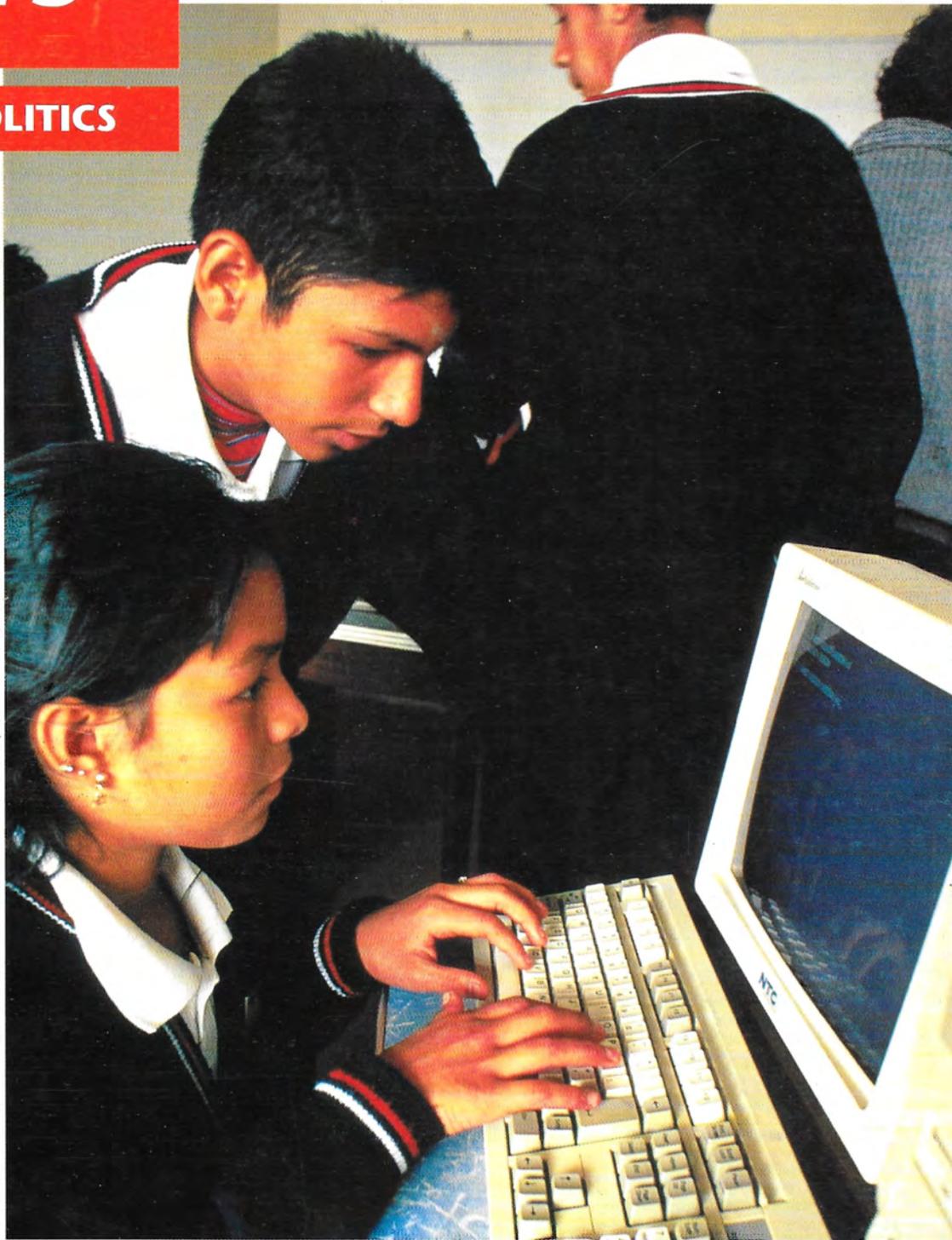


Socialist Affairs

AND WOMEN & POLITICS



***Knowledge – the
motor of change***



Issue 1 Volume 48

*The Journal of the
Socialist International*

Issue 1 Volume 48

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Annual subscription rates
(4 issues)
United Kingdom £12 sterling
Other countries £15

Production
Harriet Ogborn

Design
A.S.A.P. London

Colour origination
Reflex, London

Printing
Stanhope Press

**PRINTED ON RECYCLED AND
ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY
PAPER**

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International Women

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ISSN 0049-0946

Cover picture
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- 3 **Editorial**
- 4 **Setting the global agenda for Africa**
Ibrahim Bouabacar Keita examines the challenges facing Africa in an era of globalisation
- 8 **Looking towards the future**
Ricardo Lagos sets the way forward for Chile
- 12 **Profile**
Thabo Mbeki, South Africa's new President
- 13 **The pressing problems of a unique culture**
Carl Lidbom discusses the concerns facing the Kurdish people
- 16 **Building on our strengths**
Luis Ayala looks at the workings of the Socialist International
- 20 **A hurricane passes**
Jorge Arturo Reina tells of the damage to three countries inflicted by an exceptional natural phenomenon
- 23 **Books**
Hugh O'Shaughnessy reviews books on Swedish aid to Southern Africa, recent Chilean history and on Socialist strategy
- 26 **About the SI**
- 28 **SI News**
• SI Council meets in Buenos Aires • SICEE meeting in Bucharest •
• SIMEC Working Group on the Kurdish Question • Regional seminars
of the Global Progress Commission • Africa Committee in Bamako •
SICEE special meeting on Kosovo • People •
- 39 **WOMEN AND POLITICS**
SIW Regional meeting in Rio de Janeiro
Silvia Augsburg considers the challenges of 'Globalisation and the Politics of
Regional Integration'
Lissy Gröner outlines the significance of the European elections for women
- 49 **Socialist Notebook**
Algeria • Angola • Armenia • Burkina Faso • Cameroon • Chile • Colombia •
Czech Republic • East Timor • Egypt • El Salvador • Equatorial Guinea •
Estonia • Fiji • Finland • France • Georgia • Germany • Great Britain •
Greenland • Iceland • Ireland • Israel • Italy • Jamaica • Malaysia • Mali •
Mongolia • Nepal • Netherlands • Niger • Northern Ireland • Territories under
Palestinian Authority • Panama • Paraguay • Portugal • Puerto Rico •
San Marino • South Africa • Slovak Republic • Spain • Venezuela •
- 59 **Last Word**

Shaping change

The holding of our Council meeting in Buenos Aires, marking a return to Latin America, after major meetings in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America, highlights the truly global nature of our organisation.

The Council will address the theme 'Shaping change' in a world of disappearing frontiers, globalised communications and new technologies. Social democracy is a global movement today, as embodied in the International, which is well placed to define the direction change takes and to make sure that it works for democracy, freedom, fairness and solidarity.

The elections which are to take place in a number of countries in the region in the coming months will provide opportunities for democratic socialists to further good government and to build and drive forward change, in yet another continent in which social democracy is firmly rooted.

4 **Setting the global agenda for Africa**

The African continent is in urgent need of re-examining its priorities for the immediate future as the whole world enters into a new phase of its evolution. Globalisation brings troubles and worries, but also greater opportunities than ever before. What we have to do is to think not just about principles and concepts but also about strategies for action which will allow Africa to take its place successfully in the world economy, which is rapidly taking shape before our eyes, and regather its strength. If that does not happen, its position on the sidelines, already worrying enough, will worsen and become irreversible - even fatal.

Humanity is entering a new era of dislocation and change. We are living in a totally interdependent world where domestic events - almost in real time - take on a global dimension in a world which has been transformed by information technology.

The world lives more and more at the pace of international commerce, the liberalisation of trade and the globalisation of the invention, development, production, distribution and consumption of goods and services under the influence of giant companies. It is a world taken hostage by financial speculation; it is a world characterised more and more by the disappearance of boundaries where a new set of players, the giant corporations, tend to make the laws, unrestricted by the control exercised by states and international organisations, due to their power and technical skills.

It is a world which has less and less regard for the nation-state, to national economic and financial policies, to social and education policies, all concepts which have been until now at the root of global growth. It is a world which therefore tends to ignore the fundamental notions of solidarity and social cohesion, a world which worships the regulating virtues of the market.

It is not at all surprising that such a situation should attract the attention of our political family made up as it is of men and women with a belief in social democracy, in the North as in the South. After all, we are moved by a deep humanism and sense of solidarity among people. There in lies the basic reason for the great advances made by our ideas in every continent of the world. It is clear that there is a move, as recent election successes show, towards social government. The support being given to those who uphold our values and our political ideas give expression to popular apprehension about the risks contained within a process of globalisation based on an ultra-liberal ideology. But at the same time, and above all, it signifies hope that our political family will be able to find the right responses to new questions facing humanity. I am absolutely convinced that we can fulfil those hopes. In any case, such is the mission assigned by history to our generation.

None of us is opposed to globalisation just as none of us at this moment when we are struggling almost alone to ensure that the policies of structural adjustment take account of the social dimension of development is proposing policies at variance with rigorous macro-economic equilibrium. In the face of globalisation it would be absurd to play the role of rearguard which was adopted in the 18th and 19th centuries by those who opposed the industrial revolution.

Moreover, globalisation does have undeniable advantages. Greater access to culture, knowledge and familiarity with technology is no longer contained within frontiers. The virtual world which is developing encourages innovation and furthers creativity. The emergence of an international public opinion renders all forms of exclusion and oppression intolerable. The development of trade can benefit everyone, all the more since the establishment of the World Trade Organisation in Marrakesh which is opening the way for unprecedented development of organised, international trading activity. But at the same time economic, social and environmental waste is also on the horizon.

*Ibrahim Boubacar Keita,
Prime Minister of Mali and
President of ADEMA-PASJ,
examines the challenges
facing Africa in an era of
globalisation*



***The communications
revolution arrives***

Inequalities grow wider, not just between North and South but also within countries, even those in the North, where pockets of poverty are developing day by day. Social cohesion is weakened as attacks are mounted against social policies, justified by the supposed death of the Welfare State.

The recent financial crises, first in the emerging countries of Asia, hitherto presented as evidence of the validity of ubiquitous neo-liberalism, and more recently in Brazil, have demonstrated strikingly that if the financial markets are highly integrated these days, if technology is transferred at speeds unimaginable only ten years ago and if, finally, governments are more bound than ever by multilateral agreements, the hidden hand of the market, on its own, regulates nothing at all. On the contrary, these crises attest to the fact that the nation-state retains its importance and to the urgent need for it to retain its role as a social and economic regulator, as it is this which guarantees social cohesion.

We must therefore consider the way humanity should enter the next millennium, and, concretely, how to tame, civilise and humanise globalisation so as to seize it, for the great benefit of humanity as a whole, from the forces of the transnational economy and avoid being torn apart by that process. We must ensure that the principal values of a globalising world are not the market and money, but rather the social virtues of equality, justice, solidarity and social harmony. For us the men and women of the third millennium must not be the slaves of the market, however global that market may become. The market must be at the service of people.

Consequently, social democrats will not allow politics to be subsumed into economics which would be the sign of resignation and despair. On the contrary



Hartmut Schwarzbach/Still Pictures

they are involved in intense, popular, democratic, political debates on the risks and the outlook which pertain to globalisation for the sake of democracy and society itself. That is why the Global Progress Commission set up at the historic New York Congress of the International, under the chairmanship of Felipe González has brought in such an excellent harvest of ideas through its meetings, seminars, thematic and regional meetings.

We must maintain the initiative, as we have done before, on political and institutional levels. In the new

*Active citizens,
not passive ones*

context of our daily lives, we must rehabilitate politics, rehabilitate the State, so that the passive citizen does not prevail over the active one. We must forcefully proclaim that the State must remain as the centre of gravity of social endeavour, the forum for social dialogue and the cement of social cohesion. With equal forcefulness we must insist that under no circumstances must it give up its role as a social and economic regulator. And in the particular circumstances of developing countries, while it should favour the emergence of other players, the State should remain the vector of development.

At the same time we Africans, as part of our strategy of integration in the world economy, must invest in the quality of our states - even to the point of re-founding them. The African continent must continue in its efforts to promote democracy, to strengthen the rule of law and to achieve better governance. A particular aim must be to encourage decentralisation in order to ensure that those at the base of society play an active role in local development.

With our macro-economy in a better state it will help us to develop the specialisation needed to stake our claim in the world market. To achieve this we need imagination and a consolidation of our economies through a push towards integration. The great lesson we have to learn is that the economies which work best in the era of globalisation are those that favour subregional cooperation in

wider economic groupings.

In this process human resources are key. The present market is not a market of raw materials, rather it is a market of know-how where investment is attracted by high levels of technology. We are living in an era where education and technical skills are becoming paramount.

This means that we, in Africa, must be aware that the impending century will be merciless for unskilled workers. It will be a century of excellence; a century which will not tolerate mediocrity.

At the heart of the problems of the African continent becoming a part of the world economy is putting sufficient emphasis on human resources: education, training, culture, health, mobilising human resources. We must give this area the importance it deserves.

We have begun this process of development, proving that no-one will build Africa but Africans themselves. We are convinced that such efforts must come first and foremost from ourselves.

But we have not lost sight that this process also involves the international community, which we must work with in our efforts, all the more so as globalisation engenders an unbalanced environment, emphasising the gap between current economic powers and the developing world.

Africa must fully participate in the debate on economic and financial regulation targeted at controlling new threats to economic stability worldwide and to promoting global development.

Our action must be conceptual, incorporating both principles and methods able to take social democratic ideas into the 21st century, while governing our countries today in the best way for the African continent. But we must also have organisational, not only academic, objectives. We must constitute a force which provides concrete answers to the current expectations of our people. ♦



Ricardo Lagos, who is seeking the presidency of Chile this year, sets the way forward for his country

Looking towards the future

In recent times, Chile has been in the eyes of the world because of its past history and the unfinished tasks of our democratic transition. I wish to focus here, however, on a longer term perspective. Indeed, Chile must confront the challenge of an incomplete democratisation and then move on to the future.

As we approach the year 2000, Chile will initiate a new stage in its history. In fact, Chile is now closer to its bicentennial in 2010 than to the breakdown of the democratic regime that took place with the *coup d'état* that overthrew President Salvador Allende in 1973. Hence, without forgetting our traumatic past, the Chilean people now want answers about the future.

There are many tasks ahead: to consolidate a solid and stable democracy; to advance towards social equity; to modernise our public administration; to provide better access to quality education and health; to continue economic growth while respecting our environment; and, to provide more and better jobs.

But imagining the future is inevitably based on what we have achieved as a government coalition, the *Concertación por la Democracia*, during the last ten years.

In economic terms, inflation was reduced from about 29 per cent in 1990 to about 5 per cent last year. In the past decade, Chile has exhibited rates of growth of about 7 per cent, meaning that in 13 years Chile has doubled its gross domestic product (GDP). In the past it took us 36 years to double it. The domestic savings rate in our country has increased, while unemployment was, until recently, on a downturn and is still relatively low.

In the political arena, during the last decade Chile has regained its freedoms, enjoys political pluralism and there is no longer torture or fear of disappearance. There is a vigorous free press and a Congress that fully exercises its prerogatives.

In the social field, there has also been progress. The decrease in poverty is evident (although income distribution remains highly unequal); educational reform focusing on equity and quality has also improved.

In other words, we have progressed much in the last ten years. Macroeconomic stability and growth are now almost a given. Today we can speak confidently

about the future precisely because we have our house in order.

But, there is also a widespread perception in Chile that growth has not benefited all. Many feel, rightly so, that the fruits of progress have not entered their homes. Inequality in income distribution is as acute now as in the 70s. There is a sense of legitimate frustration, but also a sense of hope.

Because we have our house in order, Chileans need, therefore, to advance more ambitiously towards social equity.

True, we must persevere along the road of low inflation, sustained growth, higher rates of domestic savings, and increasingly higher rates of productivity. This is the foundation for social change. Higher salaries and better jobs will come only if we persevere with the macroeconomic stability already achieved. There may be some fine tuning required to achieve a better combination of interest rates and real exchange rates, for example, but the broad direction of macroeconomic growth and stability is clearly established.

Our challenge is how to introduce greater degrees of solidarity on the basis of a sound economic system.

I believe that the future of Chile depends to a large degree on deeper educational reform. We must discriminate in favour of those who have less in their access to education and training; we have to link education to the productive sectors. When it comes to education or health, Chileans cannot be viewed as mere consumers, but as citizens. Consumers in a free market society have unequal buying power, while citizens inherently have the same rights. Hence, the way to avoid an unfair or unequal educational or health system is to use the citizen approach rather than to leave it up to the market.

We need to improve the framework of labour relations, introduce unemployment insurance and reassess and amplify the health care system.

On another dimension, we must make a technical, financial, and even philosophical, effort to improve the quality of life in our cities, affected by pollution, traffic congestion; we have to recuperate our neighbourhoods, our parks, and our streets, making them safer and friendlier for the people. Economic growth will have to be compatible with the protection of our environment, with perfecting the preservation of our native forests, our marine resources, as well as controlling toxic residues.

For such tasks, we need an active and dynamic State. We will need as large a State as is socially-necessary. Free markets are not perfect and the State must be present where needed to create equal access, to stimulate cultural development and to redress existing inequalities. We must put the State at the service of the people, of the Chilean family. To the family that wants concrete solutions, that does not want to live with the fear of unemployment, the fear of ignorance, the fear of sickness.

But, we do not want a heavy, bureaucratic State. Modernisation of the public apparatuses is a must. Transparency, efficiency, and participation are only some of the criteria to face the still pending modernisation of the State.

The Pinochet crisis has also shown the weaknesses of our democratic transition. At a moment when in my country there is an intense debate on our endangered 'jurisdictional sovereignty', some do not want to speak about our incomplete popular sovereignty. That is, about the continuation of authoritarian enclaves, like the non-elected 'institutional' senators, appointed through mechanisms that favour the right wing, or the National Security Council, where the military exercises influence equivalent to that of civilian authorities.

