

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Annex II.

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To members of the Bureau

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CONFIDENTIAL

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SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Draft proposals

At the Socialist International Party Leader's Conference held in London on November 11, there was discussion on the situation as regards the Israel-Arab conflict and also on relations between Western Europe and the Middle East. In connection with this discussion, Dr. Bruno Kreisky, Federal Chancellor of Austria and Chairman of the Austrian Socialist Party, proposed to the conference that a fact-finding body of the Socialist International should be established at the highest level. The Party Leader's Conference gave general support to this proposal, and it was agreed that the proposal should be placed on the agenda of the meeting of the Bureau of the Socialist International to be held in London on December 9.

Karl Czernetz, International Secretary of the Austrian Socialist Party, put before the Bureau on December 9 amplified proposals by Bruno Kreisky concerning a Socialist International fact-finding body on the Middle East. The Bureau discussed these proposals, and decided that a fact-finding mission of the Socialist International should be established, composed of representatives of member parties at the very highest level, with the aim of visiting the Middle East in January 1974.

It was agreed that the fact-finding mission should be composed as follows:

- 1 representative of the Austrian Socialist Party (Dr. Bruno Kreisky had offered to act as leader of the mission);
- 1 representative of the member parties in the Benelux countries (possibly from the Dutch Labour Party);
- 1 representative of the British Labour Party;
- 1 representative of the French Socialist Party;
- 1 representative of the German Social Democratic Party;
- 1 representative of the Italian Social Democratic Party;
- and 1 representative of the Scandinavian member parties (possibly from the Swedish Social Democratic Party).

It was agreed that the mission should visit both Israel and Arab countries (the first country to be visited being Israel), and that the members of the mission should all travel together and visit the same countries (without which proper comparison and evaluation would be very difficult).

The Bureau decided to hold another meeting of the Bureau on January 6 to complete the preparation of the mission. It requested Karl Czernetz to act in the meantime as rapporteur with the assistance of the Secretariat of the International, and to consult with the parties nominated for the mission in order to establish who would be the party representatives who would participate in the mission, which would be the best dates for the mission, what the general terms of reference of the mission should be and which countries should be visited. On the basis of the consultations conducted by Karl Czernetz, a paper should then be circulated to all member parties represented on the Bureau, in advance of January 6 Bureau meeting, containing proposals by Karl Czernetz based on the replies received from the parties.

A letter was accordingly sent to the parties nominated for the mission, containing questions on the above-mentioned aspects of the mission and replies have so far been received from all the parties nominated for the mission, with the exception of the Scandinavian parties and the German Social Democratic Party, whose detailed replies are expected to be received shortly. The Belgian and Luxembourg parties have expressed their agreement that the Dutch Party should represent the parties of the Benelux countries, and the Dutch Party has agreed in principle to do this; the Dutch Party has stated however, that the financial cost of participating in the mission constitutes a difficult problem for the party.

Please find attached an analysis of the replies from parties, together with proposals by the rapporteur. As stated above, the detailed replies from the German and Scandinavian parties have not yet been received, and it is unlikely now that their replies can be circulated in advance of the Bureau meeting on January 6; their replies may of course contain some new elements not contained in the attached pages.

Rodney Balcomb

Rodney Balcomb
Assistant General Secretary
(acting in the absence of the
General Secretary)

REPLIES FROM PARTIES AND PROPOSALS CONCERNING SOCIALIST
INTERNATIONAL MISSION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

A. The questions put to parties, and their replies, are as follows:

QUESTION 1: "What, in your party's opinion, should be the exact terms of reference of the mission?"

On the basis of the proposals and discussions at the Party Leader's Conference on November 11 and the Bureau meeting on December 9, Karl Czernetz proposes the following draft terms of reference:

'The fact-finding group would have to find out what the countries concerned regard:

- (a) as conditions for a peaceful solution of the present Middle East conflict which would lead to a permanent and just peace in the area;
- (b) particularly as secure and acceptable frontiers and what guarantees were felt to be necessary;
- (c) as a humane solution of the problem of Palestinian refugees;
- (d) as necessary conditions for a long-range economic co-operation between all Middle Eastern countries, and also co-operation between the Middle East and Europe.

'The fact-finding group will report about their findings to the Socialist International for further political decisions and action.' "

REPLIES:

The Austrian, Belgian, Italian and Luxembourg parties accept these proposed terms of reference without any additional comment.

The Dutch Party accepts these proposed terms of reference with the one exception that it wishes the phrase in (c) "as a humane solution" to be replaced by the phrase "as a humane and political solution".

The French Party does not disagree with the four points (a), (b), (c), (d) but feels, however, that point (d) is the most important point, and that answers to the problems raised in points (a), (b) and (c) flow from, and are related to, the conclusions reached concerning point (d).

In its reply, the British Party states that in general it accepts the points (a), (b), (c) and (d), although it would prefer as loose a mandate as possible for the mission, and, therefore, would be quite happy simply to accept point (a) as the basis for the visit.

The British reply also proposes an additional term of reference. It proposes that the mission should "study and report on the possibilities of contact between the Socialist International and various sections of Arab political opinion, particularly those who claim to be Socialists".

QUESTION 2: "Which countries, in addition to Israel, should be visited by the mission? On the basis of the discussion in the Bureau meeting on December 9, Karl Czernetz proposes: Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Algeria, Libya, Lebanon, perhaps also Tunisia; contact also to be made with leaders of the Palestinians."

