

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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A Multilingua "SIN"?

After Merete Soerensen had to do the editing of SIN on her own, I (Steen Carlsen) offered her a little assistance - so we have both been contributing to the subsequent article.

This restarted the discussion on the purpose of **SERVAS** and SIN, especially concerning the question of a multilingual SIN. How to follow the recommendation from the Conference in Rome to bring articles in non-English languages, when so very few contribute with non-English material - and where should we draw the line between the acceptable and the non acceptable languages?

Probably, no-one wants us to introduce a new Tower of Babylon; that means to bring articles in Danish, Polish..... leaving alone languages like Thai, Hebrew and Arabic where the typesetting limits are immanent. Although it would increase our work as editors, we might manage to deal with articles in main languages like German, French,

Spanish and evt. Italian. But the question is, how much will be gained, as long as so many important languages (like Russian, Hindi, and you name it) still remain excluded from SIN? Moreover, would it be a rational use of the means of Servas Int., paper etc. to bring out issues, where most of the readers can only be expected to understand parts of the content?

This leaves us with the questions: Will this stressing of the differences of languages help opening our eyes for the richness of the differences among people?

Could our efforts to understand the articles in non-English languages help us appreciate the variety of customs and points of view and increase our tolerance towards one another? Will it provide us with a deeper insight into the difficulties of achieving a mutual understanding?

At the European Servas Conference in London in June this year the question was discussed, too, but no conclusion nor any

recommendation was reached. However, we want to be open to the positive aspects, which the introduction of non-English languages in SIN might contain.

Accordingly, we bring the report from the Servas-meeting in Haute-Savoie in French.

Linked to this issue arises the question, in which form we shall bring the English material. Shall we try to make it as grammatically correct as possible, evt. assisted by native English speakers, or shall we print the articles in the most possibly authentic form? We have chosen the latter, based on considerations similar to the above mentioned; i.e. the English readers will be challenged to improve their understanding of the problems connected with expressing oneself in a foreign language.

The question of Esperanto as a common language is dealt with in the following article.

We'll welcome your comments - and evt. articles in non-English languages! -

Route d'Amitie-Sentieri Insieme 1988

La 4eme rencontre internationale alpine s'est deroulee du 15 au 17 Juillet, au chalet de la Fondation Albert Faletti au Chinailon (Haute-Savoie).

Comment relater par ecrit la chaleur d'amitie degagee par 70 Servas Yeunispendant 3 jours de melodies, de discussions en anglais, francais, italien, allemand, de chansons dans les memes langues ainsi qu'en arabe, hebreu, japonais. C'est aussi un capharnaum, bien sympathique quand meme, de cuilleres ou verres we l'on recherche propres pour deguster un dessert, de sacs de couchage, d'interventions diverses pour lesquelles l est difficile d'obtenir le silence, tellement sont riches les conversations qui vont bon train.

Le chalet tres typiquement savoyard et donc tout en bois, date de 1750. 11 faut se baisser pour entrer dans la saine de sejour qui etait lecurie de cette ancienne ferme et ce sont les plus petits qui se cognent le plus sou-vent. Le trop-plein de vie deborde sur le balcon qui donne sur un panorama

magnifique. La montee a l'Aiguille Verte et au Lac de Lessy transforme notre groupe pourtant bien soude en une longue caravane de plusieurs km., tellement sont differentes les conditions physiques des uns et des autres depuis Massimiliano qui ne Bait pas dire qu'il a "tre anni", jusqu'aux jeunes qui mment de front ascension en montagne et discussions philosophiques.

Après la traditionnelle fondue savoyarde qui rassemble 71 personnes dans un espace de 40 m, nous accueillons Christian REGAT, journaliste au Courrier Savoyard qui a choisi de nous parler des Chartreuses en Savoie et Piemont. Dans un italien parfait - aux dires memes des meilleurs specialistes - puis en francais, ensuite traduit en anglais par D. Northey, Christian nous parle avec chaleur et une precision d'historien de ce sujet qu'il a choisi de traiter pour nous en raisons des liens qui unissent l'histoire des Chartreuses de ce Cote et de l'autres des Alpes.