Chile is a different and more complex case than that of countries like Brazil or Spain, which actually recuperated full democracy and even held constituent assemblies. In Brazil, return to democracy meant the immediate abolition of non-elected or 'bionic' senators; in Chile, after almost a decade of democratic transition, they still exist. In short, we need to regain full popular sovereignty through major constitutional reforms regarding, for example, the electoral



system, non-elected senators, the composition and attributions of the National Security Council and the constitutional tribunal.

The task of completing our transition will remain undone unless we also establish satisfactorily the truth about the disappeared political prisoners and make those found responsible respond before the courts. This is an open wound that will not heal until we confront the problem and find an acceptable solution.

In December 1999 Chile will choose its President for the beginning of the new century and at the beginning of June the *Concertación* honoured me with the nomination as its presidential candidate after open primaries which were held on 30 May.

The important point to emphasise here is that Christian Democrats, socialists, Party for Democracy members, and radicals are not adversaries. All together, we are partners in the construction of the future. The *Concertación* is the widest, most successful and most stable political coalition that Chile has seen in many decades.

The *Concertación* was fundamental in the struggle to recuperate democracy, and it will continue to be essential in the coming years to achieve full democracy, continued economic growth and social progress.

It is now commonplace to state that globalisation imposes constraints on national decision-making. Indeed, we are limited by the fact that we live in an ever more interdependent world, that, in addition, left behind the cold war.

In such a world, what happened in Asia is now affecting us all, and Brazil's troubles are adding difficulties to our economic performance.

Although there is some uncertainty regarding emerging markets, Chile maintains sound macroeconomic fundamentals. Despite the decline caused by external shocks on Chile's rate of growth during the last trimester of 1998 and the first quarter of this year, Chile will begin to slowly recuperate its dynamism towards the second semester.

The rate of growth will be somewhat below 3 per cent. Trade exposure to East

**Mining copper -
one of many
exports today**

Asia has caused concern as recession in Japan and South Korea has affected two key export markets; but this is not a serious obstacle. The fall of commodity prices is a more substantial issue, as the price of copper has dropped; but it will rebound. Chilean exports in 1999 are likely to rise about 5 per cent, due to both moderate price increases and the physical expansion of volumes. The current account deficit will decline to about 4.6 per cent of GDP (as compared to 6.2 per cent in 1998).

I believe that foreign investors will know that it is worth assigning a premium to the solid economic performance of our country, despite a temporary slowdown.

In a globalised world we will have to export more and better, emphasising the generation of good quality jobs, the contribution of exports to domestic growth and productive investment. Our financial opening should not be without some controls and will have to take into account domestic stability, as well as entrepreneurial, social and productive development. In a similar sense, we must also advance further in the modernisation of production, export capacity and labour in our economy, to make the country less vulnerable to the downswings of the globalised economy.

Despite globalisation, only 15 per cent of the world GDP travels across borders, and half of that 15 per cent is exchanged between neighbouring countries. This means that geography still counts for a great deal. For a relatively small country like Chile, whose value added by exports represents around 35 per cent of GDP, this is quite important. It means that we must continue on the track of regional integration with our neighbours in the Mercosur and the hemisphere, making compatible a decisive commitment to the region with Chile's feature as a global trader. Our voice will be felt louder if it is in tune with our natural partners in the region.

To summarise, I am optimistic about the future of Chile. We will certainly face difficulties: some inherited from our own traumatic past, others derived from external conditions. But, I believe that we have a solid economy, valuable human resources and a citizenry that wants to contribute to build a more democratic, egalitarian and prosperous society. This is our challenge for the new millennium. ♦

*Socialist Affairs traces the life of
South Africa's new President*



Thabo Mbeki

Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, like his parents before him, has given his life to the cause of democracy in South Africa.

He was born in the Transkei in June 1942 to two teachers who brought him up in an atmosphere of culture and learning in a house full of books. His father, Govan, was a leading figure in the democratic struggle in the Eastern Cape and he had no illusions about the sorts of sacrifice that he would be called upon to make. Consequently his parents made a decision to share the upbringing of their son with family and friends. It was a wise one since Govan was to be arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment by the white dictatorship and was only released in 1987.

The young Thabo had already launched upon a political career, joining the Youth League of the African National Congress, when he was fourteen. At 20 under the orders of the ANC he left South Africa going first to Tanzania and then on to England where he completed a master's degree in economics at Sussex University and became prominent in the students' organisation of the ANC in exile. In London he worked in the offices of the late Oliver Tambo and Yusuf Dadoo and at 28 was sent to the USSR for military training.

Though trained as a soldier he embraced the arts of politics and diplomacy serving as assistant secretary of the Revolutionary Council in the Zambian capital Lusaka and representing the ANC in Botswana and Swaziland, two countries with frontiers with apartheid South Africa which were very important in the liberation struggle. From 1975 he represented the Congress in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country. In 1978 it was time to rejoin Oliver Tambo, the ANC leader whose political secretary he became. It was as director of information for the Congress that he started to become better known in the world and did much to ensure that the world opinion almost everywhere became opposed to apartheid.

It was unsurprising therefore that in 1989 he was appointed head of the department of international affairs and became a key figure in the ANC's

negotiations with the white régime in Pretoria.

When Nelson Mandela emerged from prison on Robben Island, not far from Cape Town, Mbeki's role grew in importance. After the 1994 general election he was chosen by Mandela to become first deputy president of the newly formed Government of National Unity and when, two years later, the National Party, which had

hitherto been the political vehicle of the whites, withdrew from that government, Mbeki was left as sole deputy president.

In December 1997 at the ANC's fiftieth congress at Mafikeng he took over the ANC presidency from Mandela beside whom he sat in the yellow t-shirt of the Congress. He has underlined the supreme need for reconciliation among the races in his country. Speaking in Cape Town at a joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament on the question of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission he declared, 'The defining parameter in our continuing struggle for national unity and reconciliation is the question of race. For many years to come, we will be able to measure the distance we have travelled towards the accomplishment of these objectives by the degree to which we have succeeded to close the great racial divides which continue to separate our communities.'

He is also committed to open government. Speaking at the inauguration of the government web site in Pretoria he said, 'Many people round the world are continuously interested to know what is happening in South Africa. Sometimes the spotlight focuses on areas that are somewhat painful and embarrassing to us as a country. But in the end it is important that the rest of the world itself should get as accurate picture as possible.'

Meanwhile Mandela's successor has not forgotten his economic training. He has railed against the corruption and the damage bribery did to South Africa. Promoting different initiatives, he has also been deep in discussions with the Russians about the future of the diamond market which is of prime importance to his country.

*Learning - in a
theatre of war*

*Carl Lidbom, Chair of the
SIMEC Working Group on the
Kurdish Question, discusses
the concerns facing the
Kurdish people*



13

Anthony Taylor/Panos Pictures

The pressing problems of a unique culture

The Kurdish question is often on the international agenda. But Western governments are not keen on tackling it. It seems insoluble. Every time a glimmer of hope of finding a solution appears, it disappears again straight away.

Turkey's limping democratic regime - with a parliament and a government dependant on the goodwill of the generals - as well as the Turks' failings in their respect for human rights are highly embarrassing for Turkey's friends in Europe, indeed for all those who would like to see Turkey play its full part in Europe. But the desire to protect the West's strategic and economic interests often means that the international community refrains from criticising the Turks when they violate the most elementary rights of the Kurds. This is true not just for Washington but also for several European capitals.

Militarily, and strategically, Turkey is not just the ally of the United States and of several European countries, it has also been for the last two or three years cooperating closely with Israel.

But the international community cannot just turn its back. It cannot avoid the Kurdish problem. The Kurds are too numerous to be ignored. Neither must it be forgotten that there are significant Kurdish minorities in countries other than Turkey, in the countries which occupy strategic positions in a troubled Middle East. I am thinking here of Iran, Iraq and Syria. A lasting peace in the Middle East necessarily implies a solution of the Kurdish problem.

Kurdistan is a well defined geographic area. The geographic situation of Kurdistan allows it to control large water and oil resources. Kurdistan embraces some 30 million Kurds of whom about half live in Turkey. In Iran there are six million Kurds, in Iraq there are four million and in Syria about one and a half million.

It is not just in Turkey that the Kurds are oppressed. They are oppressed also in Iran and Iraq. Nevertheless the current situation is reasonably calm in Iran, and in Iraq the Kurds have enjoyed, since the end of the Gulf War, relative

14 independence. In a zone protected by the Americans, British and the French a Kurdish parliament has been established based in Arbil in the Kurdish part of Iraq. For a long time two parties, which fought each other in ways which were often cruel and violent, disputed power in Iraqi Kurdistan. These two parties have finally reconciled and have now agreed to move towards new elections for their parliament during the summer of 1999. No one knows what will happen when the UN sanctions against Iraq are lifted and this country recovers its full sovereignty throughout its territory, including those provinces peopled by Kurds. But it would be premature to speculate about that issue today. One can only hope that the international community will not abandon the Iraqi Kurds to their fate.

In Turkey the situation is very worrying. In south-east Turkey a real war has been waged for years. Hundreds of thousands of Turkish soldiers have been fighting Kurdish guerrillas. Their mission is to crush the Kurdistan Workers' Party, PKK, and to empty the country by making the civilian population flee. Over the last fifteen years 15,000 people, including 5,000 Turkish troops, have been killed in battles between Turks and Kurds. Three million people have been forced to quit their homes. Four thousand villages have been completely wiped out.

There is no doubt that the PKK has often used questionable methods of great brutality. But the same is true of the methods used by the Turks in their struggle against the Kurdish guerrillas. Both cases can rightly be termed terrorism. The death squads recruited by the extreme right with the permission of the Turkish authorities have carried out 4,500 extra-judicial assassinations. Amnesty International and other humanitarian organisations have often brought the attention of international public opinion to cases of torture and inhuman treatment in Turkish prisons. The judicial system in Turkey does not match international human rights norms.

Turkey has been an independent republic for 75 years. For 52 of those 75 years the Kurds of Turkish Kurdistan have lived in a state of emergency with all that this implies as regards rights failures.

The Turkish Kurds have traditionally lived in the mountains, but the wars and persecutions have forced many of them to go and live in the West of the country, often in the poor suburbs of large cities. In Istanbul alone there are today almost three million Kurds. Many Kurds have gone as refugees to Europe. France has more than 100,000 Kurdish refugees and Germany has more than 500,000. These refugees have not always been welcome in their host countries. This has especially been the case when they have committed offences or - as happens from time to time - there are violent demonstrations involving Turks and Kurds. PKK militants represent only a small minority of the Kurds, but this does not stop them doing much damage to their people in the Western world.

The history of the Kurds is linked to that of the countries of the Mediterranean and thus to those of Europe. Their culture is unique. They have not only their own language but also fine literature with classical works from the XV and XVI centuries. The Kurds are justly proud of them. The language and the literature are a part of their identity. The struggle of the Kurds against the Turks is perhaps chiefly a struggle for the defence of their culture.

The Kurds in Turkey, like many other oppressed peoples, have for long kept alive dreams of national independence. But they have learned to their cost the emptiness of these dreams. They form a minority in all the countries they inhabit. And they know that asking for changes in existing frontiers gets them nowhere. What they seek is a recognition of their identity as a people and a subsequent democratisation of society. They will be content with a certain autonomy within Turkish frontiers. Even the PKK does not seek the creation of an independent Kurdish state.

Throughout history Kurdistan has been more than once a theatre of war

between Turks and Russians. When the Ottoman empire crumbled during the First World War the victors promised the Kurds the creation of an independent Kurdish state in a treaty signed at Sèvres in 1920. But they soon moved to forget that promise which was annulled by a new treaty signed at Lausanne in 1923. Modern Turkey was established under the leadership of Kemal Ataturk whose policy was based on unyielding nationalism. It was a policy of assimilation of the minorities living in Turkey which did not even recognise minimum rights to their language or culture. For Kemal Ataturk the Kurds did not exist as a people. They were Turks living in the mountains with no identity of their own.

That policy has always been rigidly applied, and was observed when the Turkish Republic celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary.

Kurdish is a forbidden language in Turkey which may not be taught in schools. There are no newspapers, radio or television broadcasts in Kurdish. The possession of books in Kurdish or the singing of a Kurdish song in public is in principle an offence which can bring a prison sentence.

When the Turks force civilian populations from the mountains and obliterate whole villages it is part of an ultra-nationalist policy inherited from Ataturk.

It cannot be denied that the Turks have won some military victories in the war that they are waging in the mountains against the PKK guerrillas. And the arrest of their leader, Ocalan, in Kenya has doubtless been seen by the Turks as a great victory, a real triumph in the war against the Kurds.

The events of recent times puts before the Turks a choice which will be crucial to their future. Either they continue their policy of systematic oppression of the Kurds in the hope of a decisive victory. In such a case it would be logical that they condemn Ocalan to death for high treason and it is not inconceivable that they would carry out the sentence.

It cannot be excluded that such a policy would be popular among very many Turks. But what is absolutely certain is that it would make a martyr of Ocalan for the Kurds, even among those who do not support the PKK and that it would provoke a new wave of acts of violence and demonstrations.

It is very possible that Ocalan was right when he said - faced with not finding refuge after leaving Syria - that he would be more useful dead than alive to the Kurdish cause.

The other alternative that the Turks could choose in the present situation would be to work towards some opening in their conflict with the Kurds, to try to start a dialogue at last, not with the PKK - this seems totally ruled out - but with other Kurdish representatives whom they could not consider terrorists; with those Kurds who are ready to live in peace with the Turks as soon as they agree to treat them as a people with its proper identity worthy of respect.

But if it is also true that the Turks have won victories recently in their armed struggle against the PKK this would be the ideal moment to open a dialogue with other groups of Kurds. An opening towards the Kurds would be the best way for the authorities to prepare for Turkish entry into the European Union.

If the Turks really want to become part of Europe they must know that it will only be achieved if their country becomes more democratic and there is greater respect for human rights. ♦

16 Building on our strengths

During the nineties the membership of the International has doubled from close to 70 members in all categories to more than 130. We also now maintain relations and work with some 70 other like-minded parties worldwide, that is a total of over 200 parties.

This process of expansion of the International, which we have managed in the last few years, is a natural consequence of the vision and legacy of men like Willy Brandt, Olof Palme and many others: a vision and legacy which were anchored in the universalisation of our common values.

I learnt with Willy Brandt, during the years that I had the privilege of working with him, that the problems of our comrades in the most remote places of the planet are common and shared problems. And that their solution was dependent in most cases on the commitment and involvement of us all. In leading our efforts for peace during the Cold War, and towards North-South cooperation in the struggle for development, Brandt instilled in our International a vision of one humanity.

This has been the basis upon which the International has so greatly expanded beyond its earlier European limits. With that special combination of actors in the front line, side by side, with those who care, who share responsibilities, we have given meaning to our International, to the values and principles we stand for.

With this concept of global solidarity, of a common agenda, that the problems of others are also our problems, its architecture has been advanced today in every region of the world. In this process of real internationalisation, social democracy has gained in influence and credibility as a political force. And so, the 'quantitative' aspect of our organisation has become a 'qualitative' one.

Now the task before us is one of consolidating and deepening the engagement of our members with this very different International which includes new actors, new issues and new realities.

We need to continue deepening and strengthening the global character and the new multifaceted nature of today's International. We need to harness the potential of our members to strengthen our common work, and also to bring in every perspective, so enriching our political answers and initiatives.

At this time of greater interdependence and of a need for structured, common work and proposals, we can take pride in the fact that we are now present through our members in all regions of the world.

The challenge is to work more closely together, developing our organisation and strengthening our commitment to a global vision. In the age of globalisation and of the globalisation of politics, we should be mindful that our success will depend, as well, on our unity of purpose and our efforts to coordinate on a world scale.

The member parties of our organisation are geographically diverse, but they also come from countries diverse in terms of their size, scale of economies, stages of development and political systems.

Key to the working of our International is its ability to address the problems posed by this diversity in an integrated way. Thanks to our accumulated experience, we are more capable of finding the right responses.

We have widened our vision so that every issue finds its place on the International's agenda, from Africa to Central and Eastern Europe, from efforts for peace in the Middle East to democracy in Malaysia - we include the local scope as well as a global outlook.

Nevertheless, at the end of the nineties the world has gone through changes in a way that makes it less and less ordered.

While the world and its economy go forward ever more globally, on occasions one has the feeling that political responses are ever more local, weakening the

Luis Ayala, Secretary General, looks at the workings of the Socialist International

*Cementing partnerships -
Geneva Council meeting,
November 1998*



17

Latifa Perry

fabric of global society. Even within our International itself we sometimes come across the concept of 'far away' and 'distant' countries.

In this atmosphere, the mechanisms of global cooperation seem to falter. Within the International we also appear to suffer the consequences. For instance, our resolutions or statements would seem to be undervalued, or underrated, in the eyes of those who consider themselves not directly affected by the issues involved. But we should not lose sight that for the peoples in Algeria, in Peru, in Burma, or in Equatorial Guinea, these expressions of collective will have an enormous value.

Equally, the importance of the International's activities for such countries and beyond should not be underestimated. Our International undeniably serves as a forum, a network in which people meet, make contacts and share experiences. Innumerable initiatives, programmes and bilateral projects for interaction have resulted from these contacts and from these meetings convened by our organisation.

This cementing of partnerships and networks is also very much the outcome and product of our work.

It is reasonable to ask what more the International can do at a practical level, for example lending support to a party in difficulty, or assisting member parties during elections in newly established democracies. We can step up our efforts to highlight certain world situations, we can channel energies to address these matters, and we can provide an international platform for drawing attention to the issues.

But we have yet to properly equip our organisation to do more; we have not provided ourselves with the means, nor the mechanisms. This is an issue which has been with us for a long time; we need to examine it and go forward with proposals.

One important aspect of advancing the aims of the organisation is to provide it with a sound financial basis, thus empowering it to carry out its work. The payment of a fee by the members is crucial to this: it is a normal and a natural way to finance an organisation, and provides the International with its independence and autonomy and greatly assures its credibility.

We have left behind us the times of large deficits, the piling up of debts, and of budgets and financial documents with restricted circulation. We now live in

18 times of balanced income and expenditure, of living within our means, of public accounts and of transparency in our financial affairs. We have also succeeded in spreading the financial responsibility among all the members of the organisation.

