of war.

They also stressed the

importance of avoiding an escalation of the war and any deployment of weapons of mass-destruction.

The joint declaration of the foreign ministers of the USA and the USSR was welcomed.

Looking to the future and to the ongoing role of the Socialist International, the SI leaders stressed a number of areas for action.

Drawing on the experience of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, participants pointed to the need for an international conference to deal comprehensively with all the problems affecting the Middle East, in order to build a peaceful and just order in the region. Such a conference would be not a single event, but an ongoing process.

They agreed that economic stability in the region was a prerequisite for lasting peace and that outside assistance and support would be needed to secure such stability.

They also emphasised the importance of an international agreement on the control and limitation of arms sales.

Participants also took the opportunity of reviewing developments in eastern Europe, in particular those affecting the Baltic republics. The presidium agreed on the dispatch of an SI mission to the Baltic republics and Moscow.

## **SIDAC MEETS IN STOCKHOLM**

The SI Disarmament Advisory Council, SIDAC, met in Stockholm on 28 January. The meeting was chaired by SIDAC chair Kalevi Sorsa, Finnish Socialist Democratic Party, and attended by the SI secretary general and by representatives of SI member parties in Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy (PSI), the Netherlands, Senegal, Sweden and Switzerland and of Socialist International Women and IUSY.

The main themes on the agenda were events in the Soviet Union and in particular in the Baltic republics; the situation at that juncture in the Persian Gulf; and arms control.

Swedish representatives who had just returned from a visit to the Baltic republics reported on the tense situation there, following the use of violence by Soviet military forces on a number

of occasions during January. SIDAC members attending the meeting were unanimous in condemning all use of force and contravention of human rights and freedoms and in stressing that disagreements must be resolved by a return to negotiation.

Participants held a wide-ranging exchange on the situation in the Gulf, some 10 days after the outbreak of hostilities. The necessary elements of a Middle East peace process and future security structure for the region were discussed. Mention was made in particular of the CSCE model in this connection. Participants underlined the importance and the global repercussions of developments in the region. There was a proposal to convene a joint meeting of SIDAC with the SI Middle East Committee, SIMEC.

On wider arms control issues,

the meeting heard a statement from Maj-Britt Theorin, Ambassador of Sweden to the UN Committee on Disarmament, who reminded participants of the recent positive steps - at present somewhat overshadowed by events in the Middle East and in the Baltic. She stressed the importance of the CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe) agreement and of the 'new security order'. She also laid emphasis on the urgency of concluding a comprehensive chemical weapons convention - an issue given renewed urgency by the threat of Iraqi use of such weapons.

There was strong agreement amongst the members of SIDAC that the spirit and impetus of the Paris Summit and other hopeful developments in the last part of 1990 had to be sustained.

## **SI PEACE ROLE IN COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR**

A Socialist International delegation was present in Colombia in February and March at the ceremonies during which the Army of National Liberation, EPL, a guerrilla group, surrendered its arms and transformed itself into a political organisation, the Peace, Hope and Freedom Party.

The SI, attending at the request of the Colombian government and the guerrillas, was represented by Manuel Medina, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, and Edgar Ugalde, National Liberation Party, PLN, Costa Rica. The delegation visited various locations in Colombia

where the EPL gave up its weapons, which were taken to a foundry in the city of Medellín where a monument to peace will be fashioned out of the metal recovered.

A ceremony was later held in Medellín, attended by senior figures of the Colombian government and other institutions, where the SI was also represented and where the new party was launched. A new foundation, the Fundación Progresar, was also inaugurated, to fund the former EPL guerrillas on their return to civilian life.

Meanwhile, in Quito on 26 February the Socialist

International was represented at a ceremony at which the Alfaro Vive guerrilla organisation surrendered its arms and also returned to civilian life. The SI delegation consisted of Senator Manuel Aguilar Belda of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, and Heinrich Buchbinder, disarmament expert of the Socialist Democratic Party of Switzerland, who acted as witnesses at the event.

## **SI MISSION TO BALTICS AND MOSCOW**

Following the events in Vilnius and Riga in January 1991, the SI presidium, at its meeting in Vienna on 1 February, decided that a Socialist International delegation should undertake a mission to the Baltic republics. The mission took place from 24 to 28 February 1991 (see SA 3/90, page 38, for report of first SI mission to the Baltic republics, 8 to 12 September 1990). Heinz Fischer MP, president of the Austrian parliament and a vice-chair of the Socialist Party of Austria chaired the mission. The other participants were Donald Anderson MP, Front Bench spokesman on foreign affairs, British Labour Party; Sture Ericson MP, member of the foreign affairs committee of the Swedish parliament and party spokesman on security and defence policy, Social Democratic Party of Sweden, SAP; Ludolfo Paramio, executive secretary of the

federal executive committee, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE; and Luc Lévy, expert on east European Affairs, international department, French Socialist Party, PS.

The SI group went first to Moscow, where they held discussions with officials of the central committee of the CPSU and also with representatives of the Social Democratic Party of the Russian Federation. They then travelled on to the three Baltic republics.

In Vilnius the delegation met Kazimieras Atanivicius and other leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania; leaders of the other political parties and of groups within the supreme council of Lithuania, and Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the supreme council.

In Riga they met representatives of the Social Democratic Workers' Party; Romualds Razukas,

chairman of the Latvia Popular Front; Janis Dinevics, leader of the Latvia Popular Front parliamentary group, and Janis Jurkans, minister of foreign affairs.

In Tallin the mission met Edgar Savisaar, prime minister; Lennart Meri, foreign minister; Artur Kuznetsov, minister with responsibility for inter-ethnic relations; Olo Nugis, speaker of the supreme council, and leaders and supreme council deputies of the Estonian Social Democratic Party.

Finally, the SI group returned to Moscow, where they held further talks with CPSU central committee representatives.

The chair of the mission reported on the visit to the SI Party Leaders' Conference in Sydney, 9-10 March, where one of the principal items on the agenda was the latest developments in eastern Europe (see page 32).



*Waiting in  
Vilnius*

## CONFERENCE OF PARTY LEADERS IN SYDNEY

*Leaders of Socialist International member parties gathered in Sydney on 9-10 March for a conference which launched a new phase of SI activities in the Asia-Pacific region.*

The politics and economics of the Asia-Pacific region, the situation in the Gulf and the future of the Middle East, and latest developments in eastern Europe were the principal items on the agenda when SI party leaders met in Australia's largest city, in the centenary year of the foundation of the Australian Labor Party.

Delegates, guests and observers gathered from all parts of Europe, from Central and South America, Africa, the Middle East, and - in greater numbers than at any previous SI meeting - from the Asia-Pacific region.

The meeting signified a strengthening of relations with parties in that part of the world

and a stepping-up of SI activity there.

SI President Willy Brandt said in his opening remarks, 'We simply cannot do without closer contacts with the progressive forces in your region, because this part of the world is becoming increasingly important. The economic drive in the Asia-Pacific region will shift the balance of the world economy more than it has already in the recent past. Highly populated countries in Asia will self-confidently make their voices heard in world politics. We are aware that we are dealing with self-assured partners whose self-confidence is also fed by their great cultural heritage.'

The same theme of the increasing global importance of the region was taken up by Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke in his address of welcome. He initially expressed his relief at the swift and successful conclusion of the Gulf war, hailed the political changes in eastern Europe and underlined what he called 'the historic achievement of the parties of social democracy', such as his own, in reforming capitalism 'to enhance personal freedoms, to safeguard the environment, to protect the world's resources, and at the same time to make the economic system better and fairer.'

SI President  
Willy Brandt



Tim Clayton

## The Asia-Pacific region

Turning to his own region, the Australian leader laid emphasis on the process of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which he initiated in Seoul in 1989.

'Our region', he said, 'can, through its own internal behaviour, help set an example in the world. If Germany and Japan were the economic miracles of the 1950s and 1960s, countries elsewhere in Asia were the economic miracle of the 1970s and 1980s. And from the outset one of the objectives of APEC has been the encouragement by the region of fair and open international trade as a key to global prosperity.'

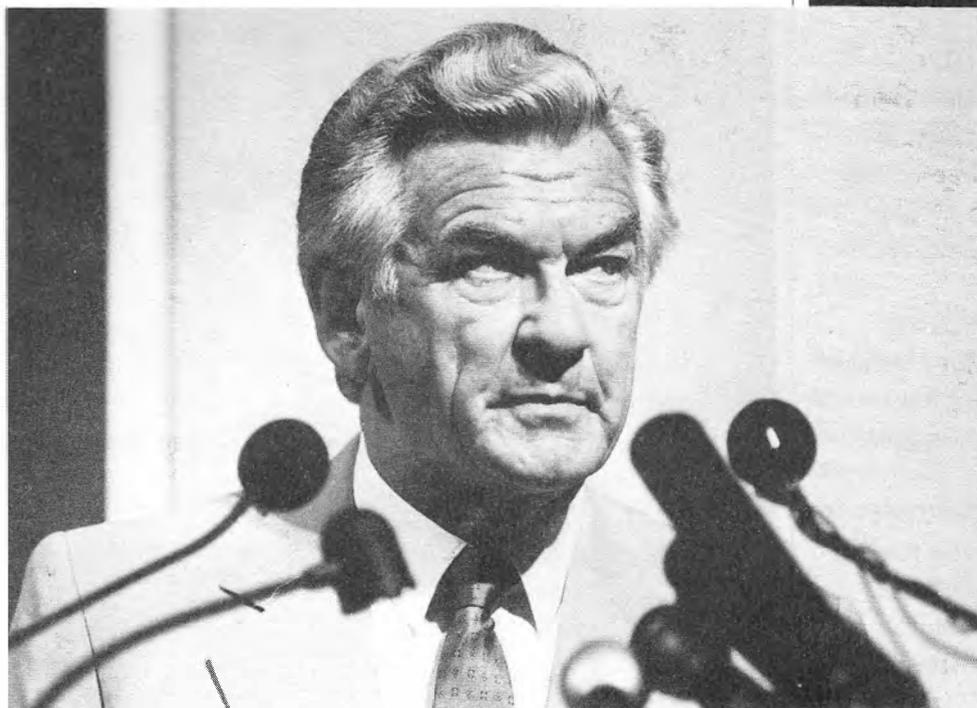
'But beyond that, our region is capable of demonstrating the capacity of countries not so long ago torn by conflict, countries with traditional rivalries, countries at different stages of development, and countries of great cultural diversity, to cooperate together.'

The Australian prime minister was followed by Takako Doi, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, who also stressed in her address to the conference the development of regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific - warmly supported by her party (see article by Takako Doi, p 7).

Mike Moore, leader of the New Zealand Labour Party and, until the party's recent electoral reverse, prime minister of New Zealand, called for clarification of the meaning of the New World Order and said that it would have to embrace freer and more open trade with the 'supereconomies'.

He called too for a strengthened United Nations, with greater authority in the military, economic and environmental fields. He favoured a modification of the present concept of the nation state and said he would support the surrendering of some political and economic power in the cause of internationalism.

SI vice-president Eichi Nagasue, Japan Democratic Socialist Party, spoke of the more than one million labourers from Asian developing countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Vietnam who had lost their jobs



Tim Clayton

and become refugees as a result of the Gulf war. He stressed also the severe economic loss to the home countries of these people, but looked forward to a brighter future with post-war reconstruction in the Gulf region.

Lim Kit Siang, leader of the Democratic Action Party of Malaysia, recalled the successful fight for an effective parliamentary regime in his country, giving thanks for the SI's efforts on behalf of 16 leaders of his party, including himself, who were detained for 18 months without trial in 1987. The 21st century, he went on, would be the Asian century and the SI reaction to events today would determine whether the social democratic message would be strong in the region tomorrow. The vastness and diversity of the region nevertheless presented a challenge. He called on the SI to reach out to parties and individuals in the region and to establish a regular regional forum in which social democrats could gather.

Senator Gareth Evans, the Australian foreign minister, laid emphasis on the developing sense of community in the region and on the fact that Australia was no

longer a 'cultural misfit' among its neighbours. He reported on the progress of the APEC process and ended with a call for SI support for the United Nations peace plan for Cambodia.

Kuini Bavadra, leader of the Fiji Labour Party and widow of former Prime Minister Timoci Bavadra, made a well-received appeal to the meeting for support in the fight against the racially biased constitution imposed on her country by the regime of Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka.

For the Mauritius Labour Party, party vice-president Marie-France Roussety brought up the question of Diego Garcia, claimed by her country but now a US military base. 'We want to keep the Indian Ocean a zone of peace', she said.

Gough Whitlam, former Australian prime minister, stressed the importance of the Law of the Sea for the Asia-Pacific region.

## Future strategy for the Middle East

On the theme of the Middle East, Alfonso Guerra, for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, called for a three-point strategy, to include a regional security system, the convocation of a peace

Host Bob  
Hawke

**TOP**  
*Malaysian  
delegation  
lead by Lim  
Kit Siang  
(centre)*



**CENTRE**  
*Bat-Erdeneen  
Batbayar  
(Mongolia)*



**BOTTOM**  
*Dale Keeling  
(Fiji) and  
Amin  
Wakman  
(Afghanistan)*



Photos by Richard C. Johnson

conference under the auspices of the United Nations and the establishment of programmes to improve living standards and guarantee the internal stability and economic development of the countries of the region.

Haim Bar Lev of the Israel Labour Party said, 'Peace in the Middle East is essential for all parties. It will bring prosperity and benefits for all.' He was however emphatic that any peace would demand compromise from all sides. He was cautious, too, about the possibility of Israel giving up land it presently occupies, given the needs of defence and the short distances between the frontier and Israel's main cities.

Taieb Sahbani, Constitutional Democratic Assembly, RCD, Tunisia, argued that the people of Iraq had been punished for the transgressions of their government.

Pierre Guidoni, international secretary of the French Socialist Party, said that the military response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was not just legitimate but necessary. He made the point that, as the United Nations had had a key role in the defence of the integrity of Kuwait, the United Nations would be vital in the effort to bring lasting peace to the Middle East.

### **Eastern Europe and the Baltics**

Heinz Fischer, president of the Austrian parliament and a vice-chair of the Austrian Socialist Party, SPOe, who led an SI mission to Moscow and the Baltic republics in February (see page 29) introduced the discussion on the situation in eastern Europe.

He pointed first to the changing situation since the end of the communist period, going on to review developments in countries of the region and referring in particular to the rising tensions in Yugoslavia.

As far as the resurgence of social democracy was concerned, Bulgaria, he said, offered a successful experience and great hope.

He laid emphasis on the expected presence of foreign observers in the forthcoming polls in Albania.

Fischer reported on the recent SI mission to the Baltic republics, noting that contacts with Valentin Falin, secretary of the CPSU central committee, showed how much the party was committed to the principle that the secession of units from the USSR should take place only within the established norms of the Soviet constitution. He also referred to the mission's talks with Russian Social Democrats.

He went on to examine the situation on the ground in the Baltic republics, reporting on the mission's meetings with authorities, the parliamentary leaderships and with other representatives of various political parties in Vilnius, Riga and Tallin.

### **Latin America**

Another important area of SI activities came in for examination near the end of the conference, when José Francisco Peña Gómez, leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, of the Dominican Republic and chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, reviewed the at times sombre economic situation in that region.

'Certainly', he said, 'we have obtained democracy, but we have lost the battle for economic development and the social well-being of our people.'

'Only effective solidarity between the industrialised countries and the nations of the third world', he warned, 'will save the democratic programme in Latin America.'

### **South Africa**

Jan Marinus Wiersma of the Netherlands Labour Party reviewed the situation in South Africa and the conference adopted a statement welcoming the developments of recent months, but stressing that much remained to be accomplished towards the abolition of apartheid. The statement also called on the democratic organisations of the non-white majority in South Africa to direct their efforts towards unity and an end to violence and appealed to the international community to make



**TOP**  
**Mohamed Sharif Baqir (Pakistan) and Shail Upadhya (Nepal)**



**BOTTOM**  
**Marie-France Roussety (Mauritius) at the delegate's table**

concrete plans for the support of post-apartheid South Africa.

### **SI action-plan for the Asia-Pacific**

Following a meeting with delegates of SI member parties from the region, SI secretary general Luis Ayala outlined to the conference a plan for the International's activities in the Asia-Pacific region in the coming period. He stressed the need for regional consolidation and development of cooperation, as reflected in the contributions of the SI member parties and guests attending the conference.

Further steps would be taken, he said, to strengthen relations among the existing SI parties in the region. To that end, a regional gathering of SI member parties would take place at least once a year, with the first such meeting early in 1992.

A personal SI presence, including the sending of SI missions to countries where crucial elections were taking place or where democracy and human rights were under threat, could play an important role.

There had been a proposal, he said, to hold one of the SI's regular statutory meetings in Asia next year. Finally, the secretary general assured participants that the affairs of the Asia-Pacific region would be high on the agenda of the next SI congress, which would take place in 1992.

### **One hundred years of Labor in Australia**

The conference ended with warm thanks to the Australian Labor Party for its hospitality and with congratulations to the party on its centenary.