Après la conference, les questions viennent des italiens surtout, et pas seulement de ceux du Nord. Yutaka, professeur a l'Universite de Tokyo, suit avec un vif interet et un plaisir evident cette conference un peu techech

nique pour certains mais we lui apprecie dons 3 langues, qu'il possede parfaitement.

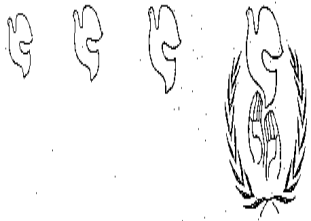
Yutaka Fujiwara etait le voyageur le plus lointain, mais it y avait wand meme 8 nations representees: is France 1'Italie, l'Allemagne, le Danemark, les USA, le Maroc, le Japon et la Suisse, sans compter la presence juive americaine.

Certains sont inquiets de l'organisation des "Sentieri insieme" ulterieurs, si les effectifs continuent de grossir. Mais pour l'instant, on est aux remerciements et aux congratulations et apres la grande danse israelienne "Mal Mal Mal" sur un pre a cote de la Chartreuse du Reposoir, plu sieurs avaient les larmes aux yeux et personne n'avait a se decider a par-tit.

Luigi Uslenghi nous console en nous invitant a la 5eme edition de "Route d'Amitie" en Italie vers i.e Simplon en Juillet 1989 a quelques kilometres de la frontiere suisse.

L'amitie internationale progresse et la paix est possible!

LAURENT CHAPPUIS



Esperanto Servas la Pacamikon

"Servas" is an Esperanto word, but there are remarkably few Esperanto speakers listed in the current U.K. host book. And I have never received a traveller who spoke the international language.; some seemed unaware of its existence. This is a great pity. A powerful tool of communication for the use of the ordinary people of the world who may not be blessed with the gift of tongues is being neglected. Servas is a wonderful concept for spreading understanding and friendship throughout the world, but I wonder how many potential travellers - with much valuable goodwill to offer - stay at home because they simply cannot master foreign languages. And, how many travellers limit themselves to visiting those countries in which they happen to have a language skill?

Esperanto opens up the whole world - in a refreshing spirit of equality, for it is native to no particular nation. And, although its logical construction makes it far easier to learn than national languages (it is reckoned to be five times easier than French for English-speaking people), every-one has to make a conscious effort to become proficient in it. Esperanto is a neutral language.

Its potential effectiveness was recognised by both Hitler, who banned it as an "arm of the Jews", and Stalin, who suppressed it for its "bourgeois internationalism". Now, for the first time in its history, there is no country where Esperanto is forbidden. It is now a living language and at the annual congress of the Universala Esperanto-Asocio there are usually up to four thousand enthusiasts.

Esperanto is popular in the Soviet Union. In a recent issue of Paco, published by the Mondpaca Esperantista Movado (Esperantist Movement for World Peace), I counted no less than 114 individual Soviet requests for Esperanto pen-friends - in addition to 9 group announcements from clubs. They were all reaching out hands in friendship from East to West.

One of my own long-standing Esperanto pen-friends is Vladimir. He is the head of a music school in Sochi, a spa town on the Black Sea riviera. Recently, I met him there, face to face for the first.

We greeted each other with familiarity of friends and yet it was a cautious encounter. We were a little unsure of what to expect for, after all, a man is more than he is able to set down on paper.