Yet we have failed collectively in two things. Our operational funds have effectively decreased, with a number of parties paying the same, or lower, fees than ten years ago. Secondly, there are a number of parties which do not fulfil this condition of membership.

Nevertheless throughout the nineties we have managed to utilise scarce resources in an effective way, carrying out an increased number of activities successfully.

There can be no doubt in anyone's mind that the question of how our International will widen its financial base is a task that should not be postponed but needs to be addressed and carried out in a proper manner, because wherever we look to increase our current capabilities, the organisation will need to have more funds at its disposal.

Alternative funding is part of the solution if it is open, if there is a consensus on how to go about this process, and only if it is a stable, sustainable source of finance. But it cannot be, in my view, a substitute for the membership fees which continue to be the price to be paid if we are to guarantee our credibility.

Furthermore, member parties cannot contribute less while asking the International to do more.

Why not create, for instance, as has often been suggested, a fund for democracy, for training schemes, for electoral programmes? Why not work towards these goals, together with, whenever possible, foundations of our member parties? Why not pool such resources and energies?

The International has the potential to do, and to be, as much as its members are prepared to empower or enable it to do.

In the life of the International, different times have required different responses. We have managed to reflect in the presidium our global nature, but we have not been able to accommodate the idea of giving some Vice-Presidents greater and more specific responsibilities to improve the effectiveness of the body, although of course a number of Vice-Presidents have assumed responsibilities as chairs of committees.

The possibility of a small group of Vice-Presidents, along with the President and the Secretary General, working together to further the work of the presidium is worth exploring.

The meetings of the International must continue to be democratic fora for reaching decisions with the participation of all. Our Councils highlight our diversity in which all our member parties contribute to our vitality and our unique ability to address today's challenges.

It is in the nature of our democratic procedures that member parties can always make proposals on how the Council meetings are organised and it is important that we maintain the integrity of the Council.

When we think of the Council of course we turn to our many committees, which it establishes. They inform and move forward the work of that body at every meeting. Our committees provide important and searching analysis, whether on specific themes or on regional developments, and, of course, because the world is changing rapidly and we need to keep apace with it, the status of our committees should continue to be reviewed after every Congress.

As our structures reflect who we are, it is important to note the increasing number of women playing crucial roles in the life of our organisation and we need to ensure that they are fully integrated and represented in all the bodies of our International.

An issue uppermost in our minds is that of communications, image and visibility of our International. We have to start to recognise today that the International is far more visible than it was in the past, but nobody should be

satisfied with where we are now.

The very growth of the International has prompted great interest in some regions of the world - for instance, anyone who was in Romania, or Senegal, during our recent meetings will have seen the enormous attention we received in the press.

In Latin America, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, people want to know more about us and there is much interest in our activities, from Tbilisi to Bamako, from Caracas to Katmandu, and this is reflected in the press coverage.

Nevertheless, we receive less attention in the big media centres, in Western Europe and North America. These are highly competitive news markets, where news is becoming a commodity, where journalists interview each other and where the focus is on the messenger rather than on the message.

Potentially we are now at a point in Western Europe where the dominance of our parties in government can improve the situation. Social democracy worldwide is now a mandatory point of reference and this affords more opportunities to raise our profile, but requires the commitment and active involvement of all our leaders.

So in many parts of the world we are newsworthy, but how do we make our message have more impact?

A concerted communications strategy should include a greater role for our members in their own countries, who could give greater visibility to the work of the International.

With our scarce resources, the International has managed a number of things in this area.

When we talk today of the presence of the International on the worldwide web and using the Internet as a tool for communication, we are discussing an already well-established presence dating from 1995. It is a well-used resource: for example, since our last Council meeting in November until today, close to 400,000 visits to our pages have been registered.

The section of our magazine on the trilingual website has been a highly cost effective way of achieving a long term aim of providing *Socialist Affairs* in French and Spanish, as well as in English.

Of course we have to continue moving forward on this, be open to change and new ideas. We are already working, for example, on the setting up of the intranet for our organisation.

However, at the same time within our concept of 'one world' we should be aware that a number of our members do not have access yet to this technology, and as a democratic imperative, we have to actively invest in helping our members to be able to take advantage of new technologies.

The documentation we produce, reports, newsletters, circulars, and other materials, guarantee accessibility for all our members. A great deal of care and effort is taken to ensure the quality of these documents as they are important information tools.

In my view, for the International to move forward we must bear in mind four key points. Success depends upon a real strengthening of the global and truly international nature of our organisation; maintaining a unity of purpose and our common vision; enhancing cooperation among our member parties and strengthening the capabilities of the organisation; and finally, reinforcing the democratic procedures, inclusion, integration and our common will. ♦

20 A hurricane passes

At the end of October 1998 Mitch the most terrible hurricane to have hit the American continent did severe damage to three Central American countries. This meteorological phenomenon registered the highest possible classification and the speed of the winds was higher than any others before.

It stayed for three days on one of the paradise islands of Honduras and then swept across almost all the country's territory from north-east to south-west, passing through the centre. It stormed for three hundred kilometres across the whole of Honduras and parts of Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The damage it caused was gigantic. In only five days it dropped approximately 300 hundred cubic kilometres of rain which burst riverbanks, flooded lagoons and lakes, carried away villages, cities, bridges, roads, productive areas and everything that stood in the way of the water and the mountains of mud that it moved. In Honduras alone 1,400,000 people were affected, with 10,000 deaths and 15,000 disappearances. In the capital Tegucigalpa, the formerly romantic rivers and streams which cross it all broke their banks at the same time and produced havoc the magnitude of which surpasses the imagination.

By way of comparison the number of people affected had the United States suffered to the same extent would have reached 60 million. It made more than one visiting foreign dignitary exclaim, 'It's a tragedy of biblical proportions'.

The vulnerability of countries was laid bare; their enormous social problems came to the surface; extreme poverty was on hand with its enormous burden of distress; richer people were hit as never before; many middle class people still held their property deeds but had neither house nor land; the lower classes saw their already inhuman level of survival dropping even further; the gross domestic product fell sharply; per capita national income slumped to the levels of some years ago and history shouted, 'reconstruction has to go hand in hand with transformation', 'things have got to be done differently', 'a new way has to be built and not looked for'.

Mitch caused nearly three times as much damage as the major earthquake in Guatemala in 1976, and more than twelve times the havoc wrought by El Niño in Central America. (See box.)

Jorge Arturo Reina, President of the Liberal Party of Honduras, tells of the damage to three countries inflicted by an exceptional natural phenomenon

Damage wrought by natural disasters in Central America (US\$)

1998	Hurricane Mitch, Central America	6,018 million
1976	Earthquake, Guatemala	2,154 million
1986	Earthquake, El Salvador	1,346 million
1974	Hurricane Fifi, Honduras	1,340 million
1988	Hurricane Juana, Nicaragua	1,159 million
1997/8	El Niño, Central America	475 million
1996	Hurricane César, Costa Rica	210 million



Juan Carlos Ulate/Popperfoto/Reuters

***Vulnerable - but
not defenceless***

These facts speak for themselves but one piece of data is missing for an accurate view of the damage caused by Mitch. No natural phenomenon has caused such damage to the GDP as Mitch did in Central America, especially in Honduras and Nicaragua. In the case of Honduras, 80 per cent of the GDP was affected and the destruction in Nicaragua was equivalent to 33 per cent of the GDP.

Damage to the social structures came to US\$799 million; to the productive structure, US\$3,920 million; to the infrastructure, US\$1,220 million; and, to the environment, approximately US\$67 million.

The recent processes of democratisation have been put to a difficult test because of the sudden worsening of conditions of life, the spread of poverty, the fall in exports and employment and finally due to the physical, economic and social vulnerability of these nations.

In contrast to the vulnerabilities some strengths have become manifest, particularly in Honduras. The fact is that the Honduran people and its government reacted as one, presenting a united front to the tragedy. The confidence that Hondurans have in their institutions is another reason for hope that allowed us to face the disaster in such a way that there was none of the looting that happened in such places as Armenia in Colombia, for instance. The part played by the churches in the distribution of aid, the lack of politicisation of the emergency procedures, the cooperation that was the framework for the rehabilitation process and the state of the process of transformation have allowed the government and civil society to join forces in confronting the great tragedy.

No less important was the attitude of the political parties who agreed among themselves not to politicise aid to the victims and to call a halt to political activity

22 as testimony to their deep concern for the magnitude of the tragedy.

The attack on poverty, the generation of employment, the rehabilitation of production, the creation of new centres of production and the holistic vision of the countries and peoples of Central America are the basic pillars of the Central American process of rebuilding and transformation.

Beside these strengths other dangers emerge - the danger that the Central American people forget the Mitch tragedy. They might start to act again as they did in normal conditions or drop their guard when we have only just begun to rebuild and transform. That would be a mistake with historic consequences. Something which could add to that threat is that the international community could forget little by little the intense solidarity that it showed at the moment of the tragedy.

The great tragedy caused by Mitch carried many lessons for the peoples and governments of Central America. These lessons must be learned with care and must light the way forward toward a globalisation with all its dangers and possibilities.

If the process of globalisation that we are living out ever more intensely finds us uneducated, untrained, unproductive, uncompetitive and deprived of national identity it will create the effects of a destructive social tornado. If on the other hand we are aware and armed with national identity, high morale and developed abilities, the will to reduce poverty and improve income distribution, a democratic vocation and we are determined to reduce social inequalities, the winds of the tornado will moderate into something that will enable us to go forward to a future of humanity, prosperity and an ecologically sustainable environment.

It is that fight that we are waging. ◆

Hugh O'Shaughnessy reviews

Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa

by **Tor Sellström**
Uppsala, Nordiska
Afrikainstitutet, 1999
ISBN 91 7106 430 0

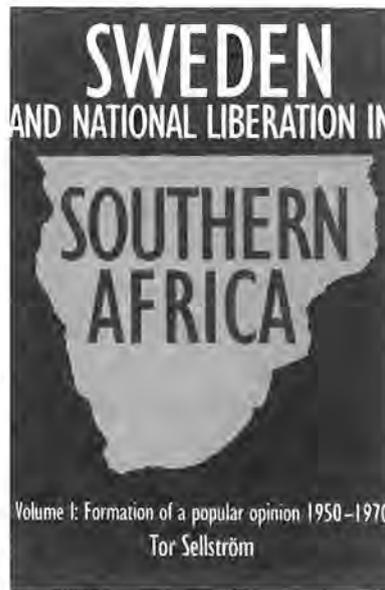
Liberation in Southern Africa: Regional and Swedish Voices

by **Tor Sellström**
Uppsala, Nordiska
Afrikainstitutet, 1999
ISBN 91 7106 438 9

The guiding role that Sweden, and in particular the Swedish Social Democratic party, a member of the Socialist International, have often played in Europe's relations with the developing countries has long been known. It has been as much a source of pride to democratic socialists in the northern hemisphere as it has been a headache to dictatorships in the south and their supporters elsewhere.

In these two exhaustive yet very readable volumes Tor Sellström, a man with ample experience on the ground, sets out the record of Swedes, within and outside the Social Democratic Party, in the liberation struggles on Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe from the earliest times.

Very usefully for those of us who are not Swedes, the author in his first volume, written by him, begins by describing the circumstances which favoured



Swedish activity in support of the liberation struggles. In these as in most of the rest of the story the figure of the late and lamented Olof Palme appears with great prominence. As head of division in the Cabinet office in 1962 he coordinated Government Bill No.100 which became known, the author tells us, as 'the bible of Swedish development aid'.

Its character was admirably set forth as it declared, 'The growing sense of solidarity and responsibility across the borders is an expression of a deeper understanding that peace, freedom and prosperity are not national concerns, but increasingly universal and indivisible. The idealistic motives behind development assistance are thus at the same time highly realistic.'

The Bill was the foundation of subsequent activity which led

Sweden to tread a path very different from other Western powers. Amusingly Sellström recalls that in a review of policies toward Southern Africa initiated by Richard Nixon in 1969 the president's then security adviser, later Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger concluded, 'the whites are [there] to stay' and 'the only way that constructive change can come about is through them'. How quaint and how misguided do such ideas seem in a year when the first black president of South Africa hands over peacefully to the second after well organised elections based on universal suffrage.

Sellström's second volume is a storehouse of views from the widest perspectives in Southern Africa and Sweden, collected by the author in interviews. Marcelino dos Santos of Mozambique on Europe, NATO, Portugal and the independence struggle; Craig Williamson, the unsuccessful intelligence agent tells of the white South Africans' dirty tricks; Paulo Jorge of Angola talks of the help, free of conditions, that the Angolans received from Sweden and other Nordic countries; Pierre Schori describes the role played by Zambia and Tanzania, in which Palme and Ingvar Carlsson were particularly interested, in building bridges between his country and those of Southern Africa. And there are dozens of others. Nor is the role of Bernt Carlsson, one time Secretary General of the Socialist International, later UN Commissioner for Namibia, forgotten.

Given his recent accession to the

South African presidency the words of Thabo Mbeki, recorded here in 1995 when he was director of information, secretary of presidential affairs and of international affairs, are particularly interesting on the question of the balance between humanitarian help and political help offered from outside to the ANC.

He says, 'The material, humanitarian assistance was very important, but it was that political stance that was critical to the people inside the country and to the people outside the country. For instance, when the issue of the legitimacy of the South African regime arose, with a whole range of implications, someone like Olof Palme would say that 'the reason why I support the right of the people of South Africa to fight for their own liberation is that I do not believe that the South African regime is legitimate. We are not protesting against bad things done by an entity which otherwise is legitimate.'

Once you had gone beyond that to say: 'We do not recognise the legitimacy of this government and the system that it is defending; let us rise against it and get rid of it', the position of the ANC inside the country and elsewhere changed, even in terms of the armed struggle.'

These two volumes are to be greatly welcomed. They are the first of a series which will cover the involvement of the Nordic countries as a whole in Southern Africa. If the rest are up to the standard of these, students of international politics will be fortunate indeed.

La Historia Oculta del Régimen Militar: Memoria de una Epoca, 1973 - 1988

by Ascanlo Cavallo, Manuel Salazar and Oscar Sepúlveda Santiago

Grijalbo, 1998
ISBN 956 258 059 8

La Historia Oculta de la Transición: Memoria de una Epoca, 1990-1998

by Ascanlo Cavallo Santiago
Grijalbo, 1998
ISBN 956 258 075 K

As one who witnessed Augusto Pinochet's putsch on Tuesday, 11 September 1973 in Santiago I preserve to this day the memory of the panic and fear which gripped all of us in the Chilean capital on that day and in the successive weeks. I recall the great patches of blood on the roads during the nightly scramble for transport home before the curfew, the troops in the streets and the emptiness of the city once the curfew fell.

The arrest of Pinochet in London last year forced me to recall and reconsider the events and I found that my recollections of those terrible days and the years of dictatorship which followed were still fresh.

But I am, too, more conscious than most of the difficulty of keeping the memories alive over a long period and this difficulty I recognise is one of the principal reasons for welcoming this book.

Assembled and written by journalists who were working at their trade throughout the period, the books capture and retain the immediacy and accuracy of a good

newspaper. They are mercifully free of the political pattern-making which some politicians and academic writers indulge in. The books are a treasure trove for those who were sometimes obliged to follow the antics of the dictatorship from afar, like the present reviewer who is proud of the fact that during the 1980s he was twice refused entry to Chile by Pinochet's police.

The authors are particularly useful on a whole multitude of subjects: the rivalries between Pinochet and his fellow conspirators; the fluctuating relationships between the dictator and the Catholic church; the unpopularity of Colonel Manuel Contreras and his vicious secret policemen among the other factions within the dictatorship and on the moneymaking activities of the Pinochet family. Their description of the incident of the 'Pinocheques', the affair when the dictator threatened to bring the army out on the streets if the civilian government did not stop its investigation of three cheques worth some three million US dollars which were paid to a member of the family by the army as a result of an arms deal, is particularly revealing. The books give the lie to the myth given enormous currency by the dictator's supporters that the family is poor and that funds need to be collected from the general public for Pinochet.

Democrats will be particularly interested in the way in which the civilian governments of Aylwin and Frei handled the difficulties which arose from their relations with dictator as he clung grimly to his military command.

***Patria Humana:
Globalización y socialismo
del siglo XXI***
by **Raimon Obiols**
Barcelona, 1999, Flor del Viento
Ediciones
ISBN 84 89644 42 X

Here is a very refreshing look at modern-day socialism from the pen of a man who is the President of the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya and the Secretary of international relations of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE.

His aim is to contribute to the debate - in Felipe González' Global Progress Commission and elsewhere - on the best way forward for socialism.

The first part of this immensely readable volume is devoted to a consideration of the recent crisis in capitalism as demonstrated in the pricking of the Asiatic bubble, the end of the 'Long Boom' and the Russian crisis. After revealing the emptiness of the doctrines of the neo-liberals - with ample quotations from Baroness Thatcher and her close adviser Keith Joseph - he turns to the task facing socialists as they seek to present the alternatives to the failed conservative experiments.

Optimistic in attitude, Obiols quotes Jean-Paul Fitoussi who commented, 'If they abandon the dogmas of the conservative revolution, everything is possible again, including a progressive revolution.'

'Time presses', the author writes.

His preference, at least as far as the European social democratic movement is concerned, is for a European programme. The new social democratic project must, for instance, 'build a European political power able to set a

social market'.

'It must realise a fairer distribution of the benefits of technical progress in the social field that implies a concerted reduction of work times and an expansion of social services under new forms of association.'

At the same time the author realises the need for a platform of global action. Vital to the formation of that platform, he says, is the re-adoption of the logic of greater equality in a world where at the end of the twentieth century, for instance, the richer countries have gone from being on average nine times as wealthy as the poor ones - the situation which pertained in 1900 - to the situation today where the gap is ninety to one.

Patria Humana: Globalización y socialismo del siglo XXI is itself a totally modern production giving at every turn useful references to the websites of pertinent organisations.