## RESOLUTIONS

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE  
ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The Socialist International, meeting as it has been in a country which is squarely placed in the Asia-Pacific region, has given particular focus in its discussions to economic, human rights and political developments in this region.

**Economic Developments**

Delegates noted that recent years had seen both positive and negative developments across the political and economic spectrum in the region - a region characterised by greater economic dynamism than any other in the world but, at the same time, by both poverty and evidence of a growing gap between rich and poor in many countries. Delegates called on developed countries of the region to continue with greater generosity their programmes of development assistance, and on world and regional international financial institutions to be responsive to the needs of all developing countries without exception.

Delegates noted clear evidence of growing economic cooperation in the region and applauded, in particular, the success of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, APEC, concept. Delegates agreed that such cooperation will clearly be of significant economic benefit to all countries and peoples of the region and will ultimately contribute to the development of higher living standards and freer trade throughout the world.

Delegates noted the particular importance to the many maritime nations in the region of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and expressed strong support for more ratifications in order to bring the Convention into force.

**Democracy and Human Rights**

Delegates noted that there had been some encouraging democratic developments in recent years in the region - for example in the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Bangladesh, New Caledonia and Taiwan - but there had also been significant reverses for the democratic cause.

In this respect, delegates deeply regretted the unhappy reversion to a pattern of military intervention in the democratic processes in Thailand's national life which the recent coup represents, and called on the National Peace-keeping Council to facilitate the earliest possible return to democracy and parliamentary government.

Delegates deplored the refusal of the military regime in Burma to implement the results of the 1990 national election

and to facilitate the transfer of power to a democratically elected government, and their continued repression of the democratic opposition.

Delegates deplored the continuing damage to democratic institutions which the 1987 coups in Fiji had caused. While noting that it was now proposed to restore some measure of representative government, they condemned the undemocratic, racially based and racially biased nature of the new constitution.

Delegates also expressed concern about continuing human rights abuses in a number of countries in the region and, in particular, the continuing stifling of free expression and association in China following the Beijing massacre in 1989. They urged all countries in the region to ratify and observe the international human rights instruments and declarations adopted by the UN and its agencies, and the ILO.

Delegates noted that there were still many countries in the region that had yet to fully ratify the Convention eliminating discrimination in employment and education and on grounds of race and gender. They urged all countries in the region to work to remove barriers to the operation of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW.

The human rights situation in East Timor continues to cause real concern. Delegates urged the government of Indonesia to fully respect the collective and individual rights of the people of East Timor and to work under the mandate of the UN Secretary General to achieve an internationally acceptable settlement of outstanding issues in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter.

**Security**

Delegates noted the growing regional debate focussed on the desirability of developing a greater sense of common security, in which countries come to appreciate that their security is best guaranteed by developing arrangements with, not against, their neighbours. They expressed support for the growing commitment within the region to dialogue and confidence building measures, and also for the growing commitments evident in the region to the principles and practices of collective security as a necessary safeguard to accompany common security processes.

Delegates noted with concern that nuclear weapons testing continued in the South Pacific despite the unanimous opposition to it of all nations in the

South Pacific Forum and the establishment by them of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. They call on all countries to cease their testing programme in the spirit of the universal desire for a genuinely new world order.

Delegates expressed concern about the continuing tragic civil war in Cambodia, and called upon all involved parties and the international community generally to redouble their efforts to achieve an early, just comprehensive settlement.

Delegates expressed their support for the UN Peace Plan initiated by Australia and now supported by the UN Security Council and General Assembly, which provides in particular for:

- a major UN role in the administration of Cambodia in the transitional period leading to free and fair elections;
- the cessation of all external arms supplies;
- international guarantees for the country's independence and neutrality.

Delegates further expressed their support for the early reconvening of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia, under the joint chairmanship of France and Indonesia, to allow the final negotiation of a comprehensive settlement based on the UN Peace Plan.

Delegates also called on the international community to respond with quick and generous support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Cambodia in the wake of such a settlement.

Delegates noted the important role that regional countries had to play in the final resolution of the Cambodian problem. They noted the importance of Vietnam in particular being encouraged by the international community to act constructively and positively, and not unnecessarily isolated in its own struggle to achieve viable independence.

Delegates agreed that growing cohesiveness and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region represented a historic opportunity both for the peoples of the region and also for the entire global community to achieve higher living standards together with a more deeply entrenched commitment to democracy, equity and fundamental human rights.

## THE GULF CRISIS AND THE FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The Socialist International welcomes the United Nations' handling of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as demonstrating a strengthening of the cooperative spirit in the international community and indicating the Security Council's unanimous desire to make more effective use of the mechanisms of the United Nations in dealing with threats to international peace and security.

The Socialist International regrets that as a last resort force was required to secure the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, but recognises that this was necessary as a result of the failure of Iraq to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. Only after Iraq had made it clear that it would defy the United Nations by remaining in Kuwait, the international community joined together in a firm commitment to defeat that invasion and uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Socialist International urges that now that this crisis has been resolved it

is vital that we intensify our efforts to establish peace and stability throughout the Middle East. There is a clear willingness among all those involved in confronting Iraq's aggression to move on from the Gulf crisis and, strengthened by the principles which emerged from the successful resolution of that crisis, to address all the longstanding problems of the Middle East, including a just resolution of the Palestinian issue.

The international community must take in the lessons to be learned from the recent conflict and take the necessary steps towards a lasting peace for the region as a whole, a region so vital to global stability.

Such initiatives comprise: the tight restriction and rigorous control of arms and arms sales, ensuring the security of individual States, but avoiding any possibility of aggression; and support for the democratic, economic and social development of all nations as a decisive factor in ensuring the future stability and

coexistence of all nations in the region. Specifically this entails a more equitable distribution of wealth and resources.

In keeping with the resolutions of the SI Cairo and New York Councils and the deliberations of the SI Middle East Committee, the Socialist International reiterates its call for negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, to be convened by the Security Council and with the participation of all parties concerned, to apply all resolutions already passed by the United Nations aimed at resolving the problems of the Middle East, and to provide fair and lasting solutions to all current areas of dispute.

The Socialist International will unreservedly support any initiative that paves the way for the rapid resumption of fruitful dialogue in order to achieve mutual respect, the security of all countries in the region and economic cooperation, all of which are vital in creating peace and furthering democracy.

## EASTERN EUROPE

The Socialist International applauds recent events in eastern Europe which have promoted the development of democratic institutions, including multi-party political systems, and respect for individual rights and freedoms. Due to the democratic demands of the peoples of central and eastern Europe and the willingness of the Soviet authorities to adjust to those demands, the momentous events have reshaped the political, strategic and economic landscape of the continent, and carry implications for the whole world. The changes provide an historic opportunity to develop pluralist, democratic systems in place of repression, and to improve living conditions. Equally importantly, they impose an obligation on all other nations to respond positively and constructively to help ensure that hard-won reforms are not eroded. This assistance, given mainly by western European democracies, can consist of economic cooperation, environmental protection, education and professional training, joint efforts in democratic institution-building and provision for new international security arrangements.

The fragile economic situation of the eastern European countries increases the need for further action, notably in the framework of the Group of 24 coordinated by the European Community. This help should in no way reduce efforts in

favour of developing countries in other parts of the world.

This commitment of the western democracies is even more important, since the new and not yet stable democracies have to cope with various threats, the most imminent of which are the following:

- Social tensions and economic injustices - deriving from an ill thought out *laissez-faire* strategy of transition to a market economy - and increasing migration;
- Emerging Right-wing and populist tendencies with militant nationalistic leanings.

The Socialist International welcomes the forthcoming dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the continuing efforts to adjust the strategy and structure of NATO to the more stable and peaceful conditions in Europe.

The Socialist International reaffirms the need to shape a viable all-European security arrangement based on the further development of the Paris Charter of the CSCE countries. A non-offensive structure of military forces will be the fundamental principle of future security arrangements in Europe.

While the Socialist International welcomes the positive results in democratic transition and security-building in Europe, further steps are still needed; in particular three specific situations require urgent solution:

- 1) The recent situation in Yugoslavia has been characterised by serious tensions among the constituent republics. The questions of the continuation of the constitutional structure of Yugoslavia,

its economic policy and the future of Slovenia, Croatia and other parts of the federation must be resolved in a peaceful and democratic way. The rights of minorities must be guaranteed and the principles of the Paris Charter of the CSCE must be upheld.

- 2) The situation in Albania can only be changed by free and fair elections, and the Socialist International calls on the government and new political parties to address the problems confronting the country so that there is a smooth transition to a political system which reflects the aspirations of the Albanian people.

- 3) The results of the recent referenda in the Baltic republics represent a clear and unequivocal expression of their very strong support for independence and the aspirations of the Baltic people to rejoin the family of nations through peaceful and democratic means.

The Socialist International urges the Soviet Government, as well as the respective political leaders in the Baltic republics, to enter into immediate constructive negotiations, without preconditions, towards a peaceful resolution of the question of the future status of the Baltic republics.

The Socialist International continues to support the process of reform in the Soviet Union, which represents the only possibility of achieving democracy and stability in that country and in the whole of Europe. This process of reform also represents the only means by which the Baltic republics will make substantial progress towards the fulfilment of their aspirations.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

The Socialist International reiterates that only by accepting a democratic, united and non-racial South Africa, equal rights and the principle of one-person-one-vote, can the South African government convince the world that it is working towards the end of apartheid and not towards its reform.

The Socialist International acknowledges that welcome developments have taken place in recent months, including the Groote Schuur Meeting of May 1990 and the Pretoria Meeting the following August between the Government and the African National Congress, and the statement of President de Klerk on 1 February this year.

Notwithstanding these significant steps the implementation of many measures towards the abolition of apartheid has yet to be accomplished.

Sanctions have been crucial in bringing about the changes which have occurred to date. Any changes in the application of sanctions should be related to the adoption of real and practical steps in the destruction of apartheid. Until the remaining obstacles to negotiations have been removed, existing measures should be maintained. Remaining political prisoners must be released. The way for exiles to return has to be cleared. The Group Areas Act, Lands Acts, and Population Registration Act will have to be repealed as promised by the South African government.

The Socialist International is especially concerned over the continuing constraints on political freedom in South Africa. The Government continues to make massive arrests and use measures such as detention without trial and restrictions on public meetings. The due process of law and the freedoms of assembly and expression are universal human rights and the Socialist International urges the South African Government to give effect to them without delay.

The Socialist International appeals to the democratic organisations of the non-white majority to forge their unity with a view to negotiations on the democratic future of South Africa. The SI emphasises its hope that agreements to overcome violence will bear fruit and that the security forces of the government will terminate their implicit and explicit collusion with one side.

The SI calls upon the international community to commit itself to support a post-apartheid South Africa. Plans should be drawn up that will help a new South Africa as part of a more stable, prosperous and democratic SADCC region.

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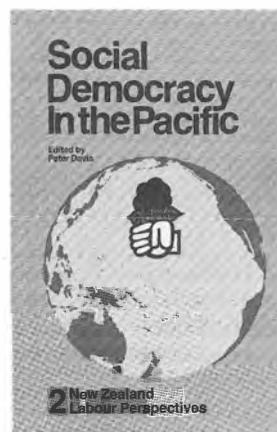
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**SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE PACIFIC**

This collection of essays, one of a series of 'New Zealand Labour Perspectives', has much of relevance to say on the forging of a social democratic programme for the Pacific region.



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PEOPLE

■  
**Mario Solórzano** (below), leader of the Democratic Socialist Party, PSD, of Guatemala, has accepted the post of minister of labour in the cross-party national unity government formed by President Jorge Serrano. Serrano, who took office on 14 January this year, pledged national reconciliation and a vigorous campaign against violence, corruption and the country's severe economic problems.



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

■  
**Haroldo Rodas Melgar**, formerly secretary of the PSD, was appointed vice-minister for external relations, and **Fernando Fuentes Mohr**, former PSD international secretary, has become a personal commissioner of the president for state rationalisation. (for full report of Guatemalan elections, see page 58).

■  
At a recent congress of the Mauritius Labour Party, **Navin Ramgoolam** was elected party leader. Dr Ramgoolam, who replaces Satcam Boolell, is the son of the late prime minister Seewoosagur Ramgoolam.

■  
The Italian Socialist Party - and many others round the world - are this year celebrating the centenary of the birth of **Pietro Nenni**, a giant of European socialism who died in 1980. Recalling his life in



Critica Sociale

an article in a supplement on Nenni (above) produced in a recent number of *Avanti!*, the Italian socialist daily, Francesco Gozzano commented on Nenni's early opposition to fascism in his own country and in others, especially Spain. He quoted what Nenni wrote at the end of 1936, 'Today it is still possible to overcome international fascism. Tomorrow it could be too late and then world war - or rather civil war on a world scale - would be inevitable.'

After the second world war Nenni wanted Italy to follow a policy of independence and neutrality, a policy which he attempted to put into practice when he was foreign minister briefly in 1947-8. He was foreign minister again in 1968-9 and inter alia sought some just solution to the problems of the Middle East, to De Gaulle's opposition to British entry into the European Community and to the problems posed by the dictatorships in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

The Nenni commemorations will continue through the year.

■  
Luxembourg's six-month presidency of the European Community, which began on 1 January 1991, placed the international spotlight on **Jacques Poos** (right), the

duchy's foreign minister and also deputy leader of the Luxembourg Socialist Labour Party, LSAP/PSOL. After serving as finance minister in 1976-79, Poos became Luxembourg's first-ever socialist foreign minister in 1984, when his party formed a coalition with the Christian Socials.

He came to European prominence at a critical juncture for the Community, as EC intergovernmental conferences embarked on the practicalities of implementing the declared aim of economic, monetary and foreign policy union. He also faced the challenge to EC unity posed by the outbreak of war in the Gulf.



Popperfoto

## Guillermo Manuel

**Ungo**, leader of the National Revolutionary Movement, MNR of El Salvador and a vice-president of the Socialist International since 1983, died at the age of 59 in Mexico City on 28 February after a surgical operation. His body was taken to El Salvador where he was buried at a ceremony attended by friends and colleagues from his country and from the Socialist International. His funeral was also attended by President Alfredo Cristiani and other political and church leaders, and large numbers of Salvadorean citizens.

Ungo had just celebrated thirty years in politics in a country where the life expectancy of politicians devoted, like him, to changing society is short. On the occasion of that thirtieth anniversary, his friend Víctor Valle commented, 'Thirty years in politics in a stable country with solid institutions is praiseworthy; but if the thirty years are spent in and for a country in continuous and growing social turmoil, it is an astonishing feat.'

He died at a time when he and his party were doing their best to bring an end to the war which had afflicted their country for more than a decade. A brave man, he was engaged in an election campaign in circumstances of great physical danger from the notorious Salvadorean death squads. Though the poll which was to take place in March was, as he well knew, a great deal less than perfect, he had thrown himself into it in a courageous move aimed at helping the chances of the electoral path in a land whose people had suffered grievously from war. He died just over a year after his close collaborator and MNR comrade, Héctor Ouelí, had been murdered by the right-wing extremists in neighbouring Guatemala.



Ungo, bespectacled and studious-looking, was born to a middle-class Salvadorean family in 1931. He started in politics as a student inspired by catholic teachings. He was soon attracted towards socialism and did not continue down the path which eventually led some of his fellow students to establish the Salvadorean Christian Democratic Party. As an outstanding candidate for a doctorate in law, he was in 1960 drafted onto the General Electoral Council which was charged with helping to stage clean elections. He and his colleagues worked in vain and Ungo went back to a career in law and to teaching at the University of El Salvador.

His political thinking was meanwhile developing. In 1963 he published an article in San Salvador in which he concluded by saying, 'the right to insurrection is no more than the natural consequence of the constitutional principle that establishes that all political power comes from the people.'

In 1972 he stood for the vice-presidency as a democratic socialist on a platform whose presidential candidate was the Christian Democrat José Napoleón Duarte. The elections, as many

times before, were treacherously annulled by the military and Ungo went into exile. In 1979 he again came close to power when he was appointed a member of the *junta* which ruled the country after the overthrow of the dictator General Carlos Humberto Romero. But once again hopes of democracy were to be dashed and again he went into exile.

In 1989, taking his life in his hands, he stood in presidential elections for the Democratic Convergence. Of doubtful validity, given the continuing right-wing terror, the election was won by Alfredo Cristiani, a political associate of the notorious Major Roberto D'Aubuisson. Unsurprisingly for those who knew him, even those elections did not put an end to Memo Ungo's commitment to the politics of the ballot box. He showed that commitment to the end.

It was his tragedy that he did not live long enough to see El Salvador firmly established on the road to democracy and social justice. It is to his everlasting credit that he spent his life in the search for that objective.

## The future of Puerto Rico

The Senate and House bills under consideration by the United States Congress provide for a referendum on the future political relationship between the US and Puerto Rico and present the US with the crucial subjects of ethnicity and nationality which the Puerto Rican case poses.

Vital issues are involved for both the US and Puerto Rico. The manner in which the US deals with this problem will have profound and lasting effects for the US both domestically and internationally.