"Saluton, Vladimiro I"
"Saluton, Henriko I"

Then, we clasped each other warmly and the written word became flesh. That first evening, Vladimir took me to a meeting of the Sochi Esperanto Club at a Russkii Chai tea restaurant where, as it happened, there was also a group of visiting French Esperantists. Russians, French and solitary Englishman met on the common ground of Esperantujo (Esperanto-land) - a neutral zone where communication is spontaneous among people of varied nationalities. It was a lively evening. We sat around a long table and drank Russian tea flavoured with slices of sugared lemon or honey. A young Russian girl recited, charmingly, in Esperanto while her devoted mother and babushka looked on, anxiously. At the end of the evening, someone thrust upon me the Esperanto version of Auld Lang Syne and we finished up in traditional Scottish style. The gaiety, conviviality and sheer pleasure of that memorable occasion was only possible through the common language which we shared - Esperanto. On another never to be forgotten evening, I was invited to supper at Vladimir's flat. The meal was prepared by his mother and there was caviar with sausage and cheese, a pork Uish with potatoes and bunches of green herbs - and fresh strawberries. We also drank a great deal of Stolichnaya vodka and Sovetskoye shampanskoye, because really important toasts like, "To Peace and Friendship I", have to be drunk, not in sips but, "AGis la fundo I" (To the bottom of the glass I). Esperanto was invented by Dr. L. L. Zamenhof, a Jewish oculist born in Bialustok, Poland, in 1859. His hymn of hope, La Espero, which is sung at inter-national gatherings, opens on a cry of triumph: En la mondo venis nova sento (A new feeling has come into the world I). A few lines later, it continues: Al la mend' eterne militanta, AGi promesas sanktan harmonion. The hundred year old promise of world harmony has yet to be fulfilled. Why not resolve to learn Esperanto yourself and add a new dimension to your Servas commitment? The Esperanto association of your own country will be very pleased to hear from you.

Henry Bilbrough,
'Espero', 18 Lakeside, FAIRFORD.
Glos GL18 2BE
Gloucestershire, ENGLAND.

Esperanto serves the peace lover.

From the Israel Peace Secretary.

As I started to be the peace secretary of Servas in Israel, I started to connect ties to other peace secretaries in Israel and other peace organizations. But during the last three months every time came out the issue of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the problems there. Those problems effect our daily life in Israel. We do not try to hide the problems, but Servas is not the stage for the debate about the Palestinian problem. Any point of view and any way of looking at the Palestinian problems or the Israeli-Arab conflict must raise its political point of view.

Servas is a non political and nongovernmental organization. Our main idea is that by every connection between two people we'll build a better world, a world of peace. And that means, that by meeting on a person to person level with another person - an Arab, Druz, Christian - in Israel or Italy, Australia, India or Mexico, we'll be able to exchange our points of view of problems in the world and ofcourse of the Middle East and try by talking to understand the issues, that we hear all the time through somebody else's eye or ear - that of the reporter, camera or interviewer on TV.

I invite every person to come and visit and talk with Arabs, Jews etc. in Israel and understand; that is the Servas Way. March 1988, Dany Bar.



The Peace Diary lists, among others, European Network East-West Dialogue, c/o Dieter Esche, Niebuhrstr.61, D-1000. Berlin 12, as a source for those who are interested in developments, official and non-official peace-and-justice movements in the East. The official ones are listed; and according to reviews their publications (e.g. from the Soviet Peace Council) are now obviously being influenced by glasnost and prestroika.

To be a patriotic (citizen) late in the 20th century is indistinguishable from being a loyal citizen of the planet as a whole. From Robert Johansen's book "The National Interest and the Human Interest".