Obiols must have an enormous capacity for reading for his 353 pages brim with quotations and references to the latest work of all sorts of modern author. One of the best of them is a line from the poet Pedro Neruda, 'From today forward your house without doors is the Earth'.



balance between monetary union and economic union. It must aim for full employment through a system which combines the subtle administration of the labour market with the relaunching of macro-economic policies at the European level. It must realise a more equitable distribution of income in order to strengthen social cohesion. It must lighten and render more efficient the welfare state through the development of what Ruffolo defines as a new 'decentralised

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The Socialist International is the worldwide organisation of socialist, social democratic and labour parties. It is the oldest and largest international political association and now brings together 130 parties and organisations from all continents. The Socialist International, whose origins go back to the early international organisations of the labour movement of the last century, has existed in its present form since 1951 when it was re-established at the Frankfurt Congress.

The International 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 late Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of Germany, was President of the Socialist International from 1976 to 1992.

Pierre Mauroy, former Prime Minister of France, was elected President in 1992 and re-elected by the International's XX Congress in 1996. Luis Ayala (Chile), was elected Secretary General by the Stockholm Congress in 1989, and re-elected by the Congress in 1992 and in 1996.

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 from time to time, as well as special conferences on particular topics and issues.

Committees and study groups have been established for work on Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Central and Eastern Europe; Economic Policy, Development and the Environment; Human Rights; Latin America and the Caribbean; Local Authorities; the Mediterranean; the Middle East; Peace, Security and Disarmament; and Finance and Administration. These committees and study groups have specific programmes of work and meet regularly. The Socialist International also frequently sends missions and delegations to various countries or regions.

The Socialist International, as a non-governmental organisation, has consultative status (Category I) with the United Nations, and works internationally with many other organisations.

Full member parties

Social Democratic Party, PSD, Albania
 Socialist Forces Front, FFS, Algeria
 Popular Socialist Party, PSP, Argentina
 People's Electoral Movement, MEP, Aruba
 Australian Labour Party, ALP
 Social Democratic Party of Austria, SPÖ
 Barbados Labour Party
 Socialist Party, PS, Belgium
 Socialist Party, SP, Belgium
 Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR-New Majority, Bolivia
 Democratic Labour Party, PDT, Brazil
 Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, BSDP
 Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP, Burkina Faso
 New Democratic Party, NDP/NPD, Canada
 African Party of Cape Verde's Independence, PAICV
 Party for Democracy, PPD, Chile
 Social Democratic Radical Party, PRSD, Chile
 Socialist Party of Chile, PS
 National Liberation Party, PLN, Costa Rica
 Movement for a New Antilles, MAN, Curaçao
 EDEK Socialist Party of Cyprus
 Czech Social Democratic Party, CSSD
 Social Democratic Party, Denmark
 Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, Dominican Republic
 Democratic Left Party, PID, Ecuador
 National Democratic Party, NDP, Egypt
 Mõõdukad, Estonia
 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
 Party of the National Congress of Democratic Movements, KONAKOM, Haiti
 Revolutionary Progressive Nationalist Party of Haiti, PANPRA
 Hungarian Socialist Party, MSZP
 Social Democratic Party, Iceland
 The Labour Party, Ireland
 Israel Labour Party
 MERETZ, Israel
 Democrats of the Left, DS, Italy
 Italian Democratic Socialists, SDI
 Ivory Coast Popular Front, FPI
 People's National Party, PNP, Jamaica
 Social Democratic Party, SDP, Japan
 Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, LSDSP
 Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, Lebanon
 Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, LSDP
 Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, LSAP/POSL
 Democratic Action Party, DAP, Malaysia
 Malta Labour Party
 Mauritius Labour Party
 Party of Democratic Revolution, PRD, Mexico
 Mongolian Social Democratic Party, MSDP
 Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP, Morocco
 Labour Party, PvdA, Netherlands
 New Zealand Labour Party, NZLP
 Sandinista National Liberation Front, FSLN, Nicaragua
 Social Democratic and Labour Party, SDLP, Northern Ireland
 Norwegian Labour Party, DNA
 Revolutionary Febrerista Party, PRF, Paraguay
 Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland, SdRP
 Union of Labour, UP, Poland
 Socialist Party, PS, Portugal
 Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP
 San Marino Socialist Party, PSS
 Socialist Party, PS, Senegal
 Party of the Democratic Left, SDL, Slovak Republic
 Social Democratic Party of Slovakia, SDSS
 United List of Social Democrats of Slovenia, ZL
 Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE
 Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP
 Social Democratic Party of Switzerland
 Constitutional Democratic Assembly, RCD, Tunisia
 Republican People's Party, CHP, Turkey
 Democratic Socialists of America, DSA, USA
 Social Democrats USA, SDUSA
 Democratic Action, AD, Venezuela

Consultative parties

Radical Civic Union, UCR, Argentina
 Social Democratic Front, SDF, Cameroon
 Liberal Party of Colombia, PLC
 Dominica Labour Party
 Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, Equatorial Guinea
 Fiji Labour Party
 Gabonese Party for Progress, PGP
 SIUMUT, Greenland
 Working People's Alliance, WPA, Guyana
 African Party for Solidarity and Justice, ADEMA/PASJ, Mali
 Mauritius Militant Movement, MMM
 Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, Mexico
 Frelimo Party, Mozambique
 Nepali Congress Party
 Party for Democracy and Socialism of Niger, PNDS
 Pakistan People's Party, PPP
 Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, Panama
 Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP
 Philippines Democratic Socialist Party, PDSP
 Democratic Party of Romania, PD
 Romanian Social Democratic Party, PSDR
 St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party
 St. Lucia Labour Party, SLP
 Unity Labour Party, St. Vincent & the Grenadines
 Popular Unity Movement, MUP, Tunisia

Observer parties

Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA
 ARF Armenian Socialist Party
 Social Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, SDPA
 Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina, SDP BiH
 Botswana National Front, BNF
 Patriotic Front for Progress, FPP, Central African Republic
 M-19 Democratic Alliance, Colombia
 Democratic Party, PD, El Salvador
 Citizen's Union of Georgia, CUG
 Organisation of the People in Struggle, OPL, Haiti
 Hungarian Social Democratic Party, MSZDP
 Janata Dal, India
 Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, PDKI, Iran
 Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, SDUM, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
 Social Democratic Party of Moldova
 Social Democratic Party of Montenegro, SDPM
 Fatah, Territories under Palestinian Authority, Palestine

Fraternal organisations

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

Associated organisations

International Federation of the Socialist and Democratic Press, IFSDP
 International League of Religious Socialists
 International Union of Socialist Democratic Teachers, IUSDT
 Jewish Labour Bund, JLB
 International Confederation of Labour Sports, CSIT
 Parliamentary Group of the Party of European Socialists
 Party of European Socialists, PES
 World Labour Zionist Movement, WLZM



Socialist International Council meets in Buenos Aires

The Socialist International Council will meet in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 25-26 June 1999, hosted by the Popular Socialist Party, PSP, and the Radical Civic Union, UCR, both members of the International.

The main theme of the Council meeting is 'Shaping change' including aspects concerning exercising responsible government, reasserting humanitarian values and promoting policies to serve people. Gathering on the eve of the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union to take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 28-29 June, a number of heads of government and leaders of SI member parties from different regions will participate in the event.

At the opening, delegates will

be welcomed by representatives of the Argentinian member parties. President Pierre Mauroy will address the meeting at the opening and Fernando de la Rúa, Presidential candidate of the Argentinian Alliance, will deliver a speech to the Council delegates.

The Presidium of the International will also meet in Buenos Aires on the eve of the Council on 24 June.

This Council meeting follows the one successfully held in Geneva, where more than three hundred delegates from over a hundred parties took part in discussions on the themes 'Making global markets work for all: the role of governments and institutions in securing a sustainable world economy', and 'Putting peace and democracy first: the cases of the Middle East, Algeria, the Great Lakes region and Kosovo'. (For more detailed

information on the meeting, see Issue 4, Volume 47.)

More than twenty resolutions and statements were adopted at the meeting, which included the declaration 'To regulate globalisation and to globalise regulation' which set out proposals for restructuring the present imbalances in the world economy. Other documents were on developments in the Middle East; on the Kurdish region in Northern Iraq, on Iraq, and on Afghanistan, on the arrest of Abdullah Ocalan; on Morocco, on conflicts in Africa, on Algeria, on Western Sahara, on Equatorial Guinea; on South-East Europe with special reference to the situation in Kosovo, Russia, and on the Caucasus; on Malaysia, Burma and East Timor; on Chile, Peru, Colombia, Central America and the Dominican Republic.

SICEE meeting in Bucharest

Hosted by the SI Romanian member parties, the Democratic Party, PD, and the Social Democratic Party, PSDR, in Bucharest, the Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, met on 5-6 February to focus on two main themes: 'Recent developments in Russia: economic and political perspectives' and 'The process of enlargement of the European Union: analyses and perspectives'.

The meeting was chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Committee, Piero Fassino, Minister of Foreign Trade, of the Democrats of the Left, DS, Italy, and László Kovács, leader of the Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP, and gathered together more than seventy participants representing nearly thirty parties and organisations.

SI Secretary General Luis Ayala said at the opening of the meeting that the International was very happy to return to Romania to continue its work with the 'committed partners' there. At a good time for social democracy in the region, he declared, there was an opportunity to further the

common agenda in the efforts towards a peaceful Europe based on solidarity and cooperation: 'In these times of globalisation not only of the economy but also of a globalisation of politics, we have shared responsibilities and shared duties', he said.

Petre Roman, PD President, gave an overview of the current situation and concerns in his country, calling for 'calm and well-conceived action' in continuing the necessary reform initiatives in all sectors of society. Presenting his party's political project for building Romania as part of an expanding Europe, Roman emphasised the need for good government and for a sense of responsibility among lawmakers.

Welcoming the opportunity to hold the meeting in Romania at a time of consolidation of economic and political transition, due in large part to the efforts of SI member parties there, Piero Fassino, DS, Italy, reiterated the importance of the impact of social democratic principles and values in Central and Eastern Europe at a time of great change

on the continent: 'In these ten years since the collapse of the Berlin Wall,' he commented, 'the need for democracy has become evident. Social democracy is necessary to provide a balance between market requirements and the exigencies of solidarity'.

László Kovács, MSzP, Hungary, added that the region clearly needed stability, 'but there is no stability without democracy, social justice, equality and solidarity'. He noted that Central and Eastern European countries needed strong parties that were able to implement these social democratic principles and values, and were to be helped in these efforts by the work and support of the Committee. The choice of venue of the meeting demonstrated the Committee's keen interest in Romania, and furthermore was an expression of appreciation for the efforts of the Romanian member parties towards the SI's shared goals.

Concluding the opening Sergiu Cunesco, President of the PSDR, added that there was much optimism for social



democracy in his country and in the region. Although the transition had been more difficult than expected due to its lengthy nature and to the lack of understanding of social democracy by two generations raised under communist occupation, Romania continued to make 'slow but very solid progress' and shared the priorities of all European socialists.

SICEE gathered to examine the situation in Kosovo days before the Rambouillet Conference and considered in great detail the political implications of the situation. (For a more recent debate by the Committee on the issues surrounding Kosovo please refer to pages 36-37.)

Having heard reports from representatives of the Russian Social Democratic Union, RSDU, the Socialist Party of Russia and the Yabloko Movement, a resolution on the economic and political perspectives in Russia was adopted, expressing the Committee's 'deep concern at the increasing negative tendencies in the economic and social areas of life in Russian society'. SICEE emphasised that the ongoing crisis was due to mistakes committed during the implementation of Russian reforms, 'above all, the lack of social orientation... which has provoked a sharp fall in the standards of living', along with the 'serious problem of corruption, organised crime and growth of extremism'. Stressing that the deterioration of the social and economic situation aggravated political instability in Russia and public tension could give rise to serious social conflicts, the Committee emphasised the importance of 'the adjustment of public interaction based on mutual trust between all sectors of authority in Russia at all levels'. SICEE

called on the international community to continue effective support of reforms and emphasised that member parties of the SI should offer 'essential support to the political parties, movements or individual candidates in Russia who commit themselves to strengthening democracy effectively'. Finally, the Committee considered it necessary, to support 'the efforts of the Russian government aimed at stabilising the economic and political situation in the country, as well as the efforts aimed at making the legislation, the judicial system, public administration and relations between citizens and the State meet the standards generally applied by democratic nations'.

Speaking on the enlargement of European structures a matter of weeks before Hungary joined NATO along with Poland and the Czech Republic, Co-Chair László Kovács, former Foreign Minister of Hungary, stated that in our time 'non-military components of security and stability play an increasingly important role' and went on to examine the impact and requirements of enlarging the European Union (EU). As a result of discussions involving delegates from applicant countries and member countries the Committee adopted a declaration on the enlargement of the European Union which underlined that the increasing role of the EU at a global level 'requires a long-term vision based on an enhanced ability to develop and promote its values and to manage this change.' The Committee stressed the responsibility of social democrats in shaping the Europe of the future and emphasised that Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) were major active players in the enlargement and restructuring of the EU, underlining the need to respect

the 'global and inclusive membership strategy which 'considers all 11 candidate countries at the same level and with the same rights in the accession process'. SICEE emphasised the need for a 'strengthened pre-accession strategy, for a more effective and structured dialogue, adequate planning and appropriate monitoring mechanisms, together with various financial instruments' in order to create a 'realistic framework'. The Committee made it clear that this future Europe was dependent on the successful modernisation of the CEECs and highlighted the need for 'a balanced approach to both economic innovation and social cohesion, a balance between real non-monopolistic market conditions and social solidarity, between effective economic reforms and social security networks'. The Committee pinpointed equality of opportunities for all, combatting all forms of discrimination, strengthening public responsibility, speeding up the setting up of a framework of state authorities and public institutions to implement economic policies as key to such development within the CEECs. Reaffirming the advantages of enlargement for both member countries and candidate countries, the Committee underlined the need for the institutional reform of the EU and for the enlargement process of the Union to be considered as interactive processes.

It was agreed to hold a meeting of the Committee in Warsaw in mid-September.

'A great human tragedy of enormous historical complexity'



Jasper Young/Panos Pictures

SIMEC Working Group on the Kurdish Question

A meeting of the Middle East Committee Working Group on the Kurdish Question was held in Paris on 5 March to discuss recent developments.

The meeting, chaired by Carl Lidbom, Chair of the Working Group, Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP, was attended by members of the Working Group from the Social Democratic Party, SPÖ, Austria, the Socialist Party, PS, Belgium, the Social Democratic Party, Denmark, the Socialist Party, PS, France, the Social Democratic Party, SPD, Germany, the Democrats of the Left, DS, Italy, along with the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, PDKI. Representatives of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, KDP, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, attended as guests.

In the light of events which had brought the importance of the Kurdish question to international attention, the Working Group issued a declaration expressing concern at the circumstances

surrounding the arrest of Abdullah Ocalan.

The Working Group emphasised Ocalan's right to a fair trial which respected the internationally recognised rules of law: 'In particular the debates should be public and international observers should be able to guarantee that the rights of the accused are fully respected'. Reaffirming that Turkey, a member of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE, a signatory of the Declaration of Barcelona and a candidate country to the European Union, was bound to respect those rules, the Working Group hoped that the international community would impress upon Turkey the importance of that, and agreed to closely follow the proceedings.

The Declaration stated that the Socialist International had never approved of the aims and methods of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, PKK, and its leader, but that they certainly did not justify the methods of

repression used by Turkey.

However, the Declaration continued, the Kurdish question was not limited only to the PKK, nor just to Turkey: 'It is a great human tragedy of enormous historical complexity... The international community, attentive to the fate of other populations, must not lose interest in these people'.

The Working Group firmly hoped that Turkey would use the opportunity of events to lay the foundations for a political settlement of the Kurdish question, which would in turn facilitate the political and peaceful settlement of the Kurdish question in other countries in the region.

The promotion of legal and democratic expression of the Kurdish people was more urgent than ever, the Declaration stated. And it expressed its support for the organisations which work in Turkey in favour of democracy and human rights.

Regional seminars of the Global Progress Commission

On 22-23 March, the Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City, was the venue of a regional seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Global Progress Commission, chaired by Felipe González, Chair of the Commission and a Vice-President of the International.

The meeting, hosted by the SI member parties in Mexico and organised with the SI secretariat, gathered a number of political leaders of the country and from Latin America and the Caribbean, representatives of SI members in the region, academics, people from the worlds of business and culture, and guests from international bodies, from Europe, the United States and the region. Under the title 'Globalisation - Latin American and Caribbean perspectives', participants debated and analysed the impact of globalisation in relation to the open economy, financial crisis and cultural identities.

Addressing the beginning of the meeting the President of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo, wished the participants well in their discussions on this theme of 'major significance for the present and for the future of our nations'.

From the SI members in Mexico, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, Party of Democratic Revolution, PRD, addressed the seminar sharing some reflections on the themes. From the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, Celso Delgado, Executive Secretary of the National Political Council, took the floor.

Felipe González stated his objectives for the Commission and for the work of the seminar. He was looking for, he emphasised, 'sustainable models', which necessarily had to include the social and human aspects of the three dimensions under discussion.

Introducing the first theme,



José Borrell of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, argued that there should be three lines of action to solve potential instability of the global economy: firstly, an end to the over-dependence on strong currencies; secondly, different forms of support by the international community, including lines of credit; and, thirdly, putting into place effective financial structures. What was needed was 'a process of cooperative globalisation'.

Raúl Alfonsín, former President of Argentina, then focused on the problems of governability in the context of open economies and globalisation, highlighting two concerns: internally policies had to be stronger than lobbyists with their agendas and the problem of resignation in the face of overwhelming globalisation.

Shimon Peres, former Prime Minister of Israel and a Vice-President of the SI, praised the work of the Commission in tackling such difficult issues: 'We are not dealing with the way to change a government but with the government of changes in our time', he declared.

Mike Moore, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, agreed

that the challenge was to achieve progress with social cohesion at a time of such dramatic and dynamic change, adding that: 'Far from taking our freedom from us, international treaties and institutions can be the guarantors of our independence'.