The real issue facing the people of Puerto Rico is whether they have a future as a distinct nationality or whether, in the long run, they will be integrated or assimilated as a state of the American union. For Puerto Rico, our very existence as a distinct people is at stake. Puerto Rico constitutes a distinct nationality by any definition of the term.

Sixty per cent of the population of Puerto Rico does not speak English and an additional twenty per cent can barely understand it, after almost a century of American control; and all the political parties of Puerto Rico, including the pro-statehood party, officially proclaim that the Spanish language and Puerto Rico's culture and way of being are non-negotiable under any status option. No party would stand a chance in Puerto Rican elections if they did not so proclaim. The primary loyalty of Puerto Ricans is to Puerto Rico.

In the light of the above, unless Puerto Rico moves towards independence, sooner or later the US will have to face the following question: is the US willing to accept as a member of the union a state which constitutes a distinct nationality, whose members moreover are not willing to give up their own separate identity? If not, what is the US going to do with the territory?

The way out for Puerto Rico is to start moving away from dependence and statehood towards independence which will provide us with the necessary tools and inspiration to stand on our own two feet.

**Rubén Berríos Martínez**

President, Puerto Rican Independence Party  
Puerto Nuevo

## Social Democracy in Mongolia

A year has passed since the Mongolian Social Democratic Party was established. It was also only a year ago that the Mongolian people made their first step from communist dictatorship towards democracy. Last summer we had the first ever free elections of any kind in Mongolia. Eight per cent of voters voted for our party and we gained four of the 50 seats in parliament. Furthermore, a vice-president of Mongolia was elected from the MSDP.

The Mongolian movement towards democracy would not have been possible without *perestroika* and the changes which took place in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe in 1989. However, Mongolia is distinct from eastern European countries, in the sense that we carried out for a longer period of time an experiment in Russian-type communism and shouldered the Stalinist terror of the 1930s.

You may imagine how difficult it is for three generations of people, having lived in such an anomalous society, to transform that society into a humanitarian, civilised society with market relations, democratic laws, fully elected state mechanisms and citizens with rights and duties. If circumstances allow, political change can happen very quickly. Rapid economic change can also be implemented. But to renew the mentality of those three generations requires patient but speedy action.

Now almost everyone is talking about the market economy, but they do not know what it really means. People shouting about democracy, without a basic understanding, will not survive within a democratic system. This leads to economic disorder and anarchy. The most important task is to change people's mentality so that they can cope with the requirements of a humanitarian society.

The MSDP is now one year old and we have gained some experience; also we have missed some points. In the future we would like to share our experience with other socialist and social democratic parties.

**Bat-Erdeneen Batbayer**

Chairman, Mongolian Social Democratic Party

## Caribbean experience widely applicable

The article from Kari Levitt published in the last issue of Socialist Affairs was extremely illuminating and accurate. Though experience is clearly drawn more from the Caribbean than from other parts of the world, her conclusions are applicable to my country and much of the rest of developing south Asia.

Her conclusion that 'ultimately each nation, each people and each society has to face and solve its own problems and set its own agenda' is particularly true.

**M Amin Wakman**

Chairman, Afghan Social Democratic Party

The editor welcomes letters from readers. These should be kept to a maximum of 500 words and may be sent by telefax to: (010 44 71) 720 4448 or by mail to the Socialist International secretariat, see address inside front cover.



# WOMEN & POLITICS

Journal of  
Socialist International Women

**Publisher and Editor**  
**María Rodríguez-Jonas**

**Margaret Shields**

## WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND

### Political Progress and Pitfalls

New Zealand is a very young country in every sense. While Polynesian settlement began about 1000 years ago European discovery dates from the 17th century and the Treaty of Waitangi, the founding document of New Zealand's nationhood was signed in 1840, just 150 years ago.

From the beginnings of the (then) colony the idea of women's suffrage was in the minds of at least some of the pioneers. As early as 1843 Mr Alfred Saunders and Sir William Fox advocated women's suffrage. However it was not until 1893 and following fifty years of struggle that the right to vote was finally won. Contrary to a statement by an early High Commissioner for New Zealand in London the 'privilege' was not 'given freely and spontaneously in the easiest and most unexpected manner'. Nor was it true, as he suggested that 'No franchise leagues had fought the fight year after year'. The battle, finally won meant that New Zealand was the first country, not part of a federation to give women the vote and the event did not go unremarked in the new country as the following piece of Victorian verse demonstrates.

A trumpet note of Victory  
Rings out across the night  
Now mellowing in the valley  
Now pealing from the height  
'Ye have the vote' - Oh God be praised  
Another step is won  
On the Golden Stair of Progress  
That leadeth to the sun.

New Zealand, O my country  
I thrill with pride this day  
To think where Nations pause and shrink  
Again thou lead'st the way!  
Thou last brushed aside mere cavil  
And to honest doubt has cried:  
Tho' the Universe crash round us,  
We shall stand on Justice's side'

David Will, M Burn *The Glorious* 19th October 1893

Why did New Zealand succeed so early and ahead of all others? Certainly the development of a strong Women's Christian Temperance Union was an important part of struggles.

In fact the main part of the struggle was led by the WCTU, ably

*An anti-suffrage handbill  
circulated at the time of the  
battle for women's suffrage in  
New Zealand*

## NOTICE

— to —

## EPICENE WOMEN.

### ELECTIONEERING WOMEN

ARE REQUESTED NOT TO CALL HERE.

They are recommended to go home, to look after their children, cook their husband's dinners, empty the slops, and generally attend to the domestic affairs for which Nature designed them.

By taking this advice they will gain the respect of all right-minded people—an end not to be attained by unsexing themselves and meddling in masculine concerns of which they are profoundly ignorant.

**HENRY WRIGHT.**

103, Mein Street,  
Wellington.

## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Women in New Zealand

assisted by a small group of parliamentarians. It was not until 1892 that specific Women's Franchise Leagues were formed throughout the country and then it was done to separate out the desire for this basic right from the 'temperance' and 'Christian' goals of the WCTU.

Some have suggested that the pioneering experience of women, working alongside their men led, on the one hand to women's recognition of their worth and, at the same time, impressed on at least some men an appreciation of women as more than bearers of children and keepers of households.

At the same time the importance of the influence of contemporary European libertarian philosophies should not be overlooked. New Zealand's early pioneers brought with them the ideas of T H Green, of D G Ritchie, J Hobson and L Hobhouse. One of the key workers in the struggle, Mary Muller was in frequent communication with John Stuart Mill. It is clear that the New Zealand fight for suffrage was not separate but very much a part of the international struggle.

It is clear from the contemporary writings that a strong thread of feminist thought underlay the thinking of the New Zealand suffragettes. For example a WCTU lecturer in 1889 said that the cause 'reminded her of a story of a little girl who said that God made Eve by taking the backbone out of Adam. She thought women had had the backbone ever since, particularly with regard to the Temperance question'. This thought was put more ironically in an 1888 pamphlet giving 'Ten Reasons Why the Women of New Zealand should Vote' - 'Because it has not yet been proved that the intelligence of women is only equal to that of children, nor that their social status is on a par with lunatics and criminals'.

Success was finally achieved after bitter opposition. White camellias (still the symbol of women's political concerns in New Zealand) were sent to the Womens Franchise Bill's supporters and these were quickly matched with red camellias sent to opponents. Predictably the Licensed Trade bitterly opposed the measure. In this they had the support of the Premier 'King' Dick Seddon.

Finally even the opposition of the Prime Minister was not enough to stop the Bill. On the 19th September the Bill received the final assent. To the present day this has been the day celebrated by feminists in New Zealand complete with white camellias tied with purple ribbons of suffragettes everywhere.

Kate Sheppard

### The impact of Women's suffrage in New Zealand

Eight years and three elections after the attainment of suffrage Mr W Sidney Smith, a staunch advocate of the movement and later husband to the overall leader, Kate Sheppard wrote of the aftermath. His enthusiasm was obvious.

*'An equal standard of morality has been set up, and the conditions of divorce have been made the same for both sexes. Women may now recover damages for slander without having to prove special damage. Women have been admitted to the practice of law in our Courts. Legal separation can be obtained summarily and without expense, thus giving protection to working women against worthless husbands. By the Testators Family Maintenance Act a man is prevented from willing away his property without making suitable provision for his wife and family. Pensions for the aged poor, both sexes being treated equally have been provided. An Act for the establishment of Inebriate Asylums has been passed and is just being put into operation. Labour laws in which the health of women and girls is carefully guarded, their hours of labour limited, their holidays fixed, and the payment of a minimum wage enforced, have been passed. The principle of the economic partnership of husband and wife has been recognised in at least two Acts. The Criminal Code has been amended in the direction of purer morals.'*

*'An Act has been passed to regulate the adoption of children. The Infant Life Protection Act is to prevent baby farming. Servants Registry Offices have been brought under regulation, greatly to the advantage of girls and women. The interests and health of shop girls have been safe guarded, and amendments have been made in the Industrial Schools Act'.*

W Sidney Smith's enthusiasm for the Colony was shared by an American lecturer, Mr H D Lloyd, speaking to a contemporary Berlin audience 'In most countries civilisation is an excrescence in New Zealand it is an efflorescence'.



## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Women in New Zealand

*Elizabeth McCombs, New Zealand's first woman member of parliament, elected 1933 - 40 years after women gained the right to vote and 14 years after they gained the right to stand for parliamentary election*



#### **The first NCW: and more steps to Parliament**

But this was not enough for the women. Although they had won the right to vote they did not enjoy the privilege of standing for Parliament. Quite quickly the women who had led the fight for suffrage saw the need for an extension of their rights to standing for Parliament themselves and this desire was one of the primary reasons for the formation of the National Council of Women. As Kate Sheppard herself wrote:

*'In Wellington is every year assembled a National Council of men which holds a session, each member of which is not only granted a free pass over the railways, but also receives a salary sufficient to maintain him throughout the year. That National Council of men not only deliberates and legislates on matters of general interest, but also on matters which specially affect women and children ... I trust however that the day is not far distant when men will no longer exclude women from their deliberations, when legislation will no longer be one sided, and when the necessity of Men's Councils and Women's Councils, as such, will be swept away'.*

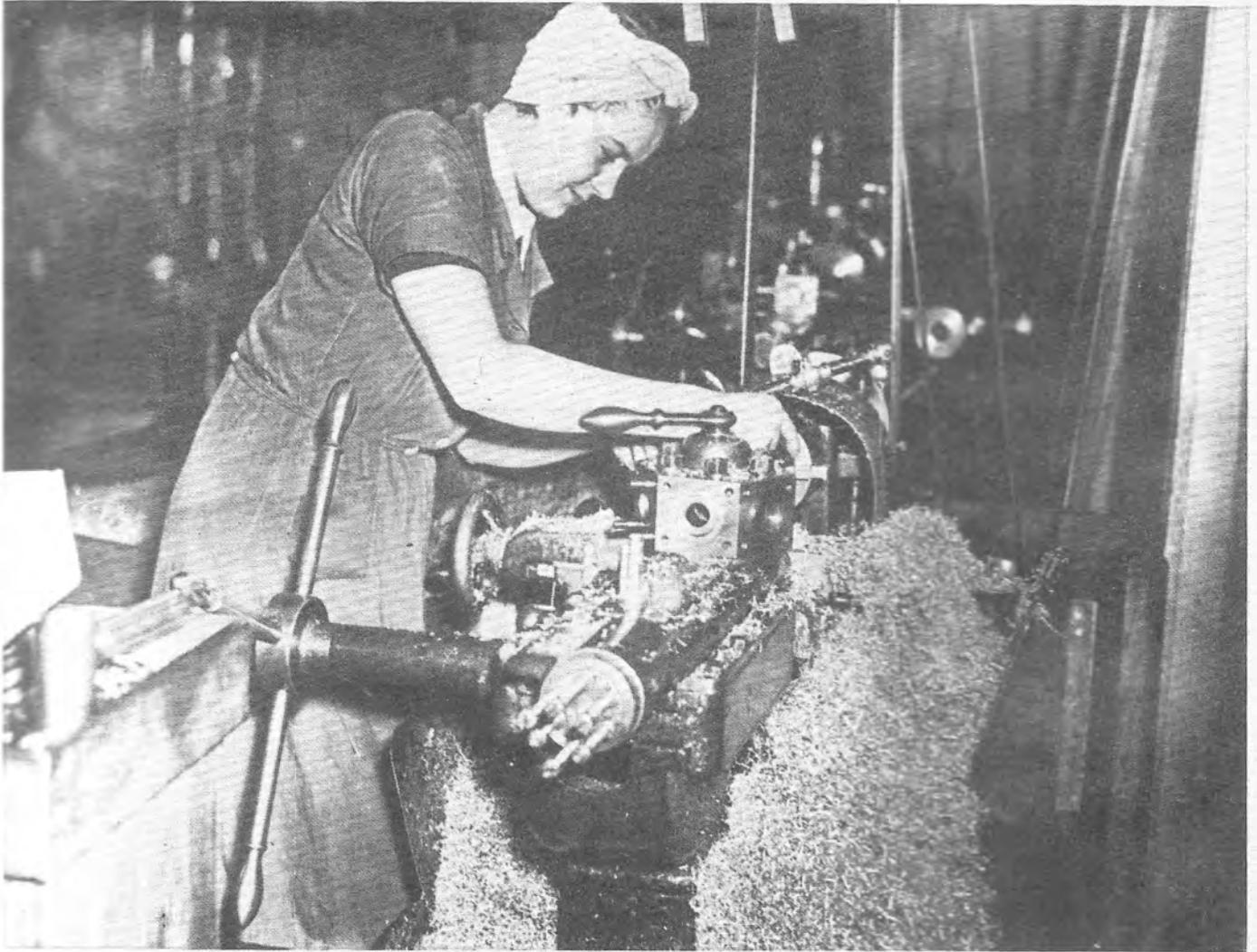
In 1896 the National Council of Women was formed. The tragedy is that nearly 100 years later it has not been swept away. Nor have all the radical reforms desired by that body yet been achieved although much has been done. However it was not until 1919 that women won the right to stand for Parliament in New Zealand and it took until 1933 - forty years after suffrage - before a woman, Elizabeth McCombs, was elected. Elizabeth McCombs was an ardent prohibitionist and President of the Canterbury Branch of the WCTU as well as serving as Dominion Treasurer. She had extensive local government experience and had stood twice for election to Parliament (in both 1920 and 1931) before she was finally elected in a by-election to succeed her husband who had died in office. Her main interests in Parliament were the status and welfare of women and children but unfortunately her health deteriorated and she died in 1935 at the age of 62 to be succeeded in Parliament by her son.

But many of the causes which had fired the suffrage movement and the National Council of Women were still unresolved. Although dramatic progress had been made in infant health through the formation of the Plunket Society in 1905 this was hardly a radical women's organisation. Moreover the National Council of Women had had a somewhat chequered career after its flying start. The year that saw the child centred, male led Plunket Society formed also witnessed the NCW going into recess following the death of the then President Margaret Sievwright and several other leading members.

Until 1919 the National Council of Women scarcely existed except for continuing contact with ICW via Christina Henderson and Kate Sheppard who was made an Honorary Vice President of the international body. A new form of NCW was to arise from

## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Women in New Zealand



the vestiges of the original organisation sixteen years later, a federation of women's groups with more conservative and less overtly political aims. The fervour of the suffrage movement with its radical aims had abated and did not return until the 1960s.

#### **The long battle for equal pay**

The involvement of women in politics increased, but slowly. In 1919 three women took advantage of the new opportunity to stand for parliament but there was no concerted thrust to women's demands. The next wave of interest in the women's agenda was not from NCW but within the Public Service Association. The PSA was formed in 1913 and at their Conference in 1914 a remit was passed demanding 'that female employees of equal competence with male employees and doing similar work shall receive equal treatment as to pay and privileges'. It was only the beginning. Little progress was made until the second world war when the conditions under which women war workers were employed gave thrust and focus to this old cause of the early NCW and the suffragettes. As a Christchurch headmistress and later President of the Business and Professional Women wrote in 1942 in a newspaper article:

*'The main battle will certainly be in the Public Service where women are employed under conditions that are nothing short of scandalous. Although the PUBLIC SERVICE ACT makes no discrimination between the sexes, regulations and administrative procedures have been used to keep women in the lowest grades of the services, to pay them at consistently lower rates than men, and to appoint them only as temporary members of the services ... To shelve the problem of women's economic rights or to refuse them a worthwhile career in the Public Service, on the grounds that they will eventually marry, is becoming daily less plausible.'*

The Business and Professional Women were among the first supporters of the PSA and

*Like women everywhere, during wartime women took over men's jobs but did them for lower wages and were expected to give up their job when the man came home*

## **WOMEN & POLITICS**

### **Women in New Zealand**

helped organise, in 1945, two public meetings on the Social and Economic Aspects of Equal Pay.