Travellers' Reports

Overcoming Prejudices

from Martin Kaiser, Bonn, West Germany:
The country of unlimited possibilities. That is what they called it in earlier times. Later, after everything had gone worse in the world and resources had become short, everywhere they said: It is the country of limited possibilities. Two letters changing a myth spread in Germany after the war. That was, basically, what I had learned about the United States at school, besides geographical, economic and political facts. And, of course, all those prejudices: Americans are superficial. They have a throw-away society. They don't know much about the rest of the world. And they don't care. They drink Coke and eat hamburgers. They suffer from having no history and they don't have any culture. Everything of this is true. And everything of this is not true. It depends on what you are looking for. If you really want to, you get your prejudices confirmed. The same happens when you look at what they say about Germans: They are the organizers, the technocrats. Nobody can keep them from working. They are authoritarian and very punctual. After traveling all over the country, there is no way of summarizing all my impressions. I found Americans who talked deeply; who didn't throw away so much carelessly; who knew a lot about the world, who cared and were proud of their history. I found out that the variety of people is much greater than in Germany. Everything, really everything, is represented. Simply, because it is such a large country. "Where are you from?" I am asked by a computer science student in Kansas. "Germany," I say. He thinks for a while. "Which Germany?" he asks. "What do you mean?" He explains: "Are you from East Germany, West Germany or Nazi Germany?" I am confused, insecure. Is he teasing? No, he is serious. I explain that you cannot just go from East Germany to somewhere else, that there are restrictions, political problems, that there is a wall. And I say that Nazi Germany has ceased to exist in 1945. His only sources on Germany were movies with secret agents and spies during the Nazi period. This was why he believed that it was still existing. Nobody believed me this story. In the Kansas City Trailways bus station, we meet an Amish family. We are sharing the same table in the small restaurant. Their Bible is written in German, they tell me. In Germany they would be outsiders, I think. Here, maybe, is more room for them. Their economic performance is admired. This is what counts: Not what you look like and what you know, but how you perform. I don't know if I really like this mentality or not. What to tell them?
"I have seen the movie," I say. "You know, this one on the Amish people, 'Witness'." "We heard about that," the woman replies. "But we don't believe in worldly pleasure-such as movies," she adds smilingly. I feel stupid. Probably I have not understood much about them. On the East Coast we meet

somebody who works for a congressman. He is very well informed about everything, asks questions about the Greens in Germany, is fascinated by the development of the ecological movement. Cautious questions on anti-Americanism in Germany come up. How to explain it? "It's not the people," I say. "It's politics. There is our strong peace movement. They demonstrate against weapons all over the world. They don't fight Americans. They fight the cold warriors and the profit-makers of the armament industry in the US-as they fight them everywhere else." Suddenly I remember that Servas is also a peace organization. "Don't you see that so many Germans are visiting the US? They would not come here if they did not like the country. We don't fight countries, we just fight certain structures, certain ideas." They can be found everywhere. And people promoting peace just by encountering people can also be found everywhere. Prejudices are fading. The idea is clarified: Traveling and encountering people is like being a small piece in a puzzle game. You are only a small part of the whole-but without you it would be incomplete: When I came back to Germany, I told people about my girlfriend in the US. Most of them said that they felt very sorry for us. That they thought there was no future in a relationship across the Atlantic Ocean. Only one said: "This is a great chance for you two." I suddenly felt that this friend had a very American attitude and philosophy. Maybe it is not the unlimited possibilities. But it is the belief that you can make it. It is this "finally you'll make it if you try only hard enough." Who knows? I hope they are right.

Visit to Kenya

from Carolyn Kenyon Lange, Ithaca, NY: I stayed with one Servas family-that of Lydia Okwatta, outside of Yala; Kenya. I chose this family: because Lydia is listed as a health educator and I was particularly interested in health care in Africa. The people in rural Kenya were always helpful and kind and most interested in white faces from Europe or the USA. The Okwattas were gracious hosts who spent much time with me and clearly viewed my visit as something very special. To know the soul of a country, one must know its people, and I am convinced the best way to do this is by staying in their homes. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to meet Lydia Okwatta and her family and friends.

In the past I was a Servas host, and I want to become active again.