Carlos Solchaga, former Economic Minister, PSOE, Spain, took the floor to introduce the debate on financial crisis. He emphasised that any reactions had to be based on realistic foundations. Financial globalisation would go forward as we remained in the very first stages of globalisation, he said. Also, the volatility of markets and the vulnerability affecting economies must be faced: 'Crises are inevitable', he suggested, but measures at a level of international financial architecture should be taken to share costs.

Carlos Slim, a Mexican entrepreneur, looked at the areas of business, investment and work in a globalised world, arguing that international organs could not resolve crises but could better the workings of world markets.

Presenting the theme of cultural identities, Hector Aguilar Camín, a Mexican writer and political scientist, looked at the effect of an uncertain future

that globalisation had presented us with and examined the meaning of traditional leftwing concepts in this new era.

Jesús Díaz, a Cuban writer, proposed that just as nation-states had to be involved in economic policies, so they should participate in supporting national and regional cultural evolution.

Bringing the sessions to a close, González applauded the extraordinarily rich nature of the debates and emphasised the difficulties of adapting to the transformation from an industrial society to an information society in the course of one generation alone.

Previously a regional Africa seminar had been held in Dakar, hosted by the Socialist Party, PS, of Senegal on 25-26 January. Delegates from some twenty-five African parties assembled to focus on three themes central to social democracy in the region and beyond, within the framework of the Commission's work. The first theme, 'Globalisation and Africa', explored the nature of global forces and regional concerns, how the region could manage new possibilities and complexities of globalisation and put forward strategies for integration. 'Governability and social cohesion' was the second theme, laying emphasis on the role of the state, maximising resources and institutions and investing in people. The third theme tackled 'Policies and Priorities for Africa', with respect to deepening and developing a democratic culture, the dynamics of the multi-party system and democratic socialism in the political context of Africa today.

Speaking at the opening of the meeting, Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General, paid tribute to the work of the SI member parties in Africa in contributing to the architecture



Latifa Perry

of the International and 'building a message of hope and commitment' in the continent.

Ousmane Tanor Dieng, PS First Secretary and Chair of the Africa Committee, welcomed the opportunity of the meeting to focus on specific issues and priorities for Africa within the context of worldwide socialist responses to globalisation. He highlighted two matters of great concern for the region: strengthening the rule of law and improving the process of governance, and consolidating economic bases within the dynamics of integration.

Felipe González, Chair of the Global Progress Commission, introduced the debate by outlining the task of the Commission to develop a new platform of ideas. Clearly, he said, different regional realities would put the emphasis for change on different priorities, but no nation would remain unaffected by global upheavals, not only with regard to economic and financial instability, but also in terms of social and political insecurity.

Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Prime Minister of Mali and leader of the African Party for Solidarity

and Justice, ADEMA-PASJ, spoke of the work of the Commission, of which he is a member. In the face of the shock and harshness of globalisation it was up to social democrats to provide concerted and concrete answers to the present challenges, he asserted. (Keita writes on pages 4-7.)

Pedro Pires, leader of the African Party of Cape Verde's Independence, PAICV, and Vice-Chair of the Africa Committee, commented that African success depended on a 'common concerted effort, with solidarity between States and progressive African parties to fight against the factors of war, armed conflict and instability, which constitute brakes to development'.

Joseph Ki-Zerbo, leader of the Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP, Burkina Faso, gave a historical perspective on the dilemmas facing Africa with regard to globalisation.

Delegates from the numerous African countries represented contributed to the discussions on the many aspects raised by the three themes on the agenda. (For a continued debate on globalisation and the African continent, refer to pages 34-35.)



Africa Committee in Bamako

A meeting of the Africa Committee took place in Bamako on 29-30 March, hosted by the African Party for Solidarity and Justice, ADEMA-PASJ, Mali, with the participation of more than sixty delegates from over twenty countries, including a number of party leaders and ministers of state. Participants gathered to continue discussions on the impact of globalisation and Africa, and also took as themes for debate: 'Regional conflicts: securing peace in the continent'; and 'Furthering and promoting democracy: the priorities of today'.

Prime Minister of Mali and leader of ADEMA-PASJ, Ibrahima Boubacar Keita, addressed the opening of the meeting and outlined some key issues for consideration. Africa was, he said 'in urgent need of re-examining its priorities for the immediate future'. The African continent had the opportunity now to take its place successfully in the world economy: 'If that does not

happen, its position on the sidelines, already worrying enough, will worsen and become irreversible - even fatal'. (Keita writes on globalisation in Africa on pages 4-7.)

SI Secretary General Luis Ayala underlined the pride the International took in meeting in Mali. The SI was well placed, he said, to 'make a difference', not only in Europe, but also on the African continent 'where our shared ideals and values are advanced each day by our African member parties'. Globalisation, he recognised, was clearly a defining issue, but any development depended on guaranteeing peace in the region, as well as promoting democratic government for all Africans.

Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Minister of State, First Secretary of the Senegalese Socialist Party and Chair of the Committee, then set out the work ahead. It was the Committee's role, he stated, to ensure that the African continent found its true

expression in the heart of the SI and the themes on the agenda would certainly contribute to this process. In a world of change which touched on all spheres of life - economic, political, cultural, ethical and ecological - ways of thinking and acting were being put in question, and, he added, it was our responsibility to work towards enabling people to seize future opportunities.

As a result of its debate the Committee issued a statement on globalisation from the African perspective which proposed a series of principles and strategies to allow 'African nations to take control of their own future'. The Committee stated that given the decidedly neo-liberal context within which the globalisation process was unfolding, and given the massive handicaps faced by the African continent in achieving equal treatment in an increasingly deregulated commercial environment, and it agreed that the African continent should make known and promote

its position on this issue to the World Trade Organisation from which, for the time being, it had been excluded: 'Only by having an effective presence at the heart of this organisation will it be possible for Africans to discuss the ways in which their produce and local industries are treated since, at this point in time, they have no real protection at all, particularly when compared with that afforded the produce and industries of the countries of the North'.

Expressing its deep concern at the low volume of direct investment in Africa, the Committee insisted in particular on the need to improve the 'mechanisms whereby direct foreign investment is earmarked and also on the urgent need for a special initiative to be undertaken by the international community on Africa's behalf with regard to direct foreign investment, whether public or private funds are involved'.

Addressing its concern for the way in which the capacity for analysis, forward-looking planning, project implementation and evaluation by the State was being systematically dismantled, the Committee made clear the need 'to enhance the skills of local government itself, at the same time as strengthening civil society' in 'programmes designed to create effective management of public affairs'.

The statement actively supported the implementation of programmes of massive investment in new technologies, 'which should include the creation of a scientific and technological culture at the heart of all strata of society, and in particular among the young'.

Given the instability of markets and economies around the world, the Committee affirmed the urgent need for analytical instruments which were focused

on the medium and long term, 'since these are the only ones capable of seeing beyond the policies of short-term adjustments, in order to set in motion a dynamic of economic and social development'.

In order to begin a new era of equality and social justice, all African countries were encouraged to improve the quality of their economic growth. The search for a more equitable and more balanced growth, the statement went on, should be accompanied by other objectives such as the improvement of the structure of public expenditure.

In their search for balanced development, to correct the asymmetric effects of globalisation on their rural areas, African countries should promote policies of land management which are based on international cooperation, it continued.

The Committee declared that Africa should strive to preserve its unique cultural identity and its ethical values in the light of the onslaught of a 'sub-culture' orchestrated by globalisation.

The Committee actively supported the total cancellation, or at least the conditional suspension, of the debt of the African nations, through a process of re-conversion which would allow these countries to direct their resources towards social investment which in turn would create human capital, itself recognised as a determining factor of success in the globalisation process.

Supporting the idea of having an Economic Security Council within the present system of the United Nations, the statement called on the members of the Socialist International who are in power in the various nations of the world, in particular in Europe, to work towards the implementation of such a project.

It was the firm advice of the Committee to the African nations to reinforce the political, economic and cultural ties which bind them together and, in particular, it called on them to become a strong and lasting alliance which would be capable of renegotiating the impending terms of the Lomé Convention, thereby allowing the interests of the African peoples to be taken into account.

A resolution was also adopted expressing the Committee's profound disquiet about the renewal of hostilities and the growing instability in Angola: 'this new wave of violence, with its litany of deaths and destruction of infrastructure, which is hindering the process of economic and social development of the country'. The Committee expressed its condemnation of UNITA's flouting internationally-recognised agreements and reaffirmed its solidarity with the legitimate government of Angola, reiterating its fraternal support for SI-member the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA.

Resolutions were also adopted on the social and political crisis in Burkina Faso, which supported and congratulated the recently formed collective of popular democratic organisations and political parties, which includes the Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP, a member party of the SI; one reaffirming the International's support for the democratic opposition forces, especially for the SI-member Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, in Equatorial Guinea and deploring the total absence of democratic rules in the recent elections there; and, another resolution calling for the release of Alpha Condé in Guinea.

SICEE special meeting on Kosovo

The Socialist International Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, held a special one-day meeting on Kosovo in Rome on 17 April 1999. The meeting, hosted by SI-member the Democrats of the Left, DS, of Italy, was jointly chaired by Piero Fassino, Italian Minister of Foreign Trade, DS, and László Kovács, leader of the Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP, Co-Chairs of SICEE.

The meeting examined in detail developments in Kosovo, with the participation of the President and Secretary General of the Socialist International, and, amongst others, the leader of the DS of Italy, Walter Veltroni, the Deputy Prime Minister of Albania, Ilir Meta, representatives of member parties from Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and delegates from the Social Democratic Party in Croatia, the Party of European Socialists, PES, the Parliamentary Group of the PES and the International Union of Socialist Youth, IUSY.

Piero Fassino, DS, Italy, put forward some considerations for the Committee. Firstly, the character of the crisis meant that NATO intervention was not an action in isolation but part of an on-going crisis. The question was how far to continue with this action. Secondly, how should the international community proceed? Faced by the rejection of initiatives hitherto, was there room for more proposals? Thirdly, how should the alternative democratic forces in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be supported? Lastly, there was the continuing dilemma of humanitarian aid.

SI President Pierre Mauroy welcomed the opportunity given by this meeting of socialists and

social democrats directly concerned with the situation. The SI, he said, worked within the framework of the United Nations, and was very much a part of this collective consensus moving towards a solution to the crisis. He recognised that the international community had spared no efforts in reaching a political solution, but drew on the lessons of history which showed that non-, or late, intervention could lead to catastrophic consequences.

Ilir Meta, Socialist Party, SPA, Albania, demonstrated the huge impact of the campaign on his country: the 350,000 refugees so far constituted 16 per cent of the population, with a further 100,000 expected, and were putting a significant strain on Albania's limited resources. He could envisage that the crisis easily turning into catastrophe, with the destabilisation of Albania and neighbouring countries. Democratisation, cooperation and integration had to be encouraged in the whole region, he emphasised.

Pavli Zeri, Social Democratic Party, PSD, Albania, a member of the coalition government and a member party of the SI, agreed the already tragic situation could become disastrous, adding that long-term plans and help for countries in the region were needed.

László Kovács, MSzP, Hungary, stressed that the role of the SI and this Committee was to keep working for the traditional values of the International, at the forefront of the struggle for democracy, human rights, minority rights, international peace, security and stability; to analyse the situation and explore ways and means to solve or at least ease the crisis; to encourage governments led by member parties to seek a political framework and support such

initiatives; to urge Milosevic to comply with the demands of the international community; to encourage other governments and intergovernmental organisations and all non-governmental organisations to focus on the refugee issues. The victory of an inhuman policy, he concluded, could not be allowed to happen.

Walter Veltroni, DS, Italy, declared that the situation represented a challenge of historical importance for the European region, and for the socialist-led governments in the European Union: 'It is a challenge that involves us'. With firmness and determination, he proposed, the international community had to act on three fronts: firstly, defining a common idea of a security and defence policy of Europe; secondly, moving towards a settlement in the Balkan region through a European process; and, thirdly, strengthening the discussions on the initiatives of humanitarian intervention.

Following its discussions, the Committee unanimously approved a declaration on Kosovo which regretted the failure of attempts by the international community to reach a politically negotiated solution, due to the positions taken by Milosevic, and condemned his refusal to meet an agreement.

Strongly condemning the deportations and forced expulsions suffered by Kosovo's civilian population at the hands of the military troops of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, it affirmed its support for all the efforts undertaken in response to the humanitarian emergency in the region, particularly in Albania and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Declaration reiterated that 'every woman and every man must be respected, regardless of their culture, religion, nationality',



Francesco Garufi

and refused 'any attempt to base the existence of states on ethnic purity'. The objective of the military action undertaken by NATO, it confirmed, was 'to stop the violence and the ethnic cleansing carried out against the people of Kosovo and to open the way towards a negotiated solution to the conflict'.

SICEE reiterated the position of the General Affairs Council of the European Union and supported the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which envisaged halting NATO's military offensive based on the conditions as follows: The authorities in Belgrade immediately should put an end to the repression taking place in Kosovo; stop the activities of their military and paramilitary forces along with withdrawing from Kosovo; accept unconditionally the return of the refugees and displaced persons; accept a political framework of negotiation for Kosovo in conformity with the conclusions of the Rambouillet Conference; and, accept an international military peacekeeping presence aimed at guaranteeing security.

It was up to the Yugoslav authorities, the declaration stated, 'to fully accept international demands and begin immediately with their implementation; this would permit a suspension of military action by NATO and pave the way for a political solution'.

Russia's willingness to work for a solution to the conflict was welcomed and the need to continue to include Russia in the search for such a solution on the basis of the proposal put forward by Kofi Annan was reiterated.

The Committee underlined the need to implement 'consultative mechanisms for crisis management which would enable all the countries in the region to be fully involved in the decisions taken by the international community'.

It reiterated that the functions and powers that the Yugoslav Constitution recognises for Montenegro need to be fully respected, and expressed the need 'for all countries of the region to respect the principle of the inviolability of existing borders'.

The Declaration denounced the acts of repression against the media, prominent figures in civil society and the democratic political sectors in Serbia, and invited all Socialist International member parties to cooperate concretely to reactivate civic and democratic structures for the establishment of a democratic regime in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

SICEE appealed to all member parties to work towards these goals, to contribute to the search for a political and diplomatic solution to the crisis, and to back every initiative which the United Nations and the Security Council,

together with regional organisations, would consider useful to put into effect a political solution for Kosovo.

Highlighting the generosity with which Albania's government and its people had accepted and given shelter to thousands of refugees, it called on the citizens of all the countries in Europe to demonstrate their active solidarity with the Kosovar Albanians, supporting the work of the NGOs active in the region and encouraged the European Union to continue to back efforts aimed at dealing with the humanitarian emergency.

The Declaration encouraged the European Union to take a 'strong political initiative aimed at strengthening democracy, economic and social progress and the peaceful co-existence of diverse ethnic groups, religions and cultures within these states and favouring their integration as a whole into the international community', and asked the European Union to strengthen its ties with the Balkan countries, mobilising its economic and financial means for the reconstruction and development of the region to this end. In conclusion, SICEE reaffirmed the SI's solidarity with all political forces in the Balkan countries committed to affirming the values of peace, tolerance and democracy.

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People
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Ramón Rubial, a former President of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party, PSOE, and an Honorary President of the Socialist International, who spent many years of his life in prison for his party and his cause, died on 24 May and was mourned worldwide.



of the Northern Front and in March was given a 30 year prison sentence by a court martial. Having been found to have organised a secret socialist organisation within prison he was given an additional 14 years in prison. In 1944 he married Emilia Cachorro by

The PSOE Secretary General Joaquín Almunia said, 'He suffered much and fought for his ideas but had understanding and respect for those who thought differently from him and never had rancour for those who kept him in prison for twenty years.'

Rubial was born in the Basque Country in 1906 to a working-class family, becoming an apprentice in an engineering factory at the age of 14 and joining the trade union and later the party. He was arrested by the Civil Guard for the first time in 1930 as he distributed leaflets and was jailed for four years.

In 1934 he became Secretary of the Socialist Youth Movement of his hometown Erandio and a member of the Executive Committee of the Metal Workers Union of the province of Vizcaya. He was arrested and put aboard the boat Altuna-Mendi in the port of Axpe for seven months and later to the prison at El Dueso until an amnesty was declared in 1936. In July of that year he headed the mobilisation against the military uprising of Franco, serving at the front in the XV Brigade until the fall of Asturias.

In November 1937 he was captured while trying to get to the Republican zone after the collapse

proxy. The following year he escaped but was caught by the forces of the dictatorship as he tried to cross the frontier into France and put into a punishment cell for months. Later that year his daughter Lentxu was born whom he would not see for 12 years.

The dictatorship freed him conditionally in 1956, and he planned to travel to Chile where his wife and daughter had gone two years before. The Party however asked him to stay to organise the party in Spain which he did successfully for several years using the alias 'Pablo'. Rubial was elected to the party's Executive Committee in 1959. The dictatorship struck again in 1967 exiling him to the remote region of La Hurdes in Extremadura before putting him before another court in 1968.

In 1972 and 1974 he attended the important conferences held in Toulouse and at Suresnes. In 1976 at the first PSOE congress celebrated in Spain he was elected party president and the following year he was elected to the seat in the Senate which he would occupy for the rest of his life. In 1978 he was elected President of the Basque General Council.

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Mahendra Chaudry, General Secretary of the Fiji Labour Party is the new Prime Minister of Fiji (See *Socialist Notebook* on page 51.)

◆
Alberto Cecchetti was named President of the San Marino Socialist Party, with **Augusto Casali** as the new General Secretary.

◆
José Antonio González Fernández was confirmed at party elections in May as the new President of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, Mexico, and **Dulce María Sauri Riancho** is the General Secretary.

◆
Former Vice-Chair **Vytenis Andriukaitis** became the new Chair of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, LSDP, at the party congress in May. Former Chair, **Aloyzas Sakalas**, was named Honorary Chair. Five Vice-Chairs were elected: **Algirdas Butkevicius; Roma Dovyaniena; Juozas Olekas; Rimantas Ruzas; Biruti Vasaite**. **Romas Turonis** continues as General Secretary of the party.