Momentum gathered as the Labour Party, the Federation of Labour and the NCW lent their support through appropriate resolutions. In 1947 the new Minister of Health and New Zealand's first woman cabinet minister addressed an overcrowded meeting. Part of the long process of MPs who were being lobbied and influenced at every opportunity. The women and men involved in the campaign were good strategists. By 1955 they had a senior member of the Parliamentary Labour Party claiming in the House that equal pay 'has complete support on this side of the House'. But this support from the Opposition was matched by fierce resistance from the Public Service Commission and this was highlighted in the media.

#### **DANGER IN CHANGING SYSTEMS EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN IS INJUSTICE FOR MEN**

Equal pay for women might have the semblance of justice for women but it would have the reality of injustice for the majority of men, as their family living standards would suffer, said the annual report of the Public Service Commission tabled in the House of Representatives yesterday.

The PSA president was quick to respond as the following newspaper headline shows.

#### **PSA PRESIDENT DECLARES ... WOMEN WAGE-EARNERS HAVE DEPENDANTS, TOO**

Many thousands of adult male wage-earners have never had, and never will have dependants, while quite a number of women wage-earners have children or other dependants to support, the president of the NZ Public Service Association (Mr J T Ferguson) said today in reference to the Public Service Commission's statement that equal pay for women was injustice for men.

The campaign finally crystallised around the infamous Parker Case. Jean Parker a young married woman employed by the Inland Revenue Department and the supporter of a medical student husband successfully appealed against the appointment above her of another male public servant. The appeal having been allowed the PSC, in some sort of retribution, reduced Mrs Parker's salary from £695 per annum to £460 per annum.

Needless to say an uproar ensued and the issue was well and truly centre stage. By April 1957 the Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity was officially formed and even the National Government came to the party with an official research programme. With the change of government in November 1957 it should have been straight forward to finesse the issue but it was not, until the last week of the parliamentary session, on 27 October 1960 that the long heralded measure, the Government Service Equal Pay Bill became law with both parties voting for it.

Despite this bi-partisan support on the eve of an election the legislation was slow to be implemented and the hoped for flow on effect to the private sector did not occur.

### **The contemporary Women's Movement**

In the 1960s the environment was changing. After decades of relative inactivity women in New Zealand were starting to respond and join with the murmurs of discontent of women around the world. It began quietly enough. A playcentre education officer in an outlying suburb of Wellington (Playcentre is a voluntary organisation in New Zealand which is concerned with pre-school and parent education) decided to hold a lecture series based on the Voice of America series 'The Potential of Women'. The response was immediate and overwhelming. Over 300 women attended all or part of the six evening series - and Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* became a best seller.

Two of the women who attended that series decided that it would be sensible to harness the enthusiasm of some of the women who later bought the published *Changing Role of Women* Booklet and they formed The Society for Research on Women in New Zealand in 1966 to discover more about 'the factual situation, the needs and the aspirations of New Zealand women'. While SROW was the first ripple of the contemporary women's movement in New Zealand it was joined by the end of the 1960s by offshoots of Women's Liberation and the American National Organisation of Women. By the time International Women's Year arrived New Zealand had already had its first United Women's Convention of the now radicalised women's movement and a list of demands to match. Ironically many of the issues had been raised at the earliest meetings of the National

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### Women in New Zealand

46 Council of Women more than 75 years before but by 1975 NCW was both respectable and conservative and many of its affiliates (in particular most of the religious groups) found it difficult to support claims for abortion rights, freedom for sexual preference, 24 hour child-care or even some of the demands for equal pay for work of equal value.

Nevertheless the growing strength of women has led to a number of notable changes. In 1972 the Equal Pay Legislation was finally passed. Within the Labour Party women became more radical and embarked on a restructuring that encompassed the policy of 'Make Policy not Tea'. In 1973 the newly elected Labour Government set up a 'Select Committee in Women's Rights' with its only agenda to listen to the views of women on their own futures. By 1975 the Government had set up a permanent Committee on Women and had made provision for local committees throughout New Zealand in recognition of International Women's Year. Meanwhile a coalition of women's groups had organised the 2nd United Women's Convention in Wellington, a meeting which attracted nearly 2500 women from throughout New Zealand. They were very heady days. Many of the leading women in New Zealand today date their involvement, and the growth of their consciousness and confidence, from that time.

#### Women in Trade Unions

Although the conditions of women workers had been the subject of concern of some of New Zealand's earliest social legislation few women had been involved in trade unions until the last two and half decades. It would be fair to say that the attitude of most women, like that of their sisters abroad, was one of indifference at best and, at the other extreme outright hostility to trade unionism. However the advent of the women's movement in New Zealand evoked a parallel response among women trade unionists who began to organise. The Federation of Labour, long a bastion of male power, slowly began to change. The woman who led the main part of that struggle, Sonja Davies, needed quite as much courage as the early suffragettes.

Some of the most embittered opponents of the 'Working Women's Charter' and the idea of a Women's Advisory Committee to the FOL were themselves women trade unionists. Sonja Davies' first move was to organise a Working Women's Council outside the FOL from the proceedings of which the Working Women's Charter was derived. It was the beginning of endless meetings and much travel culminating in the election of Ms Davies as vice president of the FOL and the acceptance of the Working Women's Charter as FOL policy. This has added the voice of trade unionism to the calls for pay equity, early childhood education, parental leave and generally better conditions for women workers.

It has also meant that far more women have seen the benefits of becoming more active within the trade unions. The proportion of women attending the Conference of the Council of Trade Unions is steadily increasing and in turn the Trade Union movement is becoming an important recruiting base for Labour women members of Parliament.

#### Women's Electoral Lobby

Interest in politics did not stop with political party groupings. In 1975 the Women's Electoral Lobby was formed, modelled on WEL Australia and defined as - 'a non-partisan feminist lobby formed by and for individual women, and committed to achieve social, legal, economic, educational and political equality for women'.

In its first year it involved itself in a variety of activities ranging from direct lobbying to conducting and publicising the results of a survey of the opinions of political candidates contesting the 1975 General Elections. This was a particularly newsworthy strategy although editorial writers seemed equally divided on the 'fairness' of testing out the opinions of candidates on 'women's issues'. In fact the effectiveness of the strategy in exposing individual candidates from every party may have led to the downfall of this mechanism as a means of gaining candidates' opinions. Fifteen years later there are few candidates willing to break the 'party line' and respond to structured questionnaires, whether self administered or conducted through a formal interview.

#### Maori women

If non-Maori women have had a struggle to attain equality Maori Women have had an even harder time. As each new step was made, from the time of the suffrage movement, Maori women gained but the underlying economic position of the Maori community and corresponding low expectations has meant that Maori women have suffered double disadvantage. This is despite the superb work done by the Maori Women's Welfare League - a national organisation devoted to the protection of Maori women and their families.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs established after the 1984 elections has done

## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Women in New Zealand

pioneering work in endeavouring to address this issue. The Ministry has split its policy resources and half of the policy staff form a Maori Women's Secretariat (*Te Ohu Whakatapu*). This agency has been extremely active in addressing a wide range of social and economic policies as they affect Maori women. In addition *Te Ohu Whakatapu* has worked to provide courses and other forms of assistance for Maori Women moving into self employment and small businesses.

#### Recent progress and pitfalls

The last fifteen years have seen an enormous amount of change. New Zealand has acceded to the UN Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and has met the requirements. Funding has been vastly increased for early childhood education, and funding has been provided for rape crisis centres and women's refuges. Abortion legislation has been liberalised. There has been legislative provision for parental leave although this is still not as generous as in some European countries. A great deal more attention has been paid to issues of women's health and the equalising of opportunity within the Education System.

Ninety three years after it was first resolved at a meeting of the National Council of Women that there should be 'equal pay for work of equal value' legislation was passed to that effect in July 1990.

It is not surprising that all this progress has been immeasurably aided by the growth in numbers of women in Parliament. The recently defeated Labour Government had five women in the 20 member Cabinet including the Deputy Prime Minister, Helen Clark. The present National Government has two women in Cabinet of whom one is the Minister

*The line up of Australian and New Zealand ministers, gathered for trade talks, is typical. Women remain a distinct minority in governmental decision making*



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of Finance. Sixteen of the 97 MPs in the New Zealand Parliament are women. However there is still unfinished business.

Pornography laws promised by Labour are yet to be enacted. A study of the value of unpaid work has reached its pilot stage only. While the Ministry of Women's Affairs has been retained by the new Government its role is yet to be determined.

Most seriously the Employment Equity Legislation which was so long in its gestation was to be first target for repeal by the new National Government. It is hardly surprising that there are at least some women in New Zealand who feel they know exactly how Sisyphus felt when, at every attempt to push the rock up the mountain it rolled back again.

#### Conclusion

The pattern of women's activity and the progress of women's rights in New Zealand has been, in the main, a reflection of the activity in Western style democracies on the other side of the world. However the relative speed with which goals have been achieved once they have been identified is probably a function of New Zealand's very small population (just over 3 million) and the ease of communication. New Zealand is an intimate democracy with high levels of participation in everything from voting to membership of voluntary organisations. Once women get organised and determined to affect things change can, and does, occur. The women's vote has proved to be significantly volatile and this has increasingly focused the minds of male political leaders. But the influence of women on policy is weakened by the lack of evidence that women will actually vote on the basis of Parties' attitudes to women's issues.

Nevertheless women are generally less willing to allow their voices to be heard second hand through men speaking on their behalf. All political parties are now paying attention to the inclusion of women at all levels. It is unthinkable now that any New Zealand Cabinet should be bereft of competent women. However, women's concerns and perspectives must still be vigorously fought for while men form the majority of central decision making bodies and leading women remain dependent on the approval and support of male colleagues. Women are still a perpetual minority.

The business sector is even worse. Although the numbers of women in central and local government, both in elected positions and in the bureaucracies has been steadily increasing women in responsible positions in the private sector are still rare. Moreover there is a substantial resistance to change. The 'Business Roundtable', a leading business organisation and the Employers Federation have been among the most vocal opponents of Employment Equity Legislation.

While enormous progress has been made for women and by women the dreams of the suffragettes are a very long way from realisation.■

*Margaret Shields is Policy Council Representative for the New Zealand Labour Party Women's Council and a former Minister of Women's Affairs.*

#### LETTERS

Dear Editor,

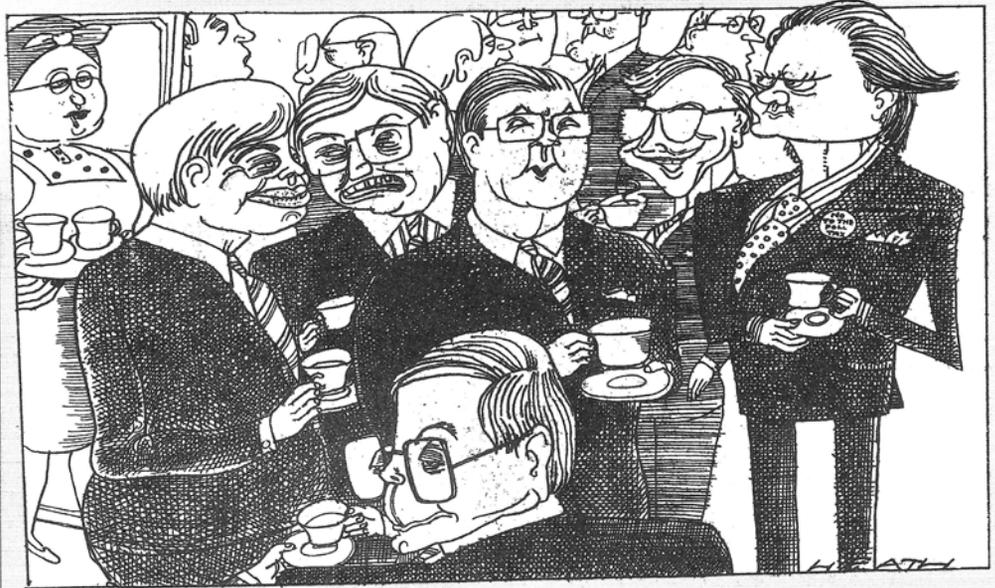
Audrey McLaughlin in her article on 'Women, The Environment & Democratic Socialism' was right to criticise 'ecofeminism' for its reactionary essentialism. The irony in Britain was that this trend in feminism gained prominence at the same time P.M. Thatcher distinguished herself with her own brand of authoritarian populism and championed the 'return to Victorian values'. While I agree that a 'Green-Socialist' perspective is needed, the case of 'Thatcherism' in Britain proves that (unfortunately!) there is no inherent predilection in women to support democratic socialism because of biology. Opinion polls here indicate that more women than men support the Tory party. 'Feminism' tends to emphasize sexual differences and reify them - years ago the Austrian psychologist Alfred Adler argued that Socialists must struggle against the sex-war and offer the vision of the reconciliation of the sexes in a cooperative community. The concept of 'patriarchy' and the tendency to 'blame men' shows that feminism too easily becomes another weapon used to stoke-up the 'battle between the sexes' (Adler) than to bring about a socialism based on humanistic values.

Yours sincerely,  
Dr Christopher G. Maddox  
London NW10

## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Questionnaire results

'Who says we don't have a woman in the Cabinet?'



49

The Independent, 30.11.90

## WOMEN AND POWER

Socialist International Women has undertaken two attempts to gather information on the position of women in member parties of Socialist International. To this end, we sent out questionnaires, one in April 1987 and the other in June 1990.

The first round brought back 15 replies and the second only 16.

Socialist International Women has summed up for *Women and Politics* the answers received to date from 16 parties.

The question of female membership over the last ten years was not answered by Canada, Denmark and Great Britain who do not keep separate statistics for their members by gender. France (21 percent), New Zealand (51 percent) Norway (ca 40 percent) and Switzerland (27.5 percent), gave only the most recent figures.

All other parties showed an increase in women affiliates over the last 10 years as follows:

Cyprus	from 7 to 12 percent
Ecuador	from 5 to 20 percent
Finland	from 35 to 38 percent
Germany	from 23.08 to 27.14 percent
Ireland	from 25 to 30 percent
SP Japan	from 4 to 14.6 percent
Paraguay	from 38 to 43 percent
Portugal	from 16.87 to 18.66 percent
Spain	from 9.40 to 20 percent

The question referring to senior offices held by women in the parties showed a greater variety. In Canada, the NDP has a woman party leader, a woman president, the treasurer and 7 out of 10 vice-presidents are women, as well as 7 out of the 14 members of the National Executive. In the Cyprus member party 6 percent of the Politburo and 10 percent of the Central Committee members are women. Denmark's SDP has a woman heading the Education Department, as well as the Equality Department. In Finland, the SI member party has women in the following positions: of 3 deputy chairpersons 2 are women and the general secretary is also a woman. The German SPD has 1 woman out of 4 deputy chairpersons and also a woman general secretary. In the British Labour Party only the director of organisation is a woman. The Irish Labour Party has 1 female vice-chair and 1 deputy general secretary. The Japanese Social Democratic Party has a woman chairperson, 1 vice-chairperson and 4 out of 30 members of the party executive. New Zealand's Labour Party has a woman president and 5 out of 12 members of the party executive are women. In the Norwegian Labour Party the international secretary is a woman, and, of course, its leader. In the Paraguay Febrerista Party, women are present in all committees and in the national executive. The Portuguese Socialist Party has 3 women among 18 members of the national secretariat and 6 out of the 51 person strong political

## WOMEN & POLITICS

### Questionnaire results

commission are women. The Spanish Socialist Party has appointed women to the positions of international secretary, emigration secretary and women's secretary. The latter secretariat was upgraded to a fully fledged department. The Swiss Socialist Party has appointed women as the two vice-chairs of the party and as international secretary.

When we asked for the percentage of women in delegations to SI meetings since the last Congress in 1989, we found that some parties were not represented at some meetings which makes comparisons difficult. However, it is worth noting that the Canadian NDP again shows either 50 or 100 percent women delegations, the Norwegian Labour Party was represented by either 50 or 67 percent women and New Zealand by women only. Finland has a steady 50 percent women, Germany and Great Britain a steady 30 percent women and Spain has had at least 20 percent women.

When we look at the way in which women are organised in their parties and at the status of the women's bodies, we find that there is a variety ranging from autonomous federations (Finland, Germany) to committees (Canada, Ecuador, Great Britain, Ireland, SDP Japan and Switzerland). Some of these parties also have women's secretariats (Ecuador, France, Great Britain, Ireland, SDP Japan, Norway, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland). The following parties give their women's organisations a right to vote: Canada, Cyprus, Ecuador, Great Britain, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Spain and Switzerland. In the SI member parties in Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, New Zealand, Norway and Spain, the women's organisations have their own budget.

From some countries we did not receive any information as to the percentage of women candidates in local, regional and national elections. Figures given range from 7 percent (SDP Japan) to 40 percent (Norway).

However, the general picture clearly indicates that SI member parties have fielded more women candidates than the overall figure for their countries. When we analyse the women *elected* to national parliaments, we again find that the SI member parties have more women in place than the average figure. Denmark: 34.8 (overall 30 percent), Finland: 32 (overall 31.5 percent), France: 6.10 (against overall 5.70 percent), Germany: 27.20 (overall 20.54 percent), Great Britain: 20 (overall 6 percent), SDP Japan: 6.4 (overall 2.3 percent), Norway: 50.8 (overall 35.8 percent), Spain: 17.52 (overall 12.63 percent) and Switzerland: 29.3 (overall 14 percent).