REPLIES:

The Luxembourg party expresses agreement with these proposals and makes no additional comment. The Belgian party expresses agreement with these proposals and states that Tunisia should definitely be included.

The Austrian party agrees with this list and regards a visit to Algeria, Libya and Tunisia as very important, even though these countries are not among the countries principally involved in the Arab-Israel conflict.

The French party does not oppose visiting any of the countries listed (including Tunisia), but has certain reservations concerning Syria, because of Syria's present attitude with regard to the Israeli prisoners of war.

The Dutch party considers that the list is too long and proposes that Libya and Tunisia be removed from the list.

The Italian party believes that only the four countries most directly involved in the conflict - Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria - should be visited by the mission, and that the mission should not visit "oil states" such as Saudi Arabia or Iraq because the mission would give the appearance of being in a weak position if it visited those countries.

The British reply states: "the list of Arab countries for a possible visit does seem rather long; it would, of course, be very good if all countries could be visited, but it seems to us that priorities should be given to the three countries with common borders with Israel, i.e. Syria, Egypt and Jordan."

QUESTION 3: "Who will participate in the mission on behalf of your party (member parties from the Scandinavian countries and Benelux are, of course, requested to consult amongst themselves as quickly as possible to decide who will represent them)."

REPLIES:

The Austrian party will be represented by Bruno Kreisky who, as stated above, has offered to lead the mission.

The British party is likely to be represented, if the mission's visit takes place in January, by either Harold Wilson (it is very unlikely that he would be able to participate), James Callaghan (the Party Chairman and Foreign Affairs Spokesman) or Ian Mikardo (Chairman of the Party's International Committee).

The French party's choice of representative will depend upon the date fixed for the mission, but if the date is convenient, the party's representative may be François Mitterrand.

The Italian party's representative will be Antonio Cariglia, leader of the party's parliamentary group. The Dutch party will try to send as its representative a government minister, but it will not be possible for the party leader and Prime minister, Joop den Uyl, to participate in the mission.

QUESTION 4: "What would be the most convenient dates in January for the mission, as far as your representative on the mission is concerned (the rapporteur suggests that all the countries to be visited could perhaps be included in one single trip, and that, for this purpose, approximately two weeks would be needed); apart from stating what would be the most convenient dates for your representative, please state also if any dates would be completely impossible for your representative."

REPLIES:

The Dutch party agree in principle to the sending of a mission in January, and think that the second half of January would be best; an exact date, however, as far as they are concerned would depend on who is chosen as the representative from their party.

The British party do not propose any particular date in January and would try to meet any date proposed by the Bureau.

The French party do not propose any particular date and would in principle accept whichever date was proposed by the Bureau.

As regards the Italian party, Antonio Cariglia, because of his parliamentary and party duties, cannot devote more than about one week to participation in the mission and this could be either one unbroken week or two trips each of 3 - 4 days; he could leave on a mission immediately after the January 6 Bureau meeting, but his availability after January 10 (when the Italian parliament reconvenes) would be subject to parliamentary and party engagements which may arise.

B. Conclusions and proposals by rapporteur

In general, the terms of reference proposed by Karl Czernetz in Question 1 appear acceptable, although there are some differences of emphasis. There is also the additional proposal of the British party referred to above concerning contact with various sections of Arab political opinion; the rapporteur feels that the type of contacts referred to here are already covered by the terms of reference of the Socialist International's Study Group on the Middle East.

As regards the countries to be visited, there is clearly a division of opinion between those parties which believe that only Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan should be visited, and those parties which are in favour of visiting a greater number of countries. This is clearly a question on which the Bureau will have to take a decision.

As regards party representation on the mission, it is clear from soundings taken that it is difficult for some party leaders to spend a period of, say, two weeks, away from their own countries. If it were decided that the mission should visit only Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan and perhaps also make contact with the Palestinians, then such a trip could probably be accomplished in one week. If, however, it is decided to visit several additional countries, then it may be preferable, in order to ensure participation at the highest level, to divide the mission into two separate trips. If the mission is to be divided into two separate trips, it may be thought preferable to visit on the first trip Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan, and to make contact with the Palestinians and to visit the remaining countries on the second trip; alternatively, it may be thought preferable to divide the countries into two separate trips on the basis of geographical convenience. If the latter solution is preferred, the rapporteur proposes that the first trip should consist of a visit to Israel, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria and that the second trip should consist of a trip to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, also making contact with the Palestinians.

As regards the date of the mission, the Bureau may perhaps have overlooked the consideration that Israel, which is to be the first country to be visited, can only be profitably visited when the new government, following the December 31 elections, has been formed. As the process of government formation in Israel could conceivably take some time and as party leaders, following the final decisions of the January 6 Bureau meeting concerning the mission will also need time to re-arrange their schedules in order to be free to participate in the mission, the rapporteur proposes, if the mission is limited to visiting only the countries directly involved in the war, that the mission's visit should take place at the end of February or beginning of March; if the mission is to be divided into

two trips comprising all the countries mentioned above, then the rapporteur proposes that the first trip should take place at the end of February or beginning of March and the second trip at the middle or end of March.

We will try to circulate the replies of the German and Scandinavian parties as soon as they are obtained, but it is possible that these replies may be available only at the Bureau meeting itself.

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