Publisher and Editor
Marlène Haas

WOMEN & POLITICS

Journal of
Socialist International Women

REGIONAL MEETING, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL, 27 MARCH 1999

The effects of neo-liberal policies on women



From left to right:
Ligia Doutel de Andrade,
Rosinha Garotinho, Anthony
Matheus Garotinho, Audrey
McLaughlin, Marlène Haas,
Benedita da Silva, Lionel Brizola

On 27 March 1999 Socialist International Women held its Regional meeting in Rio de Janeiro which was hosted by the National Women's Movement of the Democratic Labour Party, PDT, and attended by over 150 women .

SIW President Audrey McLaughlin stated in her opening address that poverty frequently has a colour and a gender, and that it is worse for black people than for white and that it is worse for women than for men.

SIW Vice-President Ligia Doutel de Andrade from Brazil noted that historically women have played a very important role in the struggle for independence in Brazil. The resistance of women against the dictatorship and the fight for civil and political rights were impressive as well.

'In patriarchal societies like Brazil', she continued, 'women suffer discrimination in terms of class, gender and race and have to fight a culture full of stereotypes, prejudice and violence'.

Anthony Matheus Garotinho, Governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro, noted that in the world today women play a fundamental role in the struggle for income distribution. 'A broad campaign should be launched to distribute the wealth', he continued. And women should have better access to information.

Lionel Brizola, the President of the PDT, mentioned in his welcome address that the PDT was the first political party in Brazil which took women's issues seriously and founded a women's movement.

The first key-note speaker on the theme, Dilma Vana Rousseff, State Secretary of

Energy, Mines and Telecommunications in the Government of the State of Rio Grande del Sur, noted that the Fourth UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 recognised that the neo-liberal proposals expressed in macro and micro-economic policies including the structural adjustment programmes did not always take into account the impact on women and girls. In the eighties neo-liberal governments in Latin-America denied the social needs of the population and increased social exclusion and poverty. Another major problem is education: Brazil has the second lowest schooling rate of Latin-America. Education is a strategic investment. Universal and democratic education is the best social democratic policy that could be adopted in Brazil. Rousseff concluded in saying that neo-liberal governments lack a commitment to society and only care for profits.

Josefina Duarte from the Revolutionary Frebrerista Party in Paraguay addressed the issue of poverty. At the moment the rate of unemployment in Paraguay is 20 per cent. Taking into account that half of the population is younger than 30, the situation is not very promising. Duarte stated that strategies to overcome poverty imply the basic principles of socialism as solidarity, freedom of organisation and association and equal opportunities. As in Brazil education is a huge problem in Paraguay. The military dictatorship crushed the ideology and ideals of citizenship. The party has developed citizenship programmes and tries to find structural resolutions for the problems.

Silvia Augsburg, local councillor of Rosario in Argentina, spoke about 'Globalisation and regional integration policies'. The 1998 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shows that poverty in Argentina went up from 7 per cent to 19 per cent between 1989 and 1998, which is an increase of 171 per cent. As in other Latin American countries women suffer most from unemployment and earn 30 per cent less than men for the same work. Regional integration policies can protect women. Augsburg stressed the importance of regional networks to develop strategies and mentioned the women's commission of the MERCOSUR as an example.

After the speeches followed a lively debate with questions to the speakers. The meeting adopted a declaration on the serious institutional crisis in Paraguay.

Declaration

The following declaration concerning the grave institutional crisis affecting Paraguay was issued by those taking part in the SIW's Regional Meeting on 27th March 1999 in the city of Rio de Janeiro, called to discuss the topic 'The Effects of Neo-Liberal Policies on Women':

- *We condemn* the assassination of the Vice-President of the Republic, Luis María Argaña, the acts of violence which have already provoked other deaths and all the violations of human rights of which Paraguayan men and women are victim at the present time.
- *We express our solidarity* to the entire Paraguayan people who are living through the anguish of seeing their democracy threatened after having achieved this at such a high social cost.
- *In particular, we show our solidarity* with the women of Paraguay, who most suffer the consequences of the breakdown of the State ruled by law and the implications that this has in social, economic and political domains.
- *We urge* women throughout the world and all those who share our democratic ideals to lead a campaign aimed at preserving democracy and respect for human rights in Paraguay - principles which have always characterised our political activity.

Globalisation and the Politics of Regional Integration

Silvia Augsburger

The development of the world economy is, without a doubt, the dominant feature of the process that has come to be called globalisation. Following the neo-liberal policies driven through by conservative governments, the deregulation of the economies of the developed countries accelerated and all controls imposed on the free circulation of capital gave way, one after another, in the face of this global tidal wave.

Globalisation speeded up the world-wide spread of the so-called 'single ideology', the neo-liberal doctrine which took on traits and distortions in the peripheral countries, such as our own, which were not present in the central countries' version, and consequently the nation-states embarked on a sort of ideological exaggeration (much to the advantage of certain interests) and enthusiastically dismantled their regulatory mechanisms.

The applied neo-conservative model, which is based on a society essentially and explicitly constructed on and for the economy, has inevitably generated a simultaneous concentration of economic resources hand in hand with widespread social exclusion.

The annual report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), announced in October 1998, established that from 1989 until then poverty in Argentina had increased by 171.42 per cent and had grown from 7 to 19 per cent of the population.

The problem of marginalisation, with its traits of poverty and wretchedness, has been, without a doubt, the dominant social phenomenon of the late twentieth century. The progressive impoverishment of particular social sectors seems inevitable in the face of the progressive enrichment of those who find themselves best placed to benefit from the new rules of the game.

The process of social exclusion has been accompanied by two other relevant changes which I would like to consider, given their special impact on the lives of women: one is the increasingly precarious nature of working conditions which affects society as a whole and especially women in its various manifestations: underemployment, instability and casualisation.

The other question refers to the increasing pauperisation of the middle class, which has brought about a recognition of the phenomenon dubbed 'new poverty' which no longer derives from inherited poverty, but is instead a consequence of the crisis and economic shake-up.

This growing impoverishment creates an ever-increasing and more widespread tension between the material conditions and the existing value system and beliefs which no longer hold for the new social circumstances.

So, we go on down the road of reduced consumption, the breakdown of established patterns and their replacement by a series of new and creative strategies such as 'el rebusque' ('struggling to keep one's head above water') among other ingenious solutions for day-to-day problems.

Women have to carry out multiple jobs, with an equal amount of responsibility in each, given the lack of proper state participation (in childcare and in the care of the



elderly) and the marked privatisation of matters related to health and education which fall back on the family.

Women have to carry on fulfilling their traditional roles as mother-wife-housewife, but at the same time they are obliged to take on work outside the home, not just as an additional source of income but as the principle or only source, sometimes full-time, without this, in general terms, leading to a democratisation of functions in the domestic sphere.

Leisure time is transformed into housework, into the preparation and organisation of domestic duties, as these cannot be contracted out to others.

Exhaustion, loneliness and a worsening quality of life are characteristic symptoms leading to a decline in physical and mental health which sometimes goes unnoticed, in the effort to juggle and balance the different demands which have to be dealt with.

In order to confront this situation it is necessary to recover the role of politics which, in the final analysis, is what will be able to regulate and control the development of the globalisation process. We must aim towards an increased level of international cooperation, the development of regional blocs and the recovery of State sovereignty.

We have systematically supported and encouraged regional integration policies as a means of protecting people and the environment from the damaging effects of globalisation. From a Latin American point of view, we believe that we have to provide cultural and political support to the structural development of the European Union and to the countries of Africa and Asia because we want a multipolar and not a unipolar world.

MERCOSUR is a top priority for us, in so far as it constitutes the sub-regional market which allows the southern countries of Latin America to achieve a global presence and identity. However, both the TREATY OF ASUNCION and the OURO PRETO PROTOCOL lack the democratic elements which would enable the decisive participation of the Parliaments and social sectors of the various countries which make up the trading bloc.

In this sphere, the consolidation of democracy requires the setting up of a MERCOSUR Parliament with established powers, and also the institutionalisation of the participation of the different social sectors. It is important that the socio-economic Council of MERCOSUR should be installed as the obligatory consultation body of the MERCOSUR Council. Subgroup 10 for Labour Relations and Social Security (SGT-10) must be strengthened, consolidating its tripartite structure (Ministry of Labour, business organisations and labour organisations from the member countries).

The signing of the Cooperation Treaty between MERCOSUR and the European Union provides our regional organisation with a series of principles and objectives which, in time, must doubtless bring about the establishment of a much-needed democratic and democratising community legal framework.

As regards women specifically, in the Twelfth Ordinary Meeting of the Joint MERCOSUR Parliamentary Commission (CPCM), held in Rio de Janeiro on the 8th and 9th of December last year, a recommendation was made that we regard as being very positive for the continued drawing up of strategic policies which will ensure once and for all the equality of opportunities for men and women.

By the same token, it was submitted at that meeting that women's issues should be included in the various working agendas, on a permanent basis, with the aim of obtaining preferential treatment in this CPCM, in the Social and Economic Consultation Forum, in SGT-10, in the Common Market Group and in the Common Market Council.

The Common Market Group also adopted a submission on the question of gender. This refers to what has come to be known as a Specialised Meeting, (there are others for Culture and Tourism), in which the official Organisms of each member state participate along with the Ministries and Institutes for Women. We consider that the introduction of the question of equality of opportunity and equal treatment, by means of concrete projects in specific areas, is essential for the placing of the subject in the common debate of MERCOSUR members.

At the same time as we push forward the democratisation of the structures of MERCOSUR and the treatment of women's issues at every level, I believe that the socialist women of the Southern Cone are under an obligation to think about and put into practice some related questions which might help us in our work promoting and demanding the rights of women and in obtaining a greater degree of gender equality in our region.

To this end I want to emphasise an aspect of globalisation which benefits or helps us in this aim which is that globalisation does not consist solely of the fact that events which take place in a certain place have an impact in distant places, but it is also the speed with which this takes place. The speed at which events in faraway places have an immediate impact makes the outside world no longer alien to day-to-day experience.

It is this phenomenon which we women must exploit and strengthen. We must circulate and promote any small step forward, any satisfactory piece of legislation which takes place in one of our countries, in the other countries and so increase its effects throughout the region.

To this end we can already count on several bodies in the region, as well as this one, Socialist International Women, which we have to strengthen and improve.

In August 1995 the Women's Network and MERCOSUR was set up and carried out several coordination activities as well as lobbying for financial support. In 1997, a seminar in support of UNIFEM was held, at which renewed interest was shown in continuing to work towards the consolidation of this network.

The aims behind the establishment of this network are the pooling of efforts from a gender perspective and the participation in this process of regional integration which sets itself the challenge of constructing a new platform on which equal relations between men and women might be developed, and so contribute to the reaffirmation of justice and the broadening of democracy in our region.

There are other areas of participation in our region which need to be strengthened and extended. One is the MERCOSUR Women's Commission which is part of the Coordinating Committee of Trade Union Centres in which female workers from nearly all Trade Unions take part.

The other is the Women's Forum of the Network of Merco-cities which is based, this year, in Montevideo. This has a proposal for the setting up of a database covering legislation for the promotion of women's rights at local levels and, it seems to me, that this is an interesting area in which to work, as local government is closest to the people.

From these networks, from these organs, we can work towards, for instance, the drawing up of an equal opportunities plan for the region that will be as participatory as possible, and, following on from an agreed diagnosis which prescribes the aim of 'development with social justice' set out in the Treaty of Asuncion as the goal behind integration, it will encourage the discussion and definition of common priorities at a Latin American level, with the aim of exerting a far greater influence in every country; along with the setting up of control mechanisms in each of our countries as regards the repealing of discriminatory legislation, the approval of a specific law regarding equal opportunities and the treatment, or the maintenance and improvement, of maternity rights and the implementation of positive discrimination measures.

I believe that these organs and networks enable us to broaden and deepen links between women from various sectors and organisations and to express and draw up efficient strategies for participating positively in the consequences that the integration process might have on women.

I believe that we must commit our support to the expansion of these networks with a view to weaving them into a live and interactive repository and support of the cogent action of the women of MERCOSUR.

Silvia Augsburg is Secretary for Women's Issues for the Popular Socialist Party, PSP, Argentina. She is also local Councillor for the city of Rosario.

*MERCOSUR= Trading bloc formed by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Europe for Women - Women for Europe

Lissy Gröner

The European Elections: An Opportunity for Women

Between 10 and 13 June 1999, European citizens within the 15 Member states will elect their representatives to the European Parliament (EP). This is an opportunity for women to have a direct say in the future development of the European Union. Women can play a central role in reaching new horizons for equality between women and men and in facing up to the political challenges of the future as female voters (around 140 million) or as future Members of the European Parliament (MEP) itself.

The European Parliament is the only institution of the European Union directly elected by the peoples of Europe. It is one of the principal decision-making bodies. Today, 26.7 per cent of the MEPs are women, while there were 25.7 per cent before the last accession of three new Member States - Finland, Sweden and Austria in 1995 - this was an increase of only 19 per cent in comparison to the elections of 1989. European democracy cannot be completed without a balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process. The 1999 European elections can help women to move towards this balance.

PES Women in the European Parliament

The Party of European Socialists (PES) is the biggest and most important political Group in the EP with 212 Members. It actively and constantly supports the fight for women's rights, mainly in the areas of employment, human rights and for the increase of the number of women in areas of decision-making. It also incorporates the strategy of gender-mainstreaming, which means the inclusion of a gender perspective into all fields of EU policies. The leader of the PES Group is Pauline Green, MEP from the British Labour Party. German MEP Lissy Gröner, Vice-president of SIW, is spokesperson on women's rights and the PES Group's coordinator in the EP Committee on Women's Rights. They work in close cooperation with the women's section of the Party of European Socialists, the PES Standing Committee on Women's Rights, which is presided by MEP Fiorella Ghilardotti from the Italian Democrats of the Left (DS). We consider the PES as one of the most advanced European parties in relation to feminism and anti-discrimination on grounds of sex.

Equality in EU Institutions

The European Institutions have set up structures that are specifically responsible for equality issues. In the European Parliament, the Committee on Women's Rights has been most active in supporting legislation and programmes aimed at promoting equality and anti-discrimination. This Committee has played a key political role within the European Parliament. During the present legislature, the Committee has put forward equality legislation and reports on many important subjects, such as trafficking in women, violence against women, incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all Community policies, the state of women's health, and the impact of unemployment on women. The Committee also maintains an ongoing dialogue with representatives of national Parliaments. Progress has been made in the



Marilène Haas

legislation regarding the reconciliation of work and family within the two EU directives on parental leave and part-time work. Progress has also been made regarding the legislation of access to employment and decision-making though the directive on the issue of the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex. The Women's Rights Committee in the EP is the motor for equal opportunities, bringing also together representatives of national bodies working for equality and the social partners. It evaluates and promotes the development of European policy on equality between men and women.

The European Commission has also specific structures for promoting gender equality. In 1995 the Group of Commissioners on Equal Opportunities under the chairmanship of the EU Commission President, Jacques Santer, was created as an expression of political commitment at the highest level. The group maintains regular contacts with the European Parliament and the umbrella organization of the European Women's Lobby (EWL). Commission & Directorate General V, Employment and Social Affairs and the Equal Opportunities Unit are responsible for initiating and monitoring legislation on equality, for the implementation of the Action Programmes for Equal Opportunities and for integrating the gender dimension in all community policies. The Women's Information Section within Directorate General X disseminates information about Community policies and activities to women and promotes debate on these policies with women in Europe.

Women for Europe - Towards A Democratic Society

Equality between women and men is a question of basic human rights, of social justice and of a democratic society. It cannot be fully achieved without equal participation of all, women and men, in every area of activity, especially in the political decision-making process. It is therefore vital for women to vote in the European elections of 1999 to express their views on Europe's future in favour of candidates and parties which have committed themselves to achieve equality.

Half the Sky, Half the Earth and Half the Power

The new Treaty of Amsterdam enlarges the power of the EP for the co-decision procedure in three quarters of EU legislation. With the new anti discrimination article 13 and, particularly, the regulation of equal pay for work of equal value in article 141, parliamentarians have got new possibilities to improve the standard of equality in Europe. The PES calls for including the women of Eastern Europe in the best possible way into the EU integration process within the framework of the enlargement strategy, the Agenda 2000.

With the European elections on 13 June 1999 on the threshold of the new millennium we do have the duty to define a society, which overcomes the old gender pattern for more than 340 Million European citizens. The PES fights for sharing. We want:
half the sky,
half the earth and
half the power for women.

During a yearlong process of discussions with the PES Women's Standing Committee, the PES Group has elaborated the Charter 'Towards a New European Citizenship for Women and Men', which has been adopted by the Members of the Women's Standing Committee on 7 December 1998 and by the PES at its Congress in Milan on 1 March 1999:

CHARTER**'Towards a new European citizenship for women and men'****1. Making Women's Rights An Integral Part Of Human Rights**

The European Union's women live in an area comprising fifteen democratic states which respect human rights. This respect is a fundamental element of international relations within the European Union.

Socialist women call for the fundamental rights of women, which are inseparable from the rights of human beings, to be upheld. These rights are often flouted in the name of fundamentalism. Rape in time of war, female circumcision, prostitution, forced sterilisation: political pressure to combat these must remain on the agenda of the Member States.

In the European Union, the women Socialists want sexual rights to be guaranteed, i.e. the right of control and freedom of determination in areas concerning sexuality and sexual and reproductive health. They also want these issues to be borne in mind in granting the right to asylum.

2. Sharing Power Between Women and Men

Every woman of the European Union engaged in politics or civic life must have access to all levels of responsibility: local, regional, national or European. Equal participation by women in political and social decision-making structures is the guarantee of the proper functioning of democracy. Parity in the representation of women in politics is not only a right, but a means for society to make progress by benefiting from the special resources of women, notably in the areas of creativity and solidarity. Party hierarchies still lag somewhat behind the times and restrict women in the exercise of their rights. They no longer reflect reality.