We enquired about quotas for women and whether these were mandatory (part of the statutes) or just recommendations. Canada is once more in the forefront with a 50 percent statutory quota for all party committees and for the national executive. (The NDP is still working on a formula for a quota in the selection of candidates),

In the Danish Social Democratic Party 40 percent for each gender is required, as is also the case with the German and Norwegian parties. In the British Labour Party 40 percent is recommended for the national executive and 50 percent for members of parliament is the target within 10 years.

The French Socialist Party has a 25 percent quota, Japan's Social Democratic Party, a 15 percent, Portugal and Spain, 25 percent and Switzerland, 33 percent. All these quotas are mandatory.

A number of these parties have also established equality commissions or similar bodies to ensure a better functioning of the quota system or the introduction of binding rules.

For the Secretariat of SIW it is depressing to note that only 16 out of over 70 Socialist International member organisations took the trouble to reply to our questionnaire. To be quite honest, out of these 16, 11 were filled in by the women's secretaries although - intentionally - not addressed to them.

This is exactly what we did not want: that the question about the position of women in parties be ignored by the party establishment.

A further cause of upset and frustration was the lack of information collected by some parties about their female membership. It seems that women are regarded as a 'quantité négligeable', when in fact they often are a sizeable group. This attitude is denying women facts that stare them in the face and also denying them their right to know how strong they are. ■

# SOCIALIST NOTEBOOK

## AUSTRALIA

### **Active role in Gulf**

The Australian Labor Party, ALP, received the full backing of parliament which was recalled from recess for a special two-day session from 21 January, following the outbreak of war in the Gulf. Prime Minister Bob Hawke stated that the commitment of Australian forces in the Gulf arose from five 'grave considerations: the violation of Kuwait's right to independence; the moral authority of the United Nations; the failure of exhaustive efforts to resolve the situation by negotiation; the clear objective of the present operation to defeat the Iraqi aggression, and the broader context of the struggle for 'a new world order of peace, security and freedom.'

### **Economic downturn, but Labor remains confident**

The ALP government confirmed in January that the economy had gone into recession, but remained confident of its ability to steer it back to health.

Federal treasurer Paul Keating, while acknowledging the deterioration in some economic indicators over 1990 (a slight decline in GDP, unemployment up to 8 per cent and a sharp rise in business failures), pointed to the long-term benefits flowing from the reduction of inflation to 6 per cent - one of the lowest figures recorded in two decades - and the accompanying 6-point drop in the basic interest rate, now at 12 per cent. Labor retained its faith in the wages accord maintained with the unions since 1983 as a key factor in its strategy for recovery and renewed growth.

On 12 March, the prime minister, in a nationally televised address to parliament, outlined an ambitious economic programme, including tariff cuts, reduced wholesale sales taxes for business, job retraining assistance and new initiatives to assist export industries.

## AUSTRIA

### **Socialists set sights on EC membership**

The four-year-old 'grand coalition' between the Austrian Socialists, SPOe, and the centrist People's Party, OeVP, was duly reconstituted on 17 December, some ten weeks after parliamentary elections in which the SPOe had remained the dominant party (see 4/90, page 57). A major task of the new government will be to pursue Austria's application for full membership of the European Community, submitted in mid-1989 and expected to reach the negotiation stage in 1993 after the creation of the single European market.

Headed as before by Chancellor Franz Vranitzky of the SPOe, the new 21-member coalition contains 10 Socialists, over half of whom are new appointments. At full ministerial level, Josef Hesoun became labour and social affairs minister; Harald Ettl took the health and sports portfolio; Rudolf Scholten became education minister; and Johanna Dohnal, hitherto secretary of state, became minister for women's affairs. Peter Jankowitsch, former foreign minister and SPOe international secretary, was appointed secretary of state for Europe and integration and Peter Kostelka secretary of state for the civil service.

The 152-page policy agreement signed by the two coalition parties identified the EC membership application as the foremost concern of the new government. Other areas to be given particular attention included environmental protection, international development, budget consolidation, and electoral and tax reform.

At a press conference in Vienna on 11 February, following intensive talks in Brussels, Peter Jankowitsch said that preparatory work on the EC Commission's 'opinion' on Austria's application for membership of the Community was essentially complete and that the expert report was expected to be favourable.

Chancellor Vranitzky



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

subsequently travelled to Brussels for talks with the president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors. Amongst other issues, the two leaders discussed the implications of EC membership for Austria's neutrality.

## BARBADOS

### **BLP comeback**

In a general election on 22 January, the opposition Barbados Labour Party, BLP, an SI member party, greatly increased its parliamentary strength.

The Democratic Labour Party, DLP, government, which had ousted the BLP in 1986, was returned for a second five-year term, but popular dissatisfaction with the rising crime rate and the ailing economy contributed to the achievement of the BLP in winning 10 seats, seven more than at the previous election.

The resurgent BLP, led by Henry de B. Forde, not only recovered the seat of one of its MPs who defected in 1989 to the government, but defeated a challenge for leadership of the opposition from the three-year-old National Democratic Party, NDP, whose four MPs lost their seats. The unicameral parliament, enlarged from 27 to 28 seats, now has 18 DLP and 10 BLP members (1986: 24 and 3 respectively). The BLP share of the vote increased three points to 43 per cent, while the DLP, though weakened by the divisions which gave rise to the NDP, stayed just ahead at 49.8 per cent; the 1991 balance of 6.8 per cent was the electorate's parting gift to the monetarist NDP, which is likely to be formally dissolved.

Right: Peter Jankowitsch

## BOLIVIA

### Paz: action against drug traffic

President Jaime Paz Zamora, leader of the SI's consultative member Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR, and head of the Patriotic Accord coalition government, was allegedly the target of an assassination plot uncovered in October.

The ultra-right conspiracy, according to police sources, was also aimed at government ministers and the US ambassador and was linked with prominent members of past military governments. A similar threat to the ambassador reportedly emerged from the same milieu a few days previously; in both cases the presumed motive was the Paz government's resolute opposition to the cocaine trade and its acceptance of assistance from the US anti-drugs agency.

Although Paz has repeatedly insisted that US involvement must respect Bolivian sovereignty and policy directions, the cooperation has also given rise to a wave of attacks by leftist urban guerrillas, including a bombing which killed a policeman. The government remains committed to suppressing the traffic but is also urgently seeking structural solutions by means of large-scale development funding (including almost US\$1 billion secured in November) to generate alternative sources of export revenue.

The task of economic restructuring was not assisted by a dispute between the government and the Supreme Court over the legality of tax-raising measures, leading in November to something of a constitutional crisis when Accord deputies moved to impeach members of the Court and the opposition in turn proposed to impeach Paz. The president announced his readiness to contest any formal impeachment motion before Congress.

Latest developments led to the resignation in March of Interior Minister Guillermo Capoblanco, a close associate of the president, following US accusations of drug connections. Capoblanco strongly



Jaime Paz at anti-drugs rally

Popperfoto

denied the accusations, but said that he felt obliged to resign for 'reasons of national dignity'.

## BRAZIL

### Run-offs bolster left

The centre-right administration of President Fernando Collor de Mello whose supporters secured barely half of the 503 seats in Congress in the October first-round general elections (see 4/90, page 57), was shaken by opposition gains in the second round of voting for the powerful state governorships in November.

Leonel Brizola, leader of the SI member Democratic Labour Party, PDT, was one of only ten candidates to win a governorship outright in the first round, with 16 states going to a run-off ballot. The one-month interval gave the electorate an opportunity to reflect on, and reverse, what was interpreted as a lukewarm endorsement of the government's 'economic stabilisation' programme, the Plan Collor. The period between the polls saw the government's credibility further

denied by political scandals including electoral fraud which led to the annulling of the October gubernatorial result in the home state of the president, who nevertheless retained much of his personal popularity.

In the second round the ruling bloc lost several key states (including Rio Grande do Sul to the PDT, and Sao Paulo to the liberal PMDB). The most likely outcome was thought to be a more conciliatory and less authoritarian style of government with increased influence and effectiveness for the PDT, other parties of the democratic left and the wider labour movement. The new situation, it was widely suggested, might also permit the formation of a new opposition coalition after parliament reconvened in February.

The October polls gave Collor's National Reconstruction Party, PRN, only 41 seats in Congress, and its allies (PDC, PDS, PFL, PL and PTB) 206, to 41 for the PDT, 59 for other left-wing opposition parties (PCB, PCdoB, PSB and PT) and 146 for the main non-aligned parties (PMDB and PSDB); in the 60-member Senate, where only one-third of the seats were up for election, the government bloc

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held on to a working majority even though its Senate leader lost his seat. The PDT bloc of 41 deputies represented an increase of 10 on its pre-election strength, and made it, jointly with the PRN, the third largest of the 19 parties in parliament.  
(profile of Leonel Brizola, page ...)

### BULGARIA

#### **UDF aids transition**

The Union of Democratic Forces, UDF, the broad opposition front of which the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, BSDP, is a major part, has shared power since 20 December as part of the country's first coalition government since the 1940's.

After several weeks of negotiation on the composition of a cabinet of national unity to guide Bulgaria through a critical period of social, economic and political restructuring, agreement was reached on a formula giving the UDF three cabinet posts including Dimitar Ludgev as deputy prime minister. The former Communists, now the Socialist Party, BSP, had seven ministers, with two from the Agrarian Party, BZNS, and six independents including Dimitar Popov who remains prime minister. (As of mid-February the UDF held three portfolios - industry, environment and finance - in addition to Ludgev's.)

The period since the June 1990 elections (see 2/90, page 55) has seen a steady decline in the support and effectiveness of the BSP, which was forced to relinquish both the presidency (to the UDF) and, from 7 December, the premiership (to Popov). The priority of the BSDP, apart from seeing through urgent and radical reforms to the ravaged economy, is to develop and secure a mandate for a social democratic programme in the next elections to the new parliament.

### CANADA

#### **NDP calls for peace**

The New Democratic Party, NDP, criticised Canadian participation in the January offensive against Iraq as a departure from the country's traditional peace-keeping role.

The NDP called for an international peace conference aimed at achieving 'common security, cooperation and confidence building' in the Middle East. The party's stance was echoed in opinion polls showing a clear majority of Canadians opposed to the conservative government's position.

### CYPRUS

#### **UN holds key to regional peace**

The EDEK Socialist Party of Cyprus, a consultative member of the International, has offered to act as intermediary for any political initiative designed to bring a just and lasting peace to the Middle East.

An EDEK statement in January drew attention to the destructive impact of the Gulf war on civilian populations, on the environment and on future Arab-European relations. Party president Vassos Lyssarides called on European socialist forces to work for the implementation of UN resolutions not only on Kuwait but on causes, such as those of Cyprus and the Palestinians, where the same economic and strategic interests were not at stake.

### DENMARK

#### **Social Democrats continue in opposition**

Despite their significant gains in the December 1990 general election (see 4/90, page 58), the Danish Social Democrats had no option but to continue in opposition to a new minority centre-right coalition, formed on 17 December. The new two-party administration was even more precarious than its three-party predecessor, so that Denmark was widely expected to maintain its recent record of having a general election every two years or less.

Under the leadership of Svend Auken, the Social Democrats had made their biggest single electoral advance since the pre-1914 era. However, heavy losses by the leftist Socialist People's Party meant that the assorted non-socialist formations continued to command a narrow majority in the 179-member Folketing. This enabled the Conservative prime minister, Poul Schlüter, to form another coalition, this time with the Venstre Liberals alone, since the Radical Liberals opted to stay outside the government.

Commanding only 61 parliamentary seats (including one Greenland deputy and one from the Faroes), the new administration was the most 'minority' seen in Denmark for many years. Although they acquiesced in its formation, the



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other non-socialist parties gave no blanket commitment to back its domestic policies. A broad parliamentary consensus exists on external and defence questions, but on economic and social policy the new government is expected to have a rough ride.

### **Auken condemns Lithuania killings**

In a party statement on events in Lithuania issued on 13 January, SDP leader Svend Auken strongly condemned the use of force by Soviet troops, which had led to the deaths of several civilians. Auken warned that such events would have an impact on European Community plans for economic cooperation with the Soviet Union. The SDP leader appealed to President Gorbachev 'to withdraw the troops, respect the Lithuanian government elected by the people and return to the path of negotiations'.

## EGYPT

### **Mubarak retains public support on Gulf**

Egypt's participation in the anti-Iraq military coalition in the Gulf provoked some internal opposition, although not on the scale apparent in some other Arab states. Evidence indicated that President Mubarak and the ruling National Democratic Party, NDP, were maintaining majority popular support.

Addressing a special session of parliament on 24 January, the Egyptian leader said that his government's decision to send over 30,000 troops to Saudi Arabia (the largest Arab contingent in the allied force) had been 'unavoidable in the light of our specific contractual obligations'. This was a reference to UN and, more particularly, Arab League guarantees for the defence and sovereignty of Kuwait, the breaching of which, said Mubarak, threatened the international community with 'the law of the jungle'.

In the same speech, President Mubarak condemned Iraqi Scud missile attacks on Israel. He added

that he had appealed to Israel to exercise restraint in the face of such provocation, but accepted that 'every state in the world has the right to defend itself'.

Anti-war demonstrations took place in early February in Cairo and elsewhere in Egypt, as Moslem Brotherhood and other opposition leaders called on the government to abandon its alignment with the USA and to promote an Arab solution to the crisis. The protesters were relatively few in number, however.

On the economic front, the Gulf crisis had mixed effects on Egypt. Foreign currency receipts from tourism, Suez Canal dues and Gulf expatriates' remittances were sharply down. However, Egypt received pledges of substantial additional post-war aid from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, while western nations declared their readiness to write off about a third of Egypt's estimated \$20,000 million external debt to the industrialised world.

In late January Prime Minister Atef Sedki presented a new economic reform programme signalling further liberalisation measures and more rigorous action to reduce the budget deficit. Incorporating a new sales tax and a rationalisation of foreign exchange conversion rules, the programme was expected to get the IMF seal of approval, thus opening the way for increased aid and investment flows from the West.

At a special session of the Egyptian parliament on 3 March, following the ceasefire in Kuwait, President Mubarak spoke of the need for a new page to be turned in the politics of the Arab world. He stressed the urgency of a solution to the Palestinian question, as a key to lasting peace in the Middle East, and called for the removal of weapons of mass destruction from all the countries of the region. He also laid emphasis on social and economic development, through a better use of the region's natural riches.

## EL SALVADOR

### **Electoral advance of left brings new hopes for peace**

Results of parliamentary and municipal elections held in El Salvador on 10 March showed substantial gains by the Democratic Convergence coalition, which includes the 51-member National Revolutionary Movement, MNR, and led to renewed hopes for peace in the country.

Negotiations for a peaceful settlement of El Salvador's internal conflict had remained stalled in January and February, with conflicting signals from the US administration.

The UN secretary-general, Javier Pérez de Cuellar, received a joint US-Soviet message on 4 January expressing support for his involvement in efforts to establish a UN-supervised ceasefire, originally scheduled for last September (see 3/90, page 54) but aborted when the government refused to discuss the disbandment of its army. The US and Soviet foreign ministers stated that conditions should be created for the participation of all political sectors, including the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, FMLN, guerilla movement, in free elections. But five days later President Bush overruled a Congressional decision to freeze half of the 1991 allocation of US\$83 million in aid to the Salvadorean military.

The elections on 10 March were for 262 municipalities and for the national assembly, which had been expanded from 60 to 84 seats. A new system of proportional representation had also been introduced.

The Democratic Convergence, which lost one of its leaders with the untimely death the MNR's Guillermo Ungo (obituary, page 38), who was the coalition's candidate in the presidential elections of 1989, had been active in a sustained voter-registration campaign over the past two years, resulting in more than two million new names on the electoral register, an increase of nearly thirty per cent.

A few days before voting, the

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country's largest trade union confederation, the UNTS, pledged its support to the Convergence. The union's position was in contrast to that of 1989, when it supported FMLN calls for an election boycott. The FMLN, meanwhile, for the first time called a temporary ceasefire for the duration of the elections.

Assisted by all these developments, and in spite of some undoubted irregularities and intimidation by the authorities and a voter turnout of little more than 50 per cent, the Democratic Convergence, taking part for the first time in a legislative election, obtained 12.2 per cent of votes and 8 seats in the national assembly. The Republican Nationalist Alliance, ARENA, of President Alfredo Cristiani obtained 44.3 per cent of votes and 39 seats; the Christian Democrats 28 per cent and 26 seats, and the conservative National Conciliation Party 9 per cent and (under the voting system now in force) 9 seats.

ARENA thus lost its absolute parliamentary majority, although it is likely to maintain a majority on most issues with the support of the National Conciliation Party.

The results represent a considerable advance for the Democratic Convergence, which obtained only 3.8 per cent in the 1989 presidential election, and also show some return of support for the Christian Democrats.

