SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

88a ST. JOHN'S WOOD HIGH STREET, LONDON NW8 7SJ

Phone: 01-586 1101 Grams: INTESOCON, LONDON Telex: 261735

Circular No. M.11/73
April 6, 1973

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

MINUTES of the BUREAU MEETING of the SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

London, March 17-18, 1973

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5. THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

Karl Czernetz reported on a) the Helsinki preparatory talks for the Conference on European Security and Cooperation, and b) the Vienna talks on mutual balanced force reductions (MBFR). A summary of his reports is attached in an Annexe. Having heard the reports, the Bureau decided to convene a meeting of the Socialist International's European Security Study Group at the time of the next Bureau meeting. It was further decided that the German Social Democratic Party should be invited to present a paper to this meeting, and also that the Israel Labour Party and the International Union of Socialist Youth should have the status of permanent observers in the Study Group.

6. RELATIONS BETWEEN PARTIES

Ron Hayward protested on behalf of the National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party at what he called unwarranted direct interference in the affairs of the Labour Party by certain members of fraternal parties. He referred to a speech made in Britain by the former President of the EEC Commission and member of the Dutch Labour Party, Sicco Mansholt, on the eve of the 1972 Labour Party conference which was seen as a direct attempt to influence the delegates on the European issue. He also referred to a letter sent by the International Secretary of the French Socialist Party, Robert Pontillon, to the Labour Committee for Europe on the eve of the Parliamentary Labour Party's decision on whether to attend the European Parliament, which had been released to the press in an attempt to sway Labour MPs in their decision. In both cases, he said, the attempts had had precisely the opposite effect : the 1972 conference had become even more determined in its opposition to Common Market entry on the Conservative terms, while the vote of the Parliamentary Labour Party in favour of a boycott of the European Parliament had become even more certain. He said that he had written to both the Dutch Labour Party and the French Socialist Party on these matters but had received no acknowledgement or reply whatsoever. He said that the British Labour Party would accept any criticism of its policies within the Bureau or other confidential body of the International. But it would not accept direct public criticism aimed at interfering with the Labour Party's internal decision-making processes.

Relus ter Beek said that the Dutch Labour Party also had its problems with Sicco Mansholt's habit of making controversial statements that represented only his own personal position. He said that the speeches he had made on the Labour Party's European policy had not been on behalf of the PvdA, which had never in any official statement or resolution either attacked or opposed the British Labour Party's decision. He said that no reply had been sent to Ron Hayward's letter because it had been decided that Party Leader Joop den Uyl should reply personally at the Paris Party Leaders Conference. He promised that the PvdA would now send the formal reply requested by Ron Hayward.

Robert Pontillon said that a reply to the Labour Party had been sent by the French Socialist Party. He said that the trouble arising out of his letter to the Labour Committee for Europe had been due to a

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