Socialist women support the measures adopted to change these structures and arrive at a fair representation of women and men, such as information programmes about women and campaigns to raise awareness of the public and political activities of women. Within the parties they are calling for balanced electoral lists, the incorporation of 'mainstreaming' in the party programmes and for the wo/men balance to be re-addressed in the European Union institutions.

3. Making Equal Opportunities a Reality

Every woman of the European Union can claim her rights as a woman in the name of the right to equality. This principle is no longer limited to the application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work. The principle of equal opportunities is now a right enshrined in the Treaty of Amsterdam and aims to combat all discrimination based, inter alia, on sex. The European Union must therefore make one of its priority tasks to combat discrimination and define positive measures. This principle is protected by European law: any woman who considers that her rights have been infringed may appeal to the European Court of Justice.

Socialist women are committed to ensuring that these social, economic and political rights are made a reality. They also support equal opportunities via the individualisation of rights and obligations, in particular in taxation, legal and social matters.

4. Access To All Types of Jobs and all Training

Every woman of the European Union must be able to fulfil herself completely in her career. She must have access to all types of job and to all types of training and, if she so desires, to any position of responsibility. The concept of equal opportunities as an integral part of all Community policies - also known as 'mainstreaming' - must go hand in hand with measures to promote employment. Since the Luxembourg Summit, the European Union has set guidelines which must be implemented in employment policy.

Socialist women intend to follow the initiatives taken at European and national level in the area of women's employment. They want demanding and verifiable objectives, statistical data on the figures for the number of jobs created and the progress made in reducing the wage gap between women and men, as well as the regular publication of statistics broken down by sex. They advocate the establishment of good working conditions and the adoption of adequate European legislation on part-time work.

5. Combining Work With Family Life

All men and women in the European Union must be enabled to strike a balance between two lives running in parallel. The first steps have been taken: the European Union recently adopted a directive on parental leave but more progress must be made before women and men can reconcile

their family lives with their working lives so that they can live in harmony in two different environments. One way to contribute to this aim is gradually to reduce working hours.

Socialist women wish to promote the adoption of directives on child care and care of the elderly, assistance to one-parent families and paid leave for these purposes for women and men, so as to have an equal distribution of responsibility, in both the public and private domains. They commit themselves to pursuing policies at European and national level which stimulate a redistribution of care work, paid and unpaid, between men and women. They want to change social structures, and attitudes, in the Member States. They want measures to be taken in the areas of training and lifelong learning for women and men who have chosen to interrupt their careers.

6. Access To The Structural Funds

All Europe's women living in rural or urban regions can expect their country and the European Union to take measures to improve their situation. Through its Structural Fund policy, the European Union, in partnership with the Member States, has made possible the social and economic regeneration of regions whose development is lagging behind and regions with severe unemployment and employability problems which mainly affect women.

Socialist women are calling for the Structural Funds to become instruments promoting equal opportunities and sustainable development allowing the creation of jobs and the strengthening of social cohesion. They want at least 15 per cent of the appropriations to be allocated to specific measures to promote equal opportunities for men and women, such as promoting vocational skills for women job seekers, setting up high-quality social facilities for child care and the elderly and promoting the setting-up of businesses by women.

7. Eliminating Violence Against Women

All women have the right to have their persons respected in all areas of life. Violence in daily life, both mental and physical, in the family, at the work place or in social life, affects women from every background, age and faith. It often means shame and fear and continues to be a private matter which is shrouded in secrecy. This silence makes it a taboo subject.

Socialist women have worked to raise public awareness of such violence, but the victims have too little protection, support or defence. The women Socialists have campaigned for 'DAPHNE', a European programme financing measures to combat violence against women and children. They are working actively to launch a campaign against the day-to-day violence affecting very large numbers of women in every European Union country. They are also campaigning against the sexual exploitation of women, particularly in Eastern Europe. They believe that cooperation between police forces must be strengthened, that trafficking in women must be legally recognised as a crime and believe that victims should be able to benefit from the right of asylum until judgement of their case is finalised.

8. Combating Poverty

In the European Union single mothers, women looking after large families, elderly women and women on their own are living in increasingly precarious conditions. Many of them fall below the poverty line, below subsistence level. The economic crisis is affecting women in particular, even those with jobs. They are the first to be made redundant. Out of every five people living in poverty, four are women.

Socialist women deplore this situation and demand that action be taken at European level: on wages, in the field of the right to housing, improving social protection, establishing equivalent pension rights for female workers and on the individualisation of pension rights. Poverty relief programmes must give priority to women.

9. Improving the Environment

The women of the European Union can contribute to the development of an environmental conscience. Their status as women, with their awareness of living in a community and of consumer issues, education, and the need to improve the quality of life for their children gives them a constructive outlook on environmental policy.

Socialist women undertake to apply the concept of sustainable development. They wish to promote changes in habits of behaviour. They are seeking to encourage the adoption of high standards in public health and a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to promote the general good of human beings and the natural world.

10. Solidarity With Women in Developing Countries

Women play a key role in achieving sustainable development. They are responsible for day-to-day life and for bringing up children and they contribute to the social and human development of the

community. They play an essential role in the economy of their country.

Socialist women want to see equal representation of women in the projects funded by the European Union, whether at the level of evaluating and implementing or at the level of programming these projects.

They also want the situation of women to be taken into account, notably in development cooperation, and in cooperation agreements with all developing countries. Particular attention must also be paid to women in the context of Euro-Mediterranean policy.

11. Cooperation With Women In The Countries In Transition Towards Democracy

Women in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were greatly affected by the collapse of the Communist system. Since then they have not, in the majority of cases, been covered by any new system of social protection. They live under difficult conditions in countries undergoing full-scale political and economic change. They are having to adapt to a system which will lead in the long term to a democratic state based on the rule of law. They will soon be part of the European Union and of the community of European women.

Socialist women are calling for the principle of equal opportunities for men and women to be an integral part of the negotiation and accession process, especially in the framework of Agenda 2000. European Union funding intended to help the applicant countries through the transition to democracy must also lead to women and women's organisations being given more power through the promotion of positive action measures of all kinds and in assisting with the setting in place of mainstreaming.

12. Better Integration Of Immigrant Women

Every woman of the European Union lives and has her place in an area based on justice and freedom. This area is also occupied by women who have come from countries not belonging to the Union who have chosen to settle here. These women suffer twofold discrimination on the basis of their gender and ethnic origin. However, their presence within the European Union brings added cultural value to a multicultural society created by the citizens of Europe. But all too often they still live in isolation and feel uprooted.

Socialist women believe that European action on equal opportunities must pay particular attention to immigrant women and provide them with access to decent working conditions, with education and training opportunities. Solidarity also means combating the social exclusion and discrimination of which immigrant women are victims.

13. Developing European Information

The women Socialists note that women are less well-informed than men on European Union issues. This may be because this information is not sufficiently well tailored to their needs. Where the euro is concerned, for example, information must be available to women which will enable them to understand the single currency in their role as consumers who are usually responsible for the family budget. Appropriate and properly targeted information offers a major advantage: women provide important points of contact with children. Information concerning them will also ensure that confidence in European matters is built up.

The Socialist women are committed to mounting an information campaign directed specifically at women. This campaign will cover all spheres of European political life.

14. Generalising 'Mainstreaming' In European Policies

The Charter of European Socialist Women mentions the concept of 'mainstreaming' several times. The commitment of Socialist women to this concept is the logical continuation of the active role they played in drawing up the final declaration and platform of action adopted at the Beijing Conference in 1995.

Socialist women ask that this concept be translated into practice in the daily lives of every male and female European citizen, and that it be implemented systematically in every Community policy, including the recourse to positive actions. To this end, Socialist European women ask for the setting up of a 5th Action Programme. Equality of conditions, situations and needs for women and men must be a priority objective.

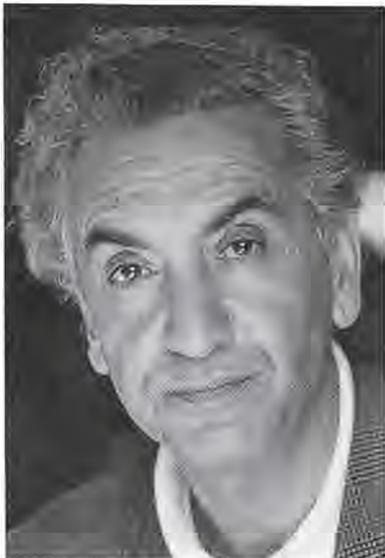
15. Half The Sky, Half The Earth And Half The Power

1999 - 2004: five years in which the Socialist women will be working to set long-term goals for the European Union. Their aim is to sow the seeds of, and cultivate a new solidarity between men and women, with equal rights and equal responsibilities.

Lissy Gröner is a member of the European Parliament for the SPD Germany, and spokesperson on Women's Rights. She is also a SIW Vice-President.

Algeria

Hocine Aït
Ahmed



Albert Facelly/Rex Features

Joint manifesto

The six opposition candidates, including Hocine Aït Ahmed of the SI member party, the Socialist Forces Front, FSS, signed a joint 'manifesto of freedom for democracy' on 14 May, a month after their withdrawal from the presidential race when they alleged massive fraud and interference in the democratic process.

The manifesto stated that the massive non-participation of the Algerian people in the poll constituted a message that 'the inexistence of freedoms and the negation of democratic mechanisms, as much as the distrust felt by the people, are at the origin of the political, social and cultural breakdown and prevent any perspective for a way out of the current political and security impasse'.

Angola

UN retires

The United Nations ended its peacekeeping effort in Angola after its mandate expired. João Lourenço, General Secretary of the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA, a member party of the SI, said that it would continue to fight the insurgents of the UNITA movement, led by Jonas Savimbi, who in earlier years had received the support of the former apartheid regime in Pretoria. The MPLA 'would completely eliminate Jonas Savimbi's war machine', he said. 'This could take weeks, a year, or two years'.

In April the government signed a defence pact with Zimbabwe, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaïre).

Armenia

ARF emerges

The ARF Armenian Socialist Party, a member of the Socialist International, won 7.7 per cent of the vote and gained nine seats in the elections for a National Assembly held on 30 May, reported the Central Electoral Commission. The party said that it had regained its rightful place in Armenian society after a period of being banned from political activity.

Burkina Faso

Death investigated

Norbert Zongo, a journalist who was critical of the government of President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, could have been killed by the presidential guard,

according to a report by an independent inquiry commission in May.

The case of Zongo who was found dead on 13 December 1998 has been taken up forcefully by the Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP, a member party of the Socialist International.

Cameroon

Party congress

The Social Democratic Front, SDF, the SI member party in Cameroon, held its V party congress in Yaoundé from 16 to 18 April. The well attended congress rallied support on a massive scale for the party. John Fru Ndi was re-elected party chair by a large majority and all officials of the executive were elected for a four-year term.

The SI Secretary General, speaking at the congress, conveyed the SI's support for the work of the SDF.

Chile

Presidential candidate

Ricardo Lagos, former Minister of Public Works, secured the nomination of the governing alliance of parties, the Concertación, which includes the Socialist Party, PS, the Party for Democracy, PPD, and the Radical Social Democratic Party, PRSD, for presidential elections in December. (Ricardo Lagos writes on Chile on pages 8-11.)

In primary elections held on 30 May more than 1.4 million voters went to the polls to give Lagos a convincing victory with 71.3 per cent of the vote, against 28.7 per cent won by Andrés Zaldívar, the candidate of the Christian

Democratic Party, PDC. After the result, which Zaldívar immediately accepted, both men undertook to work closely against the candidate of the far right. Upon the result, Lagos declared: 'This is the triumph of the ideals that founded the Concertación, it is the triumph of democracy'.

An SI delegation which included Luis Ayala, Secretary General, Guillermo Estevez Boero, PSP, Argentina, Adolfo Gass, UCR, Argentina, and María Emma Mejía, Liberal Party, PLC, Colombia, observed the elections.

Colombia

Senator released

Piedad Córdoba, a member of the Senate's human rights committee, of the Liberal Party, a member party of the SI, was set free two weeks after being kidnapped by a Colombian paramilitary squad. Following her release, Córdoba said that paramilitary forces should eventually be included in negotiations, which are currently held between the government and leftist rebels, to end the 35-year-conflict.

Czech Republic

Party gathers

The Czech Social Democratic Party, CSSD, held its XXIX party congress from 9 to 11 April. Milos Zeman was re-elected Chair of the party. The Vice-Chairs are Vladimir Spidla, Petra Buzková, Zdenek Skromach, Karel Kobes, Petr Lachnit and Stanislav Gross.

Secretary General, Luis Ayala, addressed the congress and conveyed the support and encouragement of the SI.



East Timor

Referendum in doubt

José Ramos Horta, Nobel Peace Prize winner, said that he hoped that he and Xanana Gusmão, a fellow leader of the Timorese resistance who has been under house arrest in Jakarta, would be able to freely participate in the referendum campaign due in August on the future of East Timor. But, he made clear, they would call for a boycott if Gusmão was not released, adding: 'Who would have believed in the elections in South Africa if Mandela had stayed in jail?', he asked.

Concerns have grown that the proposed referendum on the future of East Timor may be under threat because of a campaign of intimidation and violence carried out by pro-Indonesian militia groups, according to a report by the UN Security Council. It called for Indonesia to respect the agreement it signed on 5 May.

Egypt

President continues

Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was overwhelmingly nominated President of Egypt for a fourth six-year term by the country's parliament on 2 June. A referendum, expected in October, must be held to endorse the decision.

El Salvador

Election results

Francisco Flores, candidate of ARENA, the far right party once led by Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, won the presidential elections in El Salvador. He gained 52 per cent of the votes cast on 7 March. In second place was the former guerrilla Farabundo Martí Front, FMLN, whose candidate Facundo Guardado won 29 per cent. The United Democratic Centre candidate, supported by SI-member the Democratic Party, PD, won 7.5 per cent. The turnout was less than forty per cent.

Support for
freedom,
East Timor

Charles Dharapak/Associated Press AP

Lionel Jospin

Equatorial Guinea

Elections held

The SI-member in Equatorial Guinea, the Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, took 1 seat in Equatorial Guinea's second multiparty elections for the 80-seat parliament on 7 March. It was one of thirteen parties contesting, with the Democratic Party, PDGE, winning 75 seats.

Pablo Nbang Nzang, CPDS campaign manager, said opposition monitors had been expelled from some voting stations and that a strong military presence had intimidated voters. He also stated that in many areas people were denied the right to a secret ballot where there were no voting booths, adding that: 'The government has to realise that false results only reduce national and international credibility'.

Estonia

SI party in coalition government

Mõõdukad, the Estonian member party of the SI, have five places in the cabinet of the coalition government led by Prime Minister Mart Laar, with the following briefs: foreign affairs, economic affairs, social affairs, agriculture and a minister without portfolio.

The SI party is in coalition with the Pro Patria Union and the Reform Party. The coalition was formed after the poll held on 7 March, the third national elections since Estonia recovered its independence from the former Soviet Union.

Fiji

Labour wins

Following elections held in May, the Fiji Labour Party, a member party of the SI, formed a government in Fiji, with its leader Mahendra Chaudry becoming the first Fijian of Indian ancestry to head the administration, which will include the Fijian Association Party and the Party of National Unity. He had previously been finance minister in the government which was overturned in a military coup headed by Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka.

Finland

Presidential candidate chosen

Tarja Halonen, currently Foreign Minister, was selected as the party's presidential candidate for elections due in January 2000 at the Social Democratic Party XXXVIII congress held in Turku from 26 to 30 May, which celebrated the party's centenary.

The Congress also outlined the position of the party in the areas of international affairs and European policy, and a resolution on Kosovo supporting the efforts of the President of the Republic, Martti Ahtisaari, to reach an agreement was adopted.

SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, addressed the congress on behalf of the International

France



The 35-hour week becomes more common

The number of French employees benefiting from the 35-hour a week agreements has been rising swiftly, according to statistics published by the socialist government headed by Lionel Jospin.

In June 1996, 220,000 employees were contracted to working 35 hours a week. The present figure has increased to 1,130,000. The move to a 35-hour week was facilitated by a law passed on 13 June 1998.

The working week has been reduced in a number of ways: the shortening of the day of work; the reduction of the week's work by one day or half a day; the alternation of long working weeks with short ones; and, the creation of extra rest days during the week.

New legislation is to be introduced into the French parliament to further facilitate this development in September.

Georgia

Entry to Council of Europe

Georgia, represented by its president Eduard Shevardnadze, became the forty-first member of the Council of Europe at a ceremony in Strasbourg at the end of April, which included the signing of the European Human Rights Convention and an agreement on mutual assistance in criminal matters.

Georgia has already signed or ratified several Council of Europe conventions, including ones on corruption, promoting culture, mutual recognition of diplomas and the exchange of persons convicted of crimes.

Germany

President elected, leader confirmed

The new president of Germany is Johannes Rau, the candidate of the Social Democratic Party, SPD and veteran premier of North-Rhine Westphalia. Rau was confirmed in office at an election among deputies and regional representatives held on 23 May. He declared he would be a partner for all German people, 'including those without a passport'.

The Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was confirmed Chair of SPD at an extraordinary congress on 12 April. Schröder paid tribute to the significant contribution of former leader Oskar Lafontaine towards the 1998 election success of the SPD.

The congress also considered the Kosovo crisis, and supported a



stability pact for the Balkans. With the German government currently holding the presidency of the EU, the SPD outlined an initiative to offer the war-torn peoples in the region a European perspective within the framework of a comprehensive strategy, to be monitored by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE.

Great Britain

New Assemblies

The British Labour Party dominates the two new legislatures within the United Kingdom, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, both opened in May following elections, the first elections to be held by proportional representation in Britain.

Scotland's First Minister Donald Dewar, who was until his appointment to the new body in Edinburgh Scottish Secretary of State in Tony Blair's administration, said Labour

would deliver 'a progressive social justice agenda'. Alun Michael, First Secretary of the new Welsh Assembly will lead a minority government with responsibilities for distributing a grant from central government and for making decisions which directly affect Wales.

Greenland

Motzfeldt continues

Jonathan Motzfeldt, of Siumut, the SI member party in Greenland, retained his position as premier of this dependency of Denmark, one of five Siumut members of the cabinet.