The new assembly will take office on 1 June. President Cristiani's term of office is not affected and expires in 1994.

As the final election results were announced on 22 March, there was some cautious optimism on an end to the 11-year war in El Salvador, with an apparently positive response from representatives of the ARENA government to an FMLN proposal for a ceasefire to begin on 30 May and reforms of the constitution and armed forces.

## ESTONIA

### *Social Democrats appeal for solidarity*

The Estonian Social Democratic Party, ESDP, issued an appeal in mid-January calling on the Socialist International and its member parties to back the Estonian people's campaign for independence from Moscow. The appeal came as Soviet troops cracked down violently on the pro-independence movements in Lithuania and Latvia, Estonia's fellow Baltic republics to the South (see separate reports below).

The ESDP described recent actions of the Soviet authorities as seeking to 'overthrow democratically elected and constituted organs of power and replace them with regimes obedient to the the Soviet empire'. This, according to the ESDP, was tantamount to a repeat of the 1940 scenario, when the independent Baltic states had been annexed by Stalin's Russia. The party took the view that 'the will of the Estonian people to restore its independent statehood and to join the European home of democratic states is irrefutable', in which course the Estonian people had chosen 'the peaceful, parliamentary way'. The Baltic question was 'not soluble as an internal affair of the Soviet Union', but rather must be treated as an international problem.

This view was underlined by the results of the referendum organised by the Estonian authorities on 4 March, in which 77 per cent of those voting (turnout was 82 per cent of the electorate) were in favour of independence.

## FINLAND

### *Social Democrats go into opposition*

A disappointing result for the Finnish Social Democratic Party in general elections held on 17 March left the agrarian-based Centre Party in the lead with 24.8 per cent of the vote and 55 seats

(1987: 40 seats), while the Social Democrats gained 22.1 per cent of the vote and 48 (56) seats, and the Conservative Party - with whom the Social Democrats had been in coalition since 1987 - 19.3 per cent and 40 (53) seats. The Left Alliance took 10.1 per cent and 19 (20) seats; the Swedish Liberals, also partners in the previous coalition, 5.5 per cent and 11 (12) seats; the Greens 6.8 per cent and 10 (4) seats; the Christian Democrats 3.1 per cent and 8 (5) seats; the Rural Party 4.8 per cent and 7 (9) seats, and others 3.5 per cent and 2 (1) seats.

The result will be seen as a response to the deepening recession afflicting Finland in recent months. It represents the highest vote for the Centre Party since 1920. The Party is firmly opposed to European Community membership for Finland, an option much discussed recently.

Negotiations on the formation of a new coalition were expected to begin in April. On 24 March, the leadership of the Social Democratic Party announced that the party would go into opposition.

## FRANCE

### *Gulf crisis*

The outbreak of war in the Gulf found the Socialist-led government of France firmly committed to the international coalition, to which it contributed a substantial military contingent. Up until the last moment President François Mitterrand had been pursuing all avenues for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

A statement issued by the Socialist Party, PS, executive on 17 January noted that Saddam Hussein had 'remained deaf' to peace appeals by President Mitterrand, adding that French troops were involved in support of UN resolutions and in the cause of 'right and freedom'. The statement also reiterated the party's support for an international conference to seek 'a durable peace in the region', including a settlement of the Palestinian problem and peace treaties between Israel and its neighbours.

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### 56 **Mauroy in Israel**

The PS first secretary, Pierre Mauroy, led a party delegation to Tel Aviv at the end of January, seeking to show solidarity with Israel as it came under Iraqi missile attack and to discuss post-war scenarios with Israeli leaders. The visit featured in particular talks with the opposition Israel Labour Party and Mapam, both members, with the PS, of the Socialist International. Prior to leaving Paris, Mauroy had stated that the PS would seek to reinforce its links with Arab parties in the SI with the aim of promoting a global peace settlement in the Middle East.

### **Government reshuffle**

While majority public opinion strongly backed the government line, some PS members remained opposed to the military option, notably the defence minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement. Founder-chair of the Franco-Iraq friendship society and leader of the left-wing Socialisme et République grouping, Chevènement eventually left the government on 29 January.

In consequential government changes, Pierre Joxe moved to the defence ministry, his interior portfolio being entrusted to Philippe Marchand, hitherto minister of territorial collectivities and civil security. At the same time, Louis Besson (independent) became minister of equipment, housing, transport and the sea,

replacing Michel Delebarre, who was elevated to the post of minister of state for urban affairs.

Following the cessation of Gulf hostilities, attention focussed on a PS plan for new voting rules affecting next year's regional elections, and on other regional and municipal reforms.

## GREAT BRITAIN

### **Kinnock maintains Gulf consensus**

While giving broad support to the Conservative government's Gulf crisis policy, including the deployment of British troops, the Labour Party leadership laid stress on the need to give UN sanctions against Iraq reasonable time to work. It therefore regretted the coalition's resort to force in mid-January, but once hostilities had commenced the party was behind the government in backing the British military effort to secure implementation of the UN resolutions.

Speaking after the outbreak of war, the Labour leader, Neil Kinnock, said that the longer-term prospects for stability in the region 'would have been enhanced by reliance on sanctions', but emphasised that the writ of the UN had to run and that 'it is well that this deed is done as quickly as possible'. He and other party spokesmen stressed that there must be no extension of the allied war aims beyond the terms of the UN resolutions.

With opinions polls showing large support for Britain's participation in the Gulf military action, the Labour leadership's line secured majority backing within the party. At the same time, a significant minority of Labour MPs came out strongly against the war. These included some members of the Labour front bench, a few of whom opted to resign their shadow responsibilities.

A statement adopted by Labour's national executive committee on 30 January stressed that it was 'essential that every effort be made to try to ensure that the post-war peace settlement

is durable'.

On post-hostilities requirements, the statement said that the international community must bring about 'the ending of regional superpower status for Iraq and for every other country in the region' and convene an international conference under UN auspices 'as an essential means of achieving lasting security and justice for the countries of the region and for the Palestinian people'.

The above aims were reaffirmed in a subsequent statement of the NEC, meeting on 27 February. The Labour leadership further undertook to use all relevant channels, including the Socialist International, to promote a United Nations peace structure in the Middle East; to achieve and enforce the reduction and regulation of arms supply to the region, and to work for the strengthening and modernisation of the United Nations.

### **Labour deplures Baltic violence**

Also at its 30 January meeting, the Labour NEC approved a statement strongly deploring the violence of the Soviet authorities in Lithuania and Latvia, warning that they seriously jeopardised prospects of the 'common European home' proposed by President Gorbachev. The statement also expressed concern that recent events in the Baltic states were part of 'more general moves towards greater powers for the military and the KGB throughout the Soviet Union'.

The statement reaffirmed British Labour's support for the Socialist International's call of October 1990 for 'all sides to avoid actions which increase tensions and to enter into immediate negotiations on a peaceful and mutually satisfactory resolution of the present conflict'.

### **Opinion poll boost for Labour**

The 'honeymoon period' of Conservative Prime Minister John Major appeared to be at an end when Labour moved ahead in opinion polls, following a reversal in March of government policy on the controversial Community Charge or 'poll tax'.

**Left:**  
**Pierre Joxe**



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Right:  
Hans Eichel

## GERMANY

### Anti-government protests

As Socialist Affairs went to press, a wave of protest in the eastern states of Germany, suffering rising unemployment and economic problems in the aftermath of unification, culminated in mass demonstrations against the government of Christian Democrat Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Tens of thousands took to the streets on 25 March in eastern cities including Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Magdeburg, Jena and Chemnitz. Leaders of the Social Democratic Party, SPD, joined the protest in Leipzig and party chairman-elect Bjorn Engholm (see below) called for a vote of no confidence in the government and, if necessary, new elections.

### SPD victory in Hesse

State elections in Hesse on 20 January provided a welcome victory for the Social Democratic Party, SPD, some six weeks after its comprehensive defeat in the first post-unification federal elections (see 4/90, page 60). Overturning the incumbent Christian Democrat/Free Democrat, coalition, the SPD took 41 per cent of the vote (up one point), while the CDU slipped from 42 to 40 per cent and the FDP from 7.8 to 7.4 per cent. With the Greens (8.8 per cent) proving unexpectedly resilient, the way was therefore open for the formation of a 'red-green' coalition under the SPD leader in Hesse, Hans Eichel.

In terms of seats, the new coalition commanded a narrow 56 to 54 majority in the new state parliament. One important effect of this result was that the federal Christian Democrat/Free Democrat government lost its narrow majority in the Bundesrat (upper house), where members represent state governments.

### 'Grand coalition' in Berlin

The new unified government of Berlin, sworn in on 24 January, is currently unique in Germany in being a 'grand coalition' of the SPD and CDU. The two major



parties were forced into this accommodation by the inconclusive outcome of the December 1990 Berlin state elections, which left neither SPD nor CDU with the possibility of creating a majority coalition with small parties.

Headed by a Christian Democrat, the new administration set itself a priority task of rebuilding the dilapidated eastern sector of the city.

### Engholm names new team

Björn Engholm, who will in May replace Hans-Jochen Vogel as chair of the SPD, has named Karlheinz Blessing of the influential metal workers' trade union, to take over as general secretary. Another important collaborator of the new chair will be Cornélie Sonntag, appointed by Engholm to the post of party spokesperson.

### Gulf statement

The SPD responded to the outbreak of the Gulf war on 17 January by calling for a suspension of military action to facilitate renewed efforts to find a peaceful settlement.

In a statement issued on 23 January, the SPD executive stressed the risks of escalation of the conflict in the Gulf and of 'ecological and economic catastrophe' and demanded that every attempt be made 'to find political solutions'.

The statement condemned Iraqi missile attacks on Israel and

commended the latter's restraint. It also expressed support for the peace proposals advanced by President Mitterrand of France, adding that an international conference was a suitable means of seeking a stable peace for the Middle East region.

Addressing the German constitutional position, the statement welcomed the unanimity shown in the German parliament and government that the federal constitution 'forbids the deployment of German troops outside the NATO area'.

### Baltic statement

Also published on 23 January was an SPD executive statement condemning the Soviet Union's use of force in Lithuania and Latvia. 'This violent aggression against the right of self-determination', said the statement, 'is equally also an attack on the fundamental principles of the Soviet policies of reform'.

## GREENLAND

### Siumut retains power

In elections held on 5 March, Siumut, a member party of the Socialist International, retained its leading position, although with a reduced vote.

The social democratic Siumut party took 37 per cent of the vote (a 2 per cent drop on the previous elections), retaining 11 of the 27 seats in the assembly. Siumut was expected to form a coalition with the independent left-wing Inuit Ataqatigiit party, which took 5 seats. The conservative Atassut party took 8 seats (previously 11).

Siumut, which has been in power since Greenland gained autonomy from Denmark in 1979, thus continues to be assured of an absolute majority in government. Continuing popular rejection of membership of the European Community, from which Greenland withdrew following a referendum in 1985, is seen as the main cause of the fall in support for Atassut, which campaigned on a platform of re-entry.

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### GUATEMALA

#### Unity cabinet

The Democratic Socialist Party, PSD, has joined a coalition government formed by Jorge Serrano, victor of the second round of presidential elections following an inconclusive poll in November (see 4/90, page 62).

The voting on 6 January gave Serrano, candidate of the 'Social Christian' Solidarity Action Movement, MAS, some 68 per cent of a low poll (barely half of registered voters) to 32 per cent for the National Centrist Union's Jorge Carpio. The campaign was marked by unseemly exchanges between the candidates, but was relatively free of the violence which led up to the first round.

Despite his background as an ex-member of a military-led government, Serrano, a US-educated conservative businessman, has promised to continue his involvement in negotiations for the pacification of the country. Three decades of left-wing guerrilla activity, official repression and military-backed death squad killings have taken the lives of some 130,000 people.

It was in this spirit of conciliation that Serrano sought the participation of the PSD, the Christian Democrats, DCG, the liberals, the traditional right and the business sector in a government of national unity containing only two MAS members. PSD leader Mario Solórzano became minister of labour in a cabinet installed after Serrano was sworn in on 14 January to succeed Vinicio Cerezo of the DCG ('People', page 39). The PSD will thus have a key role in formulating the new government's response to an economic crisis in which inflation has passed 75 per cent. Work has begun on the development of a 'social pact' between labour, the private sector and the government.

### HAITI

#### Aristide takes office

Haiti's painful five-year transition from Duvalierist dictatorship to electoral democracy culminated in the landslide victory of radical priest Fr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide in a presidential poll held on 16 December.

The election, postponed from November (see 3/90, page 57), reflected the Haitian people's definitive rejection of the politicians and methods of the Duvalier era. The voting process was peaceful but somewhat chaotic, a large contingent of international observers including an SI team (see report in 4/90, page 42) nevertheless agreed that it was free and fair. It gave Aristide - a charismatic 37-year-old who has since 1982 spoken out at great personal risk for the rights and interests of the poor - some 67 per cent of the vote, 52 points ahead of Marc Bazin, the nearest of 13 other contenders. Aristide had run as the nominee of a recently-founded National Front for Change and Democracy, FNCD; Bazin headed the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress, ANDP.

The Revolutionary Progressive Nationalist Party, PANPRA, a member of the Socialist International and of the ANDP, acknowledged Aristide's victory as an incontestable expression of the popular will. It will continue to play an active part in the consolidation of Haiti's hard-won democracy. Although no party secured a majority in the 110-seat parliament installed after a second round of voting on 20 January, the progressive coalition aligned with Aristide emerged as the largest bloc.

Even before Aristide was sworn in on 7 February, his victory easily survived the first of the expected Duvalierist revolts when on 7 January Roger Lafontant, who as a prominent associate of the dictatorship was banned from standing in the 1990 elections, led a coup attempt which ended ignominiously when the army command asserted its loyalty to the constitutional order and mob violence was directed against Duvalierists. Lafontant and 15

supporters were imprisoned; the Aristide regime subsequently initiated an investigation of alleged corruption under his predecessor, interim President Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, installed in March (see 2/90, page 60).

### ISRAEL

#### Labour peace initiative

The bureau of the Israel Labour Party met during the first week of March, for the first time following the ending of the state of emergency declared in Israel during the Iraqi Scud missile attacks on the country.

In a response to the recent crisis which contrasts with that of the Likud government, Labour Party chairman Shimon Peres stressed at the meeting the ever-greater need to achieve a permanent peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours, including the Palestinians. He introduced an initiative thought likely to attract the support of the widest range of opinion within the party.

The plan includes negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation or a solely Palestinian delegation based on US Secretary of State James Baker's 1990 proposal. It would not include an invitation to the PLO to the negotiation table. The option of a link between the present occupied territories and Jordan is also revived, as is a proposal for the demilitarisation of any territories from which Israel withdraws. Under the plan, Jerusalem would remain the united capital of Israel.

### ITALY

#### PSI Gulf position

The position of the Italian Socialist Party, PSI, on the Gulf crisis was set out by party secretary Bettino Craxi in a speech in the Chamber of Deputies on 16 January, shortly before the coalition counter-offensive was launched.

Recounting the failure of numerous bilateral and

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multilateral efforts at negotiation or mediation with Iraq, Craxi called on the international community to make a determined collective effort to resolve not only the Gulf crisis but the other regional issues in the context and spirit of UN resolutions. The PSI thus stood with the Italian government in its active quest for a peaceful settlement and in support for whatever course of action was deemed necessary to implement Security Council resolutions on Kuwait. The party also stressed however that the same principles of equity, denial of aggression, respect for the rights of peoples, and practical international cooperation should be applied in the development of a new world order of justice and security.

### **Baltic repression condemned**

The PSI leadership issued a statement on 15 January expressing its deep concern over the crisis in Lithuania and condemning the military repression. It called on the Soviet authorities to work for a fair long-term solution of the Baltic unrest based on respect for human rights.

Bettino Craxi



### **Craxi calls for government renewal**

Addressing the PSI National Assembly, held in Rome on 14 and 15 March, PSI leader Bettino Craxi called for government changes and set out a number of areas which his party would be seeking to prioritise in government policy for the coming months. These were: public finances, institutional reforms, the fight against organised crime,

preparations for the European single market, and the further development of Italy's international role.

## JAPAN

### **Debate on Gulf commitment**

The Social Democratic Party of Japan, SPDJ, maintained its objections to the attempts of the Liberal-Democratic Party government to establish a Japanese role on the side of the US-led coalition in the Gulf war (see 4/90, pages 63 - 64), stating that the country's post-World War II constitution forbade Japanese military involvement in overseas conflicts.

However, the Democratic Socialist Party, DSP, gave full support to the government proposal, maintaining that the constitution should not preclude the participation of a Japanese defence force in UN activities aimed at maintaining peace.

### **Opposition win in Okinawa**

In a gubernatorial election in Okinawa prefecture on 18 November, the SPDJ-backed candidate, Masahide Ota, decisively defeated the LDP-supported incumbent governor, who had held the post for 12 years. The key issue in the campaign was the government's Gulf participation plan, which Ota opposed.

