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General Secretary: HANS JANITSCHKE

February 15, 1974.

To Members of the
Middle East Study Group

Dear Comrade,

The Chairman, Robert Pontillon, has asked me to point out that, among the subjects discussed by the meeting of the Study Group on January 18, 1972 were certain items relating to the Arab-Israel conflict which, in his opinion, were outside the terms of reference of the Study Group and should not therefore have been discussed by the Study Group. The terms of reference of the Study Group make it clear that, as regards the Arab-Israel conflict, discussion of the conflict falls within the competence of the Bureau, the Council Conference and the Congress of the International and that, as far as the Study Group is concerned, its role is simply 'the collection of facts and documents concerning the positions of the countries of the area, and political forces inside those countries, with regard to the Arab-Israel conflict.' Robert Pontillon is of the opinion that Items 2 and 4 of the minutes (attached) of the Study Group meeting of January 18, 1972 ('Report of Dutch Labour Party and 'Bologna Conference') do not come within the terms of reference of the Study Group as defined above, and, on his advice, the Secretariat has therefore taken no action in respect of Items 2 and 4 of these minutes.

Rodney Balcomb

Rodney Balcomb.
Assistant General Secretary.

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IN ENGLISH ONLY

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Circular No. X2/74.

February 15, 1974.

To Members of the
Middle East Study Group

MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING

of the

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL STUDY GROUP ON THE MIDDLE EAST

Luxembourg, January 18, 1972

1. Minutes of last meeting. The meeting approved as a true record the minutes of the second meeting of the Study Group, held in London on November 13, 1971 (Circular No. X3/72).
2. Report of Dutch Labour Party. The Dutch Labour Party had submitted to the Study Group as a background document a report by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Dutch Labour Party which had been published in February, 1971. The report, entitled "The Middle East - A Flashpoint" was before the Study Group (Circular No. X2/72), and was to be presented to the Study Group by Harry van den Bergh. As Harry van den Bergh had been unable to attend the present meeting of the Study Group, however, it was decided to invite Harry van den Bergh to present the report to the next meeting of the Study Group, and to postpone any discussion of the document until the next meeting. It was decided that the report should be circulated to parties for information, and that parties should be invited to forward to the Secretariat of the International any comments which they wished to make on the report and should be invited to consider producing reports of this type themselves.

Meeting Centre for Arab and Israeli Youth. The report "The Middle East - A Flashpoint" had suggested that opportunities should be created, in an informal way if necessary, by which especially the younger generation of Arabs and Israelis could communicate with each other. The report had also recommended that the Socialist International should strongly promote and support financially the efforts, which had been made before, to create a permanent meeting centre, where the younger generation of Israel and the Arab countries could meet each other regularly to discuss the possibilities of development of the whole of the Middle

East, (it being obvious that for the time being this could not be realised in the area itself) and had gone on to suggest that the Socialist International could also develop its own initiatives to achieve this communication, in places which the International deemed suitable for this purpose (Cyprus, Paris, London). The Study Group decided that Harry van den Bergh should be asked to make more precise suggestions with regard to such a meeting centre.

3. Study of Egypt; agenda of next meeting. The Study Group discussed the way in which it should conduct its detailed study of Egypt. It was decided that this study of Egypt should begin at the next meeting of the Study Group, which should be a two-day meeting, and to which parties should be urged to send representatives who were experts in Egyptian affairs. Rodney Balcomb reminded the Study Group that two members of the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Union of Egypt had visited the Secretariat of the International on November 9, 1971 at their own request and that during their talks with the General Secretary of the International they had suggested that the Middle East Study Group of the Socialist International should send a fact-finding mission to Egypt. The Study Group considered this question and was of the opinion that the Study Group should begin its work by considering a number of expert reports on Egypt; only when it had acquainted itself in this way with different aspects of Egyptian affairs should the question of a mission to Egypt be considered, because only then would the Study Group be in a position properly to assess what its exact objectives should be in undertaking such a mission.

The Study Group discussed the question of expert reports for the next meeting of the Study Group, and it was decided to invite the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to prepare for the Study Group a report on economic and social policy in Egypt. It was also decided to extend an invitation, via the Egyptian Embassy in London, to the Arab Socialist Union of Egypt to prepare a paper for the Study Group; this paper should describe the organisation, structure, statute, ideology and policy platform of the Arab Socialist Union. Zvi Harmor agreed to ask the Israel Labour Party to prepare a paper for the Study Group and the Chairman, Robert Pontillon, said that the French Socialist Party would also prepare a report. As regards the paper to be prepared by the Israel Labour Party, two possible subjects were suggested: i) that the paper should describe the general political situation in Egypt; or ii) that the paper should set out ways in which Israel and the Arab countries could work together to promote economic and social development in the Middle East (assuming that a state of peace had been reached which permitted normal contact and cooperation between Israel and the Arab countries).

It was also suggested that reports and documentation about Egypt should also be sought from Egyptian government sources and from libraries and institutes concerned with international affairs.

4. Bologna Conference. Luciano de Pascalis informed the Study Group of preparations which were being made for the holding in Italy, possibly in the autumn of 1972, of the "Bologna Conference", which the organisers hoped would bring together representatives from Israel and the Arab countries for talks on the basis of United Nations Resolution No. 242. He said that the Conference was being prepared by an Italian organising committee which reported to an international committee consisting of representatives of national committees, and that the presence of Israeli representatives at the Conference was a pre-condition for the holding of the Conference.

After considering the report by Luciano de Pascalis, the Study Group was of the opinion that it might be possible, at a later stage, to recommend to the Bureau that member parties of the International should consider participating in this conference; this would of course depend on future developments, however, and the Study Group felt that essential pre-requisites for any such recommendation should be that the basis of discussion at the Conference should be United Nations Resolution No. 242, that effective representation of Israel should be guaranteed, and that the delegates participating should be truly representative. The Study Group agreed that it should follow the preparations for the proposed "Bologna Conference" and should keep the Bureau informed of developments.

5. Date and Place of next meeting. It was decided to take up the invitation extended some months previously by the Swedish Social Democratic Party and to hold the next meeting of the Study Group in Sweden in May, if this was convenient for the Swedish Party. The Rapporteur was instructed to investigate whether it would be convenient for the Swedish party to act as host to the next meeting of the Study Group on May 12 - 13 or May 19 - 20 (preferably May 12 - 13).

LIST of PARTICIPANTS

<u>France</u> :	Robert Pontillon (Chairman)	International Secretary of Party
<u>Israel</u> :	Zvi Harmor	Director, European Liaison Office of Party
<u>Italy (PSDI)</u> :	Giampiero Rolandi	London representative of Party
<u>Italy (PSI)</u> :	Luciano De Pascalis	International Secretary of Party
	Gianni Finocchiaro	International Department of Party
	Gino Bianco	London representative of Party
<u>ICSDW</u> :	Anna Rudling	Chairman
<u>Socialist International</u> :	Bruno Pittermann	Chairman
	Hans Janitschek	General Secretary
	Rodney Balcomb	Assistant General Secretary
<u>Apologies</u> :	Dutch Labour Party	