In elections the party won 35.2 per cent of the votes and 11 of the 31 seats in the Inatsi-satut or diet. The party is against full separation from Denmark but wants to continue examining the relationship which, Siumut says, 'must be based on mutual respect and cooperation'.

President Rau
and Chancellor
Schröder, with
the Mayor of
Bonn, Baerbel
Dieckmann

Roberto Pfeil/Associated Press AP

*Celebrating
success in
Rabin Square,
Israel*

Iceland

Elections

Results of parliamentary elections on 8 May showed that the Independence Party would continue in government, receiving 40.7 per cent of the vote and 27 seats. Its coalition partner, the Progressive Party got 18.4 per cent and 12 seats.

The Unified Left, comprised of the People's Alliance, SI-member the Social Democratic Party and the Women's Alliance, won 26.8 per cent of the vote and 17 seats.

Ireland

National convention

From 30 April to 2 May, the Irish Labour Party held its LVIII National Conference in the southern town of Tralee, the first since it merged with the Democratic Left Party.

Ruairi Quinn, the former finance minister who succeeded Dick Spring as party leader, spoke of the opportunities and exciting future ahead for Ireland and for his son's generation: 'Progress is what our party is about. And opportunities should be for everyone, not just the few. They should be available to all regardless of class, creed or colour. And it is Labour's job to create them,' he continued, 'As a nation today we have choices to make. We have built a modern and dynamic economy. But for Labour that is not enough'.



Israel

Labour wins

Ehud Barak, leader of the Israel Labour Party, a member party of the SI, became the new Prime Minister with 56.1% of the vote in the legislative elections held on 17 May. Benjamin Netanyahu took 43.9% of the vote.

The Labour Party and the parties in the alliance, One Israel, won 26 seats, whereas Likud took 19 seats. Meretz, a member party of the SI, won 9 seats in the 120-seat Knesset. Twelve other parties shared the remaining 65 seats.

The victory was welcomed in many countries where the unwillingness of Netanyahu to honour the pledges he gave to the Palestinians had for long been condemned. Pierre Mauroy, president of the SI, greeting the victory talked of 'hope which is reborn after three wasted years. The election of Ehud Barak opens a new perspective for the Oslo agreement.'

Italy

New president

Massimo D'Alema, Prime Minister of Italy, Democrats of the Left, DS, welcomed the unified approach of governing and opposition parties in the election of Carlo Azeglio Ciampi as the new President of Italy. The 'yes' vote of opposition leader Silvio Berlusconi represented 'a positive signal, a common sense of responsibility'.

Ciampi, then Treasury Minister, a former governor of the Bank of Italy and a former Prime Minister, was elected by 770 members of the 990 members of both houses of Congress voting in Rome on 13 May. He is seen as the architect of Italy's successful entry into the euro currency at the beginning of the year.

Speaking after the murder on 20 May of Massimo d'Antono, a government adviser, seemingly by a terror group called the 'Red Brigade', which had been inactive for more than a decade, the Premier declared: 'The years of terrorism will not return.'

Jamaica

Riots defused

P J Patterson, Prime Minister of Jamaica and President of the People's National Party, PNP, a member party of the SI, introduced revised budgetary measures and succeeded in stabilising the situation in Jamaica following three days of demonstrations in Kingston in response to a rise in the price of fuel which had the country paralysed for several days.

In an address to the nation, Patterson called for: 'The process of dialogue is now in full train so that we can together fashion the best solution to the problems that have for so long confronted us. Let us all unite to ensure that our country, not only recovers from the losses of the last few days, but also succeeds in becoming a stronger, more determined nation'.

Malaysia

Lim loses MP status

On 31 March Lim Guan Eng, Deputy General Secretary of the Democratic Action Party, DAP, the Malaysian member party of the International, was stripped of his status as a member of parliament.

The loss of status followed the rejection of Lim's appeal against the eighteen-month sentence he is serving for charges under the Printing Presses and Publications Act and for sedition after he had published a pamphlet reflecting public disquiet about the handling of a case of alleged statutory rape facing a former senior government politician.

Mali

Local elections

The governing African Party for Solidarity and Justice, ADEMA-PASJ, a member party of the SI, won a large victory taking 4,193 seats out of 7,123 seats in local elections held on 2 May.

More than thirty parties took part in the elections in some 492 towns in the Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso and Segou regions. The African Party for National Renaissance took 857 seats, the Union for Democracy, UDD, won 425 seats, with the Social Democratic Convention, CSD, the Block for Democracy and African Integration, BDIA, the Sudanese Union of the African Democratic Rally, USRDA, and the Malian Party for Development and Revival, PMDR, each taking 100 seats.

Mongolia

Party conference

The Mongolian Social Democratic Party, MSDP, which is a member of the coalition government, held its annual party conference on 27-28 March. Radnaasumberel Gonchigdorj, MSDP leader and the Speaker of the Mongolian parliament, delivered a speech on the MSDP's assessment of the political, social and economic situation in the country. Adiyagiin Ganbaatar was elected Vice-Chair of the party, and Noroviin Altankhuyag was elected Secretary General.

Campaign
for justice
Lim, Malay



Polls in Nepal

Benod Joshi/Associated Press AP



Nepal

Congress Party wins majority

Krishna Prasad Bhattarai was sworn in as Prime Minister at the end of May, after parliamentary elections held on 3 and 17 May when the Nepali Congress Party, the SI member in Nepal, won 110 of the 205 seats of the House of Representatives, so forming the second majority government since 1990. Sixty-four seats went to the United Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, the National Democratic Party took 10 seats, the National Goodwill Party and the National Janmorcha Party each won 5 seats. Bhattarai succeeded Girija Prasad Koirala, President of the Party, following his decision to step down.

Netherlands

Coalition strengthened

The Netherlands avoided a new general election in June after the government coalition, led by Prime Minister Wim Kok of the Dutch Labour Party, PvdA, resolved its differences over a bill about the holding of referendums, which the Party wants to become a more important feature of Dutch politics. Increased importance for referendums had been opposed by a senator of the Liberal Party, a member of the coalition.

'We have cleared the most important hurdle', commented Ad Melkert, the leader of the PvdA in parliament.

Niger

Coup condemned

Foreign ministers from the 16-nation Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, concluded a two-day meeting on 26 May with a strong condemnation of the recent military coup in Niger.

The ministers strongly condemned the putsch which led to the assassination of the President, General Ibrahim Bare Maissanara, by a member of his bodyguard, and called for an independent investigation into the circumstances leading to Maissanara's death.

Northern Ireland

New deadline; Hume hopeful

John Hume, leader of the SI-member Social Democratic and Labour Party, SDLP, and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has welcomed the setting by Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, of a new deadline of 30 June for reaching an accord on the implementation of the agreement made on Good Friday last year. The agreement aimed to set up a new government in the territory where power would be shared between the Unionists, who support the status quo, and nationalists and republicans, who are demanding change.

Territories under Palestinian Authority

Halting new settlements

Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, meeting with King Abdullah of Jordan on 26 May, issued a call for the halting of new Jewish settlements on Palestinian land, as agreed in the Wye River agreement reached by Israelis and Palestinians in the US last year. The call came after it emerged that land from five Arab villages was being sought in order to double the present size of the Jewish population of Maale Adumim, a settlement on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

Panama

SI party in elections

In elections held in Panama on 2 May the Democratic Revolution Party, PRD, a member of the SI, won 33 seats in the 72-seat legislature. The Arnulfista Party, PA, took 11, the Papa Egoró Movement, MPE, 6, the Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement, Molirena, won 6. The remaining six parties shared 14 seats between them.

In the presidential race, Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, PA, won 44.9 per cent of the vote, followed by Martín Torrijos, PRD, with 37.6 per cent.

Paraguay

PRF hopes for renewal

The Revolutionary Febrerista Party, PRF, a member party of the SI, will form constructive opposition to the new coalition government led by President Luis González Macchi in Paraguay. The new administration came into office after widespread popular revulsion in Asunción and other cities in March following the assassination of Vice-President Luis María Argaña and the subsequent flight of former President Raul Cubas, who had been facing impeachment charges, and of the recently released convicted coup leader, Lino Oviedo. The PRF stated its hopes that the rule of law and democratic institutions could be re-established in the country, so opening the way for regeneration in all aspects of Paraguayan life.

In May, 110 officers, including 18 generals, were dismissed from the armed forces, removing many Oviedo supporters.

Portugal

1974 ideals praised

President Jorge Sampaio of Portugal, during 25th anniversary commemorations in Lisbon, declared his pride in the action of the officers of the armed forces who took part in the coup against Marcelo Caetano and the other followers of the former Prime Minister Antonio Salazar in 1974. The President said: 'Twenty-five years later everything looks simpler than it was.... But to overcome that dictatorship demanded much determination and courage. It is a big debt that we owe to those captains.'

Speaking of the lack of vengeance taken against the supporters of the old dictatorship, Mario Soares, the Socialist Party leader who was three times Prime Minister and twice President, declared: 'Portugal needed to forgive and forget and move on.'

Puerto Rico

Island campaign

The Puerto Rico Independence Party, PIP, a member of the Socialist International, is stepping up its campaign of civil disobedience following the death of one person and injuries to four people in April on the island of Vieques, to the east of Puerto Rico, which was being used by the US Navy for active training purposes.

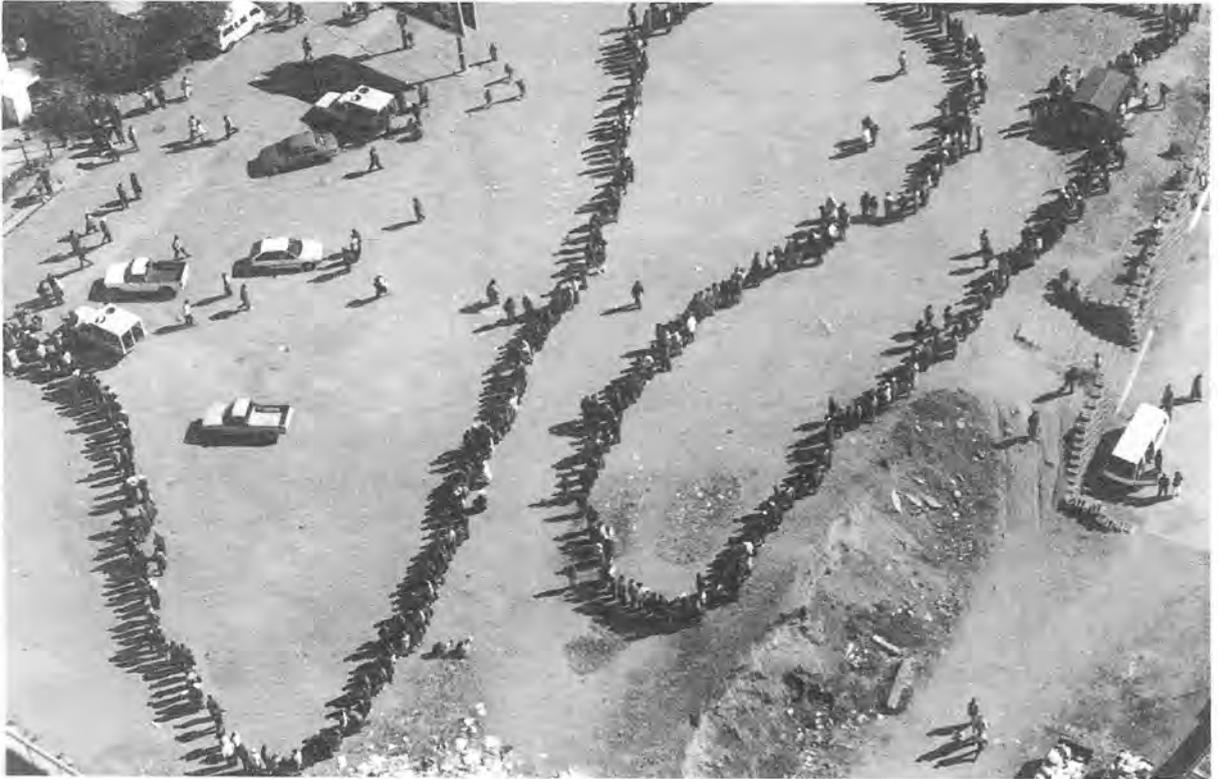
Led by Senator Rubén Berríos, PIP leader, who was imprisoned in 1971 for having carried out similar action against US military activities on the adjoining island of Culebra, a number of PIP members, including Fernando Martín, PIP Vice-President, installed themselves in the military zone on the island in order to try to halt bombing and other military training of US personnel.

San Marino

XXXVIII party congress

The San Marino Socialist Party held its XXXVIII general congress on 9-11 April, taking as its theme 'Socialist tradition, ideals, coherence and commitment for the new millennium'. The SI Secretary General addressed the congress.

Patient
voting in
South Africa



57

Themba Hadebe/Associated Press AP

South Africa

ANC victorious

To the jubilation of its supporters the African National Congress won a larger than expected victory in the elections held on 2 June in South Africa, assuring Thabo Mbeki the country's presidency. (See profile on page 12)

As he acknowledged the victory Mbeki declared, 'The people have spoken. The people have said unequivocally: The ANC leads! In their millions, and without equivocation, without hesitation, the people of South Africa have renewed the mandate of the ANC to govern our country. The poorest of the poor have said they trust the ANC to help them out of their condition of misery. The women of our country have mandated the ANC to continue with the struggle for their upliftment and their emancipation. Our people, both black and white, have

mandated us to remain firm in the pursuit of our vision of a non-racial South Africa, and the important goal of national reconciliation... In a very clear voice the people have said that democracy is alive and well in South Africa.'

In his last State of the Nation address, Nelson Mandela, spoke of the advances made by the African National Congress government since it came to power in 1994, but also lamented the lingering obstacles to racial reconciliation and much of the speech concerned the issue of crime in the country. The President praised the achievements, such as the supply of water, electricity, houses and telephones to millions of South Africans, saying that: 'The steady progress of the past few years has laid the foundation for greater achievements. But the reality is that we can do much, much better... The long walk is not yet over. The prize of a better life has yet to be won'.

Slovak Republic

Meciar defeated

Rudolf Schuster, the candidate of the governing coalition, won 57.2 per cent of the vote in the second round of the presidential elections on 29 May, to become the first directly elected President of the Slovak Republic. Former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar secured 42.8 per cent, the Central Electoral Commission declared, and the turnout was reported as 75.5 per cent.

The country's prospects of eventually joining the European Union were seen by observers to have improved with the rejection of Meciar. Schuster, Mayor of Kosice, had also headed the polls in the first round of balloting on 15 May, but with 47 per cent of the vote the result was below the majority required to avoid a runoff.

Spain

Borrell resigns

The candidate for the prime ministership of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, José Borrell, presented his resignation to the party's 33 member executive council in May.

Former prime minister Felipe González ruled himself out of standing again for the post. 'I'm not joining in. I don't like revivals,' he commented.

Ramón Rubial, President of the PSOE, and an Honorary President of the SI, died on 24 May. (See page 38)

Venezuela

Voters abstain

Nearly 61 per cent of voters abstained from participation in the referendum called on 25 April by President Hugo Chávez to approve the new Constituent Assembly he proposed.

The Assembly idea was nevertheless adopted and it will meet in July.

Senator Timoteo Zambrano, international secretary of SI member party Democratic Action, AD, underlined the lack of participation in a statement.

Chávez, a former soldier, attempted a coup d'état against the constitutional government of Democratic Action in 1992.

From the archive

Lim Kit Siang, MP, General Secretary of the Democratic Action Party, DAP, of Malaysia, visited the London Secretariat of the Socialist International today.

The DAP is a member of the Socialist International, and Lim Kit Siang attended last week's Council Conference of the International in Helsinki. He arrived in Britain after brief visits to Germany and Denmark. In London he will also have talks with officials of the British Labour Party.

Speaking of the current political situation in Malaysia, Lim Kit Siang said that the Sedition Act at present in force stifled any free expression of opinion. This act, said Lim, was designed to prevent all discussion, however moderate of certain constitutional amendments which have entrenched the position of the Malay population. The effect was that virtually any criticism of the Government's policies could be construed as a contravention of the Act.

The DAP General Secretary who was himself imprisoned for over a year following his party's success in the May 1969 general elections, added that there was no way to attempt to change the Sedition Act, because any such attempt would itself constitute a contravention of the Act and therefore be liable for prosecution.

This Sedition Act had been the principal means, said Lim Kit Siang, by which the ruling Alliance had maintained its grip on the country since the 1969 elections in which the DAP made spectacular gains to become the largest opposition party.

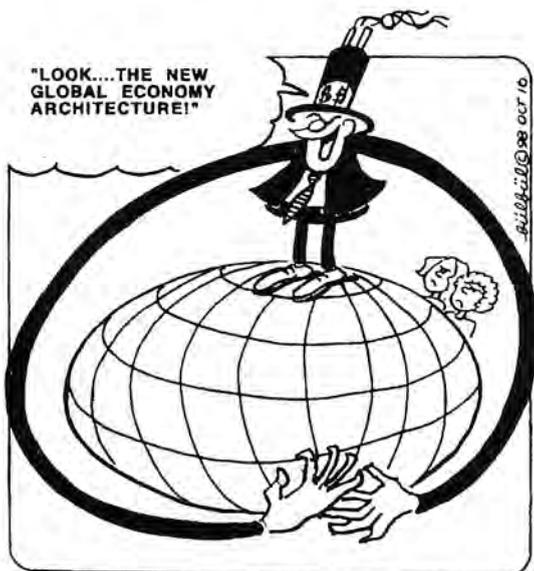
2 June 1971, *Socialist International News*

- 60 million young people are out of work
- which is equal to one economically active person out of ten
- and equal to double the rate of average adult unemployment
- the most vulnerable to unemployment among the young are: young women, the young disabled, young people from ethnic minorities, young people with a low level of education.

- ICFTU Trade Union World



From the French newspaper, *Le Monde*



From *The Commonwealth*, the official journal of the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party, Canada



'Draw me a Europe'
L'Hebdo des socialistes, France