### **New party name**

At the recent party congress of the Socialist Party of Japan, SPJ, it was agreed that the party's English name be changed to Social Democratic Party of Japan, SPDJ. The party name in Japanese, Nippon Shakaito, remains unchanged.

## LATVIA

### **Condemnation of Riga killings**

The long-running confrontation between the Latvian pro-independence movement and the Soviet regime took a very serious turn on 20 January when four people were shot dead in an assault on a government building in Riga by Soviet special troops. The killings in the Latvian capital came a week after a similar violent crackdown in Lithuania, Latvia's fellow Baltic republic to the South (see separate report below), and marked a new stage in the protracted campaign of the Latvian people for independence from Moscow (see 2/90, pages 53-54).

The Riga violence occurred when Soviet interior ministry troops, known as the 'Black Berets', stormed the republic's interior ministry and occupied it for five hours. Unlike the Latvian parliament and other government headquarters, the interior ministry had not been barricaded and its few guards could offer only token resistance. Lurking in the background of the episode was the so-called 'committee of public safety' set up by pro-Moscow hardliners in Latvia to challenge the legitimacy of the elected pro-independence government.

The leadership of the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, LSDSP, said that 'anti-democratic forces' had caused a 'critical' situation in Latvia. 'Blood has flowed as a result of the deeds of the Black Berets (OMON) manipulated by the Latvian Communist Party', said a Party appeal, which went on to warn that 'direct USSR armed forces attacks are possible in the future'. The appeal also recorded that Latvian state buildings were now being guarded by 'unarmed civilian volunteers' and government militia.

In the confused aftermath of the Black Berets' withdrawal, uncertainty surrounded the source of the authorisation for their assault, which the central government in Moscow denied having given. Tensions were eased somewhat by talks in Moscow on

22 January between Latvian government leaders and President Gorbachev, when the threat of presidential rule in Latvia was averted, at least temporarily.

In mid-February the Latvian parliament voted to follow Lithuania and Estonia in holding a referendum to demonstrate popular support for independence.

Results of the referendum, held on 3 March, showed 73 per cent (with a turnout of 88 per cent of voters) in favour of independence.

Together with the other Baltic republics, Georgia and Armenia, the Latvian authorities rejected participation in the Soviet Union-wide referendum held on 17 March and designed to test support for Moscow's preferred version of union-republic relations.

## LEBANON

### *Jumblatt quits cabinet*

Less than a month after it was formed on 24 December, Lebanon's new national unity government lost the country's Druze leader, Walid Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, an SI member. A holder of (often nominal) ministerial responsibility since 1984, Jumblatt announced his resignation on 12 January, saying that 'for personal reasons I will stay away from the political scene for the time being'.

The Syrian-backed national unity government was established under Omer Karami and included the leaders of all the main militia groups in what appeared to be the best chance for many years of a settlement of Lebanon's bitter civil war (see 4/90, pages 64-65). However, Jumblatt had remained fundamentally unreconciled with the leaders of the militant Christian Phalangist Lebanese Forces, not least because they continued to resist moves to create a more equitable constitutional relationship between Moslems and Christians. Both principal Phalangist leaders, Samir Geagea and George Saadeh, had been offered posts in the new government but had declined to accept them.

## LITHUANIA

### *Bitter response to Soviet crackdown in Vilnius*

The Lithuanian movement to break free of Moscow rule met its gravest crisis to date when Soviet troops stormed the broadcasting centre in Vilnius on 13 January, killing at least 13 people and injuring over 600 others. The crackdown attracted broad international condemnation, with western governments warning that economic cooperation with the USSR could not be continued if it was to revert to totalitarian ways.

The events leading to the killings in the Lithuanian capital started with a Soviet decision on 7 January to send in paratroops to enforce army conscription, which most eligible Lithuanians were refusing. Over the next few days the Soviet forces occupied or surrounded a number of public buildings amid sharply growing tension. Although President Gorbachev told other republic leaders on 12 January that force would not be used in Lithuania, six hours later, early on 13 January, Soviet troops stormed the broadcasting building, crushing unarmed resistance with tanks and guns.

Confusion surrounded the source of the authorisation for the assault and its circumstances. The Moscow authorities denied having ordered the attack and claimed that the violence had been provoked by pro-democracy Lithuanians. Complicating the situation were the shadowy activities of a 'committee for national salvation' formed by hardline Communists in Lithuania to challenge the elected government of President Landsbergis.

Kazimieras Antanavicius, leader of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, LSDP, an SI-member party, accused the central Soviet authorities of launching 'new aggression' against Lithuania, flouting the requirements of international law and disregarding their own promises to recognize the free will of the Baltic peoples. He appealed for 'all possible measures' to

prevent a restoration of 'the old Stalinist regime'.

After the 13 January violence Lithuanian people massed in their tens of thousands around the parliament building, pledging to defend it to the death as the symbol of their independence. Their cause received significant backing from the president of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, who issued a joint statement with the three Baltic republic leaders appealing to the UN secretary-general to convene an international conference on the Baltic question.

The immediate confrontation eased somewhat in the second half of January, as no further Soviet military action was attempted. However, tensions rose again prior to the holding of an independence referendum in Lithuania on 8 February. The Moscow regime declared this consultation illegal since it preempted the 'official' referendum on the future of the union due to be held throughout the USSR on 17 March. Nevertheless, there was a turnout of 84.4 per cent, of which a massive 90.5 per cent voted in favour of Lithuanian independence. Only 6.5 per cent of those participating actually voted against, while those abstaining were mainly Russian and Polish inhabitants of Lithuania.

In light of these results, the Lithuanian parliament added a clause to its prospective constitution specifying that the decision could only be overturned by another referendum, and not simply by a parliamentary vote.

On 11 February, Iceland became the first Nordic country to recognise independent Lithuania when its parliament instructed the Icelandic government to establish diplomatic links with Vilnius as soon as possible.

## MALAYSIA

### *DAP condemns PSB arrests*

The opposition Democratic Action Party, DAP, an SI member, strongly condemned the arrests in early January of two leaders of the United Sabah Party, PSB. The

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arrests were widely seen as a government move to punish the PSB for its switch to the opposition camp in last October's federal elections (see 4/90, page 65).

In those elections the DAP had remained Malaysia's leading opposition party, although the opposition alliance had failed to overturn the ruling National Front's substantial parliamentary majority at federal level. At the same time, the PSB had retained its majority in the Borneo state of Sabah, one of the constituent parts of the Malaysian federation.

Those arrested were the PSB leader and Sabah chief minister, Joseph Pairin Kitingan, and his press adviser, Maximus Ongkili - the former on corruption charges, the latter under the notorious Internal Security Act allowing indefinite detention without trial. According to DAP general secretary Lim Kit Siang, the arrests were 'definitely politically motivated', whichever law the authorities had chosen to use.

## MOROCCO

### *USFP expresses Gulf dissent*

On 17 January the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP, a consultative member of the SI, issued a joint statement with the Istaqlal Party and the Organisation for Popular Democratic Action condemning the military action in Iraq and Kuwait as 'an imperialist aggression against the Arab Nations'.

A call for a general strike on 28 January from both opposition labour confederations, the socialist CDT and the nationalist UGTM, was successively supported by a wide range of civic, cultural and political organisations, including finally the Moroccan government. On the day, demonstrations throughout the country expressed their solidarity with Iraq and support for an Arab-negotiated solution.

## NEPAL

### *Election date set*

Nepal's first multi-party elections for three decades have been set for 12 May 1991, according to an official announcement on 11 February. The elections will take place just over a year after the start of the popular uprising which resulted in the abolition of the country's absolute monarchy and the achievement of a democratic constitution (see 4/90, page 65; 2/90, page 63).

Heading the interim coalition government is the Nepali Congress Party, an SI member, under the premiership of K.P. Bhattarai. The latter has declared his party's intention of seeking a mandate from the people to continue its programme of democratic reconstruction.

## NETHERLANDS

### *Party congress in shadow of Gulf crisis*

The biennial congress of the Netherlands Labour Party, PvdA, took place on 1 and 2 February in Amsterdam and was thus somewhat overshadowed by the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf two weeks previously.

The congress strongly endorsed PvdA support for the policy of the government - in which the party is a coalition partner - and thus for the direct participation of the Netherlands in the liberation of Kuwait.

A congress resolution adopted by a 90 per cent majority also stressed that the first serious indication by Iraq of an intention to leave Kuwait must be grasped, in order to come to a ceasefire and to end the conflict by political and diplomatic means, and opposed any escalation of the war in pursuit of goals other than the liberation of Kuwait.

The resolution supported the rapid formulation by the European Community of policy on a future international Middle East conference; and by the European democratic socialist

parties of a security and development policy based on new international relations and aiming at arms reduction.

The congress also adopted a resolution on environmental policy which gave new priority to the issue, setting considerations of environment and sustainable development as the paramount socio-economic goal.

Following discussion of the situation in the Soviet Union, the congress called for the deferral of EC aid until the re-establishment of dialogue between the central authorities and the Baltic republics.

Elections for the party executive bureau left the bureau largely unchanged, with Marjanne Sint remaining as party president, Alard Beck as general secretary and Jan Marinus Wiersma as international secretary.

## NORWAY

### *Labour rides high*

Norway's minority Labour government under Gro Harlem Brundtland, appointed in November 1990 (see 4/90, pages 66-67), faced immediate international crises in the Baltic republics and the Gulf but received a surge of public opinion support.

The Conservative Party's exit from government exacerbated its internal problems and its slump in the opinion polls, which by January were showing the party's lowest rating since World War II. When the Conservatives secured nearly 40 per cent of the vote in 1981 there had been much talk of Norway becoming a British-style two-party system. Now reduced to only 14 per cent in the polls, the Conservatives faced enforced leadership changes to avoid being eclipsed by Norway's several contending centre-right formations.

The Soviet crackdown in Lithuania and Latvia in January elicited strong condemnation from Norwegian government ministers. Coming as they did on top of the Vilnius violence, the Riga killings of 21 January attracted unusually fierce criticism, which included an

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62 official government assertion that the USSR had 'demonstrated contempt both for the process of democratisation and for human life'. Such opinions were communicated to the Soviet embassy in Oslo by foreign minister Thorvald Stoltenberg, while a government spokesman said that 'no credence' was attached to the claim of the Moscow authorities that they had not authorised the violence in the Latvian capital.

On the outbreak of the Gulf war both Brundtland and Stoltenberg described it as 'deeply tragic'. A member of NATO, Norway had sent one supply vessel to the anti-Iraq naval forces in the Gulf; later a Norwegian field hospital was earmarked for the Saudi Arabian theatre and the Norwegian Red Cross also stood by to assist. When the Gulf became threatened by a huge Iraqi-released oil slick in late January, Norway was quick to offer assistance based on its North Sea expertise.

Another issue exercising the Brundtland government was the 'European Economic Area', EEA, negotiations between EFTA and the European Community, scheduled for completion by May 1991. With some aspects of the EEA agreement requiring approval by a two-thirds majority of the Norwegian parliament, the government launched a countrywide campaign extolling the potential benefits of the EEA link. At the same time, it indicated that if the EEA agreement did not obtain parliamentary approval full EC membership - the option taken by Sweden's Social Democratic government - was an alternative scenario.

### PAKISTAN

#### Former premier confirms electoral fraud

The charge of Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, PPP, that the October 1990 general elections were substantially rigged received endorsement in January from the caretaker prime minister in office at the time. In a public statement, former premier Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi asserted that the elections had been fraudulent in many

respects, thus confirming the verdict not only of the PPP but also of some NGOs (see 4/90, page 67).

Jatoi's revelations in part reflected fissures in the army-backed Islamic Democratic Alliance, IDA, which was credited with having won the elections. The new prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, was from Pakistan's largest province, Punjab, and was already attracting criticism from IDA leaders from the smaller provinces concerned about the deteriorating economic and security situation in their territory. Nevertheless, for the PPP, Jatoi's admission was seen as confirming that the ejection of the Bhutto government the previous August had amounted to a 'constitutional coup'.

### PARAGUAY

#### Febreristas gear up for polls

The approach of May's local government elections, which will be the first ever held under democratic conditions in Paraguay, offers the Revolutionary Febrerista Party, PRF, an opportunity to prepare its campaigning machinery for the presidential poll of 1993.

The Socialist International - affiliated PRF has joined the main opposition formation, the Authentic Radical Liberal Party, PLRA, and the small Christian Democratic Party, PDC, in formally requesting the presence of observer teams from the UN and the Organisation of American States to ensure fair play in the elections, which were originally scheduled for March (see 3/90, page 15).

In view of the limited progress to date in dislodging the Stroessner era elite from positions of power, the opposition parties remain sceptical as to the willingness of the ruling Colorado Party to risk losing control of the municipalities, much less the presidency. A particular disappointment with the Colorados' performance since the 1989 coup has been the refusal of President Rodríguez to permit proper investigation of corruption under the 34-year dictatorship of Stroessner.

However, Rodríguez sacked his foreign minister in July after the latter stated publicly that the Colorados would never surrender power; nevertheless the subsequent cabinet reshuffle retained a strong 'old guard' contingent in the government.

### PORTUGAL

#### Soares swept back

President Mario Soares won a second five-year term of office on 13 January after a campaign in which he was endorsed not only by the SI-affiliated Socialist Party, PS, to which he had belonged until his election in 1986, but by the ruling centrist Social Democrats, PDS, whom the PS expect to defeat later this year in a general election. The PDS backing was a recognition that no-one from their ranks could approach the experience and popularity of Soares, a former PS prime minister. Other factors were his renunciation as 'president of all the Portuguese' of party labels, and his non-confrontational attitude, in the interest of national unity and stability, towards a duly

Enthusiasm for Soares



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ected government of the other major party.

Soares' margin of victory was a record; his 70.4 per cent of the vote was 56.3 points ahead of his nearest rival, the conservative Basilio Horta of the Democratic Social Centre, CDS, whose aggressive mud-slinging rhetoric was not to the taste of the Portuguese electorate. The communist candidate won 12.0 per cent and a radical leftist 2.6 per cent of the relatively low (62 per cent) turnout. The PS, acknowledging that the credit for Soares' re-election lay with the man himself, nevertheless expressed its deep satisfaction at the outcome.

### SPAIN

#### **Strong support for government stance on Gulf crisis**

A special session of the Spanish parliament on 18 January overwhelmingly endorsed the Socialist government's view on the Gulf crisis. Spain subsequently played an important role in sustaining the logistics of the coalition campaign and in enforcing sanctions against Iraq, while continuing to support the search for a just peace and emphasising the need for a sustained international effort to resolve other problems in the region, including the Palestinian question.

#### **Government reshuffle**

In a long-expected government reshuffle announced by government president Felipe González on 11 March, six new ministers were appointed, whilst two others moved to new responsibilities.

Defence Minister Narcis Serra became vice-president, replacing Alfonso Guerra, who had announced his resignation on 12 January. Guerra, for many years the closest political associate of Felipe González, and deputy head of government since the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, took office in 1982, remains deputy general secretary of the PSOE.

New ministers appointed were Julián García Vargas (defence), Juan Manuel Eguigaray (public administration), Jordi Solé Tura (culture), Julián García Valverde (health), José Borrell (public works and transport) Tomás de la Cuadra Salcedo (justice), and Pedro Solbes (agriculture). Other members of the cabinet, who remain unchanged, are: Francisco Fernández Ordóñez (foreign affairs); José Luis Corcuera (interior); Carlos Solchaga (economy); Luis Martínez Noval (labour and social security); Claudio Aranzadi (industry, commerce and tourism); Javier Solana (education and science); Virgilio Zapatero (parliamentary relations); Matilde Fernández (social affairs), and Rosa Conde (government spokesperson).

#### **PSE-PSOE leaves negotiations**

In the autonomous Basque Country, the Basque Socialist Party, PSE-PSOE, dropped out of the negotiations which had dragged on since October (see 4/90, page 68) as to the composition of a new regional government, which was announced on 23 January as a coalition of three nationalist parties.

### SWEDEN

#### **Social Democrats respond to Baltic developments**

Sweden's minority Social Democratic, SAP, government has vigorously condemned the use of force in the Baltic states.

A series of protests issued at government and party level included one by the government on 14 January shortly after the killings in Vilnius. It said that 'pressure and force cannot be accepted under any circumstances', warned that 'further violence would have far-reaching consequences for the Soviet Union and for future developments in Europe' and asserted that 'a solution of the conflict between Moscow and the Baltic republics must be achieved by political means and through agreements'.

The statement continued that

'the democratically elected Baltic parliaments must be respected and protected' and that 'attempts to undermine their position and authority by various self-appointed "national salvation committees" are a serious threat to the legitimate power of the people and completely contrary to one of the most important elements in the entire Soviet reform policy, the emergence of democracy'.

In an earlier statement issued on 11 January (before the Vilnius violence) the SAP executive had expressed concern at the threat of force being used in the Baltic states and had urged the Soviet government to 'start serious negotiations with the Baltic republics, whose popularly elected parliaments are legitimate representatives of their respective peoples'.

In a report to the Riksdag on 17 January foreign minister Sten Andersson said that Sweden was investigating the possibility of raising the Baltic crisis in the UN human rights commission. He also described Swedish diplomatic activity within the CSCE and Council of Europe frameworks. At national level, said Andersson, the government had allocated SKr one million for 'various activities', including broadcasting in Lithuanian by Swedish radio (in addition to existing Latvian and Estonian programmes).

As part of the national effort of solidarity, continued the foreign minister, the government would 'support representatives of the Baltic parliaments and governments who have arrived in Stockholm in the past few days'. In this connection, the Swedish capital would be host to information offices representing the interests of the Baltic republics.

#### **EC membership aim**

Following the parliamentary vote in December authorising the government to apply for full European Community membership (see 4/90, page 68), the SAP manifesto for the September 1991 election contains a commitment to membership subject to the maintenance of Sweden's traditional neutrality.



### TUNISIA

#### Gulf conflict reverberations

The ruling Constitutional Democratic Assembly, RCD, an SI member party, and the RCD government of President Ben Ali condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and applied UN sanctions against the Baghdad regime. The government declined, for its part, to join some other Arab League states in sending troops to the coalition forces in the Gulf, arguing for an Arab solution to the crisis and describing its stance on the conflict as one of neutrality.

As in other Maghreb countries, the government was faced with expressions of public sympathy for Iraq, a situation which led the RCD general secretary, Abderrahim Zouari, to state that 'we cannot be at odds with the people'.

### VENEZUELA

#### Pérez calls for UN oil role

The Democratic Action, AD, government has restated its commitment to moral and practical assistance to Venezuela's smaller neighbours with the maintenance of generous concessions on oil exports.

Under the San José Accord, Venezuela and Mexico had since 1980 supplied oil to a group of Caribbean and Central American countries on 'soft' terms as a form of development assistance. The Accord had been renewed in 1984 and in October, as the Gulf crisis threatened the ability of many oil-importing countries to finance their requirements, Venezuela agreed with Jamaica a further extension of the concession in a modified form. Under the new deal fully 30 per cent of the value of the exports are to be financed



Carlos  
Andrés Pérez

by Venezuela as an extended loan on favourable conditions.

With a view to the longer term Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez, a vice-president of the SI, has asked for a UN-sponsored summit of oil-exporting countries to discuss the stabilisation of oil prices and the protection of less-developed importing countries from the effects of price fluctuations.

### FROM THE ARCHIVE

#### THE REVOLT OF INDIA AND WORLD REVOLUTION

The most famous leaders of the anti-bourgeois movement are the mystical agitator Ghandi, preacher of the 'spiritual revolt' and of the total boycott of European civilisation, and the great poet Rabindranath Tagore who himself declared that the League of Nations was a group of thieves based on force ...

One can only debate whether the liberation of world revolution will be the work of a few months or a few years, but that liberation is inevitable and certain ...

And its importance for the success of world revolution will be simply enormous. With the loss of India, England will cease to count as a world power. International capitalism will lose its most formidable bastion. British imperialism, the greediest and most ferocious in the world, will be mortally wounded ...'

'Quidam' writing in *Avanti*, the newspaper of the Italian Socialist Party, 18 January 1921.



# About the SI

## The Socialist International

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The Socialist International (SI), founded in 1864, is the world's oldest and largest international political association. It represents 90 political parties and organisations with the support of more than 200 million voters.

The SI provides its members with a forum for political action, policy discussion, dialogue and exchange. Its statements and decisions advise member organisations and the international community of consensus views within the global family of socialist, social democratic and labour parties and organisations.

The president of the SI since 1976 is Willy Brandt, former chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, winner of the 1971 Nobel Peace Prize and the 1984 Third World Prize, chair of the Brandt Commission, and honorary chair of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. The secretary general is Luis Ayala, from Chile, who was elected at the Congress in 1989.

The Congress, which meets every three years, and the Council (including all member parties and organisations), which meets twice a year, are the supreme decision-making bodies of the Socialist International. Meetings of the presidium and party leaders are also held regularly, as well as special conferences on particular topics or issues.

Committees, councils and study groups have been established for work on Africa, disarmament, economic policy, the environment, human rights, Latin America and the Caribbean, local authorities, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Southern Africa, and finance and administration.

The SI is a recognised non-governmental organisation, collaborates with the United Nations, and works with a range of organisations and free trade unions internationally.

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Willy Brandt

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Luis Ayala

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Barbados Labour Party  
Socialist Party, PS, Belgium  
Socialist Party, SP, Belgium  
Democratic Labour Party, PDT, Brazil  
Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, BSDP  
Progressive Front of Upper Volta, FPV, Burkina Faso  
New Democratic Party, NDP/NPD, Canada  
Radical Party of Chile, PR  
National Liberation Party, PLN, Costa Rica  
Movement for a New Antilles, MAN, Curaçao  
Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party  
Social Democratic Party, Denmark  
Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, Dominican Republic  
Democratic Left Party, MID, Ecuador  
National Democratic Party, NDP, Egypt  
National Revolutionary Movement, MNR, El Salvador  
Estonian Social Democratic Party, ESDP  
Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP  
Socialist Party, PS, France  
Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD  
The Labour Party, Great Britain  
Panhellenic Socialist Movement, PASOK, Greece  
Democratic Socialist Party of Guatemala, PSD  
Hungarian Socialist Democratic Party  
Social Democratic Party, Iceland  
The Labour Party, Ireland  
Israel Labour Party  
United Workers' Party, MAPAM, Israel  
Korean Social Democratic Party, PSDI  
Italian Socialist Party, PSI  
Peoples' National Party, PNP, Jamaica  
Japan Democratic Socialist Party, DSP  
Social Democratic Party of Japan, SPDJ  
Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, Jordan  
Lithuanian Socialist Party, LSDP  
Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, LSAP/PSOL  
Democratic Action Party, DAP, Malaysia  
Malta Labour Party  
Mauritius Labour Party  
Labour Party, PVDA, Netherlands  
New Zealand Labour Party  
Social Democratic and Labour Party, SDLP, Northern Ireland  
Norwegian Labour Party, DNA  
Revolutionary Workers' Party, PRF, Paraguay  
Socialist Party, PS, Portugal  
San Marino Socialist Party, PSS  
Socialist Party of Senegal, PS  
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE  
Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP  
Social Democratic Party of Switzerland  
Constitutional Democratic Assembly, KCD, Tunisia  
Social Democratic Populist Party, SDP, Turkey

Democratic Socialists of America, DSA, USA  
Social Democrats USA, SDUSA  
Democratic Action, AD, Venezuela

#### Consultative parties

People's Electoral Movement, MEP, Aruba  
Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR, Bolivia  
EDEK Socialist Party of Cyprus  
Siumut, Greenland  
Working People's Alliance, WPA, Guyana  
Revolutionary Progressive Nationalist Party of Haiti, RANPRA  
Party for National Unity, VITM, Madagascar  
Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USEP, Morocco  
Nepal Congress Party  
Pakistan People's Party, PPP  
Pieuviann Apriasia Party, PAP  
Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP  
Progressive Labour Party of St. Lucia, PLP  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines Labour Party, SVGLP  
Popular Unity Movement, MUP, Tunisia  
Democratic Left Party, DSP, Turkey  
People's Electoral Movement, MEP, Venezuela

#### Consultative parties - members of SUCEE

Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, LSDSP  
Polish Socialist Party, PPS  
Romanian Social Democratic Party, PSDR  
Socialist Party of Yugoslavia, SSI

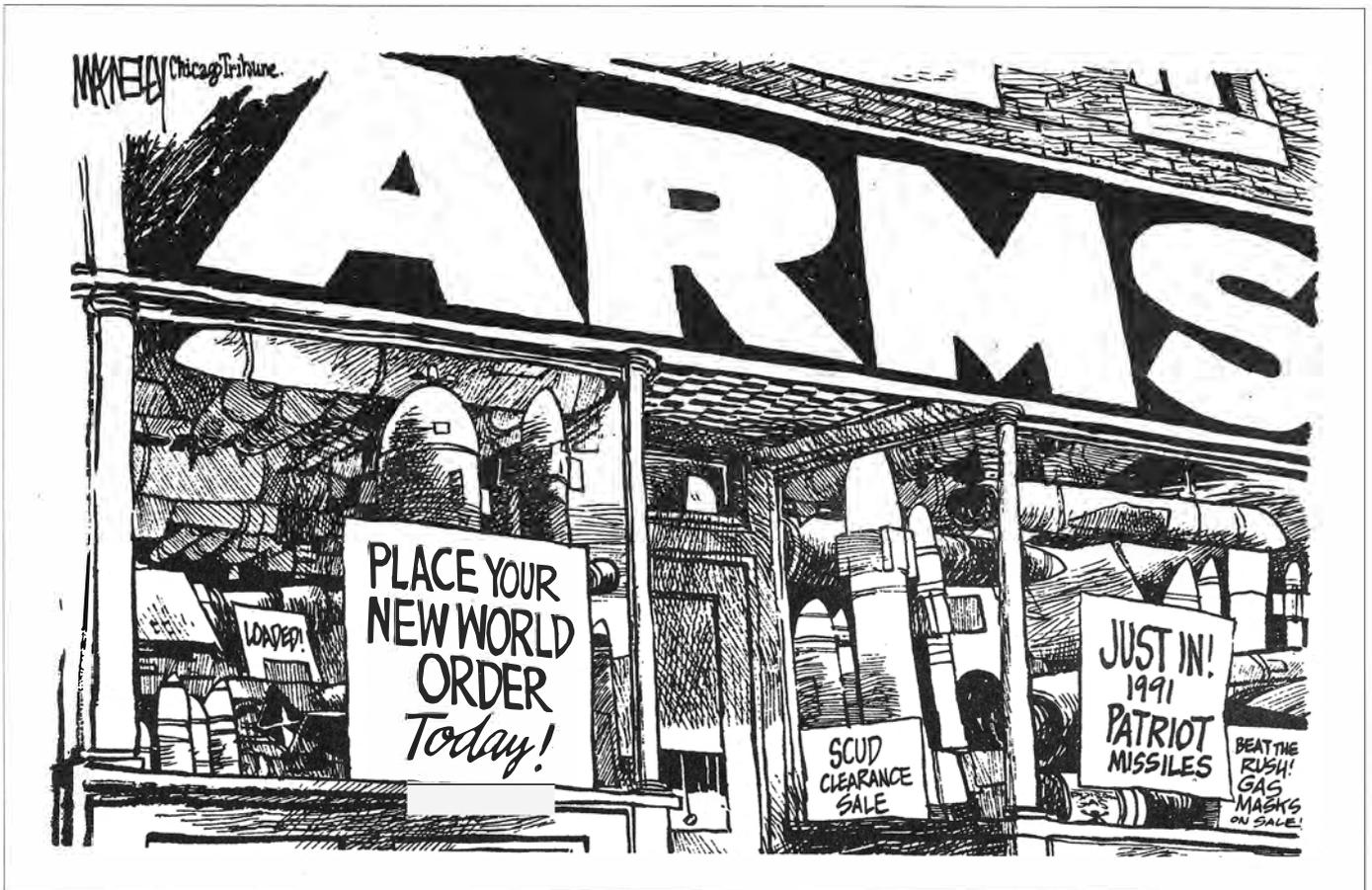
#### Fraternal organisations

International Falcon Movement/Socialist Educational International, IFM/SEI  
International Union of Socialist Youth, USY  
Socialist International Women, SIW

#### Associated organisations

Asia-Pacific Socialist Organisation, APSO  
Confederation of the Socialist Parties of the European Community  
International Federation of the Socialist and Democratic Press, IFSDP  
International Union of Social Democratic Teachers, IUSDIT  
Gewerkschaften Bündnis, GSB  
Labour Sports International, CSIT  
Socialist Group, European Parliament  
Socialist Union of Central and Eastern Europe, SUCEE  
World Labour Zionist Movement, WLZM

## LAST WORD



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*'A child born today in sub-Saharan Africa faces a bleak set of statistics. The odds are one in 10 that he or she will not live more than a year; the odds are one in 20 that the child's mother will die giving birth.*

*The child born today in sub-Saharan Africa can expect to live for only 50 years - 25 years less than children in the industrial countries.*

*The newborn African child enters a world in which one person in five does not receive enough food to lead a productive, healthy life.*

*There is only one doctor for every 25,000 people, compared with one for every 555 people in the industrial countries.*

*By the time the child born today is 22 years old, if present population growth continues, sub-Saharan Africa's population will have doubled. When the child is 45, it will have quadrupled. And all this in a region where many people are already poorer than they were 30 years ago.'*

Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank

*'We had a brief peace - four weeks to be exact - from the date of the London Declaration, July 6, when the Alliance recognised that the Soviet Union was no longer an enemy, until August 2, when Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait.'*

William Taft, US permanent representative on the North Atlantic Council

*'An engineer from Barcelona, Antonio Ibáñez Alba, has perfected an artificial tree which, he says, can green the deserts within ten years, if planted in sufficient numbers, together with real trees... The technique works, according to its inventor, by modifying the precipitation pattern... The artificial tree creates cold air by absorbing water from the surrounding air, which then condenses on its leaves during the cool desert nights and is retained inside the trunk. In the course of the day, humidity is gradually released and cools the atmosphere.'*

from 'UN Development Forum',  
January/February 1991



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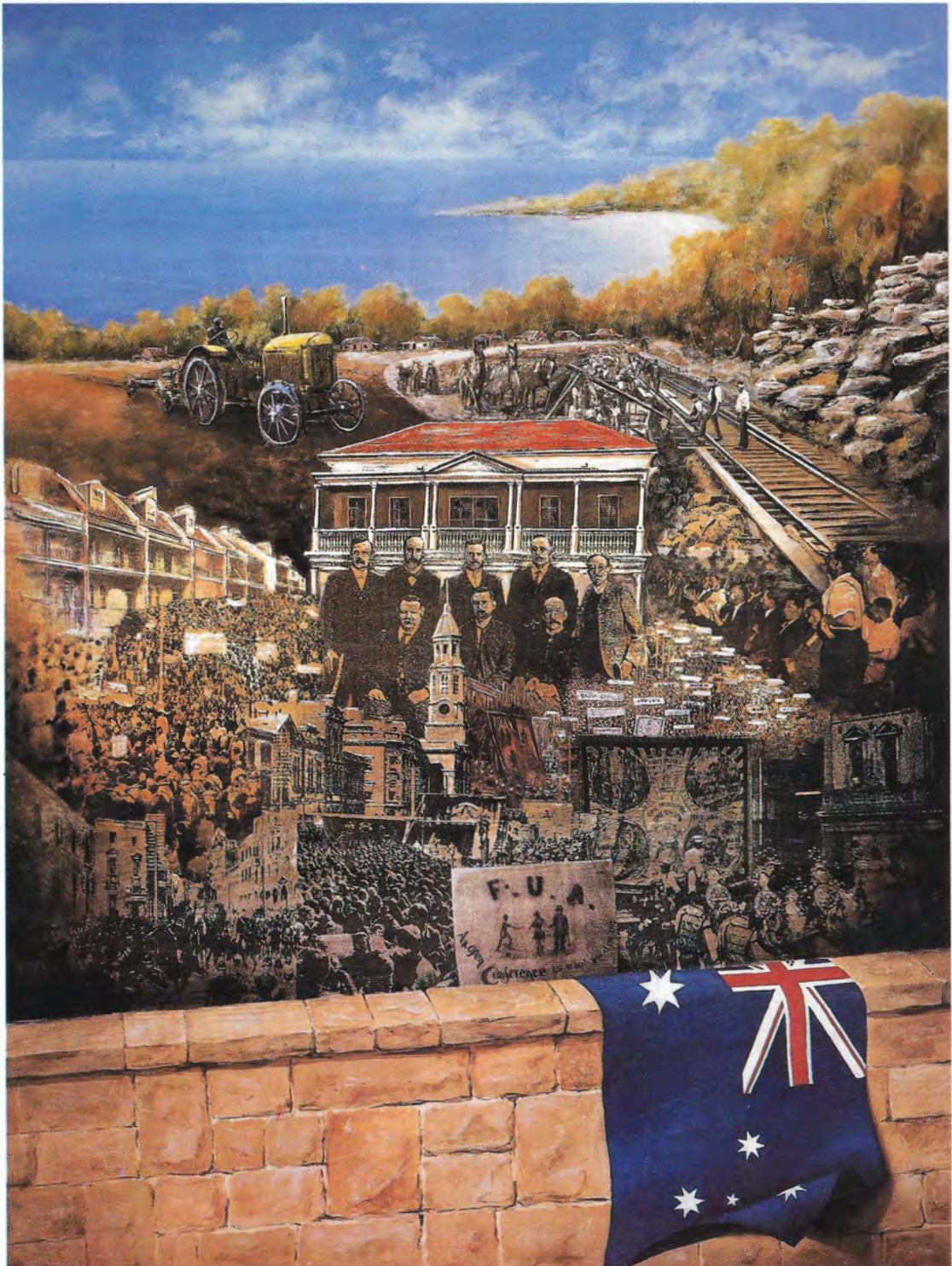
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# 1891-1991 Australian Labor Party