Visit to Europe

Celeste Lane, El Verano, California. U.S.A.
It would be difficult to pinpoint how and where my attitudes changed after such a long trip (10 months in Europe) seeing so many different places. Every person I met added a bit to my perception of things.
The only serious problem was that I found it difficult to coordinate my very unfixed schedule to notifying hosts in advance. I would have enjoyed visiting many more hosts, but sometimes found it very time consuming with no hosts able to host me.
I enjoyed the Servas parts of my trip very much, and perhaps on another trip would make them more of a focal point. I was very disappointed in Spain not to be able to contact even one free host-who could-accommodate or even meet me. The Spanish speaking countries were of great interest to me, and I would have specially appreciated this. But I was of course able to meet natives in other ways.
I believe it is important for SERVAS to stress in an interview or in written material not to count on Servas as a safe option for sleeping spots of times (especially if telephoning without a few days notice) no - one is available. Also don't count on SERVAS in communist countries.



Visit to Japan

from Helaine K. Minkus, Eau Claire, WI:
I stayed with the Aoyama family in Sagara, Japan, twice in 1986 and again this year. There is no way I can adequately express the depth of my gratitude to them nor of my love for the entire family. They were remarkably patient with my initially halting Japanese and made me feel very loved and looked after. Joseki and his father, who are Zen Buddhist priests, allowed me to observe ceremonies at the temple and willingly answered my questions. There were three small children when I arrived and twins were born in May. I was happily able to participate in childrearing as well as to observe. While I was at the temple, other Servas visitors came-a Swedish couple, an American couple, an American woman and a Swiss man-and I was able to share the Aoyamas' enthusiasm about various Servas visitors who have stopped over the ten years that they have belonged, and it is obvious that the experience is as positive for hosts as it is for travelers.



European Experiences

from David Tavaréz, Chihuahua, Mexico:

Thank you very, very much for having been the means through which I was able to have many pleasant Servas contacts throughout my three-month long trip in Europe. I have just returned home; I sincerely feel my attitudes towards many important issues have changed from lukewarm aloofness to a more mature consciousness. Sometimes it was like being educated again. First of all, the vision that people in Mexico have about Europe and Europeans comes from movies and clichés and remotely remembered history lessons. With my journey, I came close to the daily lives and worries of different people in different countries—yet they seemed so similar to those of Mexican people. I saw their strong sense of nationality—that some-

times degenerates in regionalism—something we have a lack of in my country. Their problems—unemployment, poverty, social indifference and many others—seemed just a smaller reflex of ours. I saw a lot of individuals making a difference by taking a stand against nebulosity, invincible-looking problems—nuclear warheads arriving to Holland, or housing problems in London—and making slow but encouraging progress. I thought: Maybe this is the way to deal with mighty menaces that seem so unbeatable, perhaps even abstract and well out of the reach of normal people. Perhaps if each and every one of us takes a small step. I brought with me a photo book with pictures from my travels through northern and southern Mexico, and from the border. I answered every question and 'broke' many myths. Most people were sincerely interested in our lifestyles, costumes and problems—and they saw me as an individual, as David, not as the Mexican." I believe they now have a little more accurate impression about Mexico and America.

Visit to Costa Rica

Many tourists make the long, difficult journey over the rocky road to the high cloud forest where the Quaker community of Monte Verde is located. They stay in any of several pensions and hike in the beautiful government forest reserve. But with the Servas Letter of Introduction, the visitor has the opportunity to get inside the community, find meaningful work in the camps where they live with their families and to find a market for the crafts they are producing.

Molly and Miguel travel a to visit in the refugees, mostly Salvadorans, to homes of the hosts, who explain the history and activities of Monte Verde. Servas hosts Molly and Miguel are a dedicated Costa Rican couple who do a great deal of work in helping to visit in the homes of the hosts, who explain the history and activities of Monte Verde. Servas hosts Molly and Miguel are a dedicated Costa Rican couple who do a great deal of work in helping great deal, taking donated school supplies and clothing to the camps. Taking part in the Quaker meeting, visiting their school, enjoying the monthly community pot-luck lunch on Sunday and hearing from other hosts, Bob and Susie, about their drive to raise money to buy parts of the rain forest before it is demolished to make way for cattle ranching are all examples of the experiences that await the Servas traveler. In time, friends of the hosts become your friends as well. My host, Ana, took me with her on an all-day bus ride that passed through a panorama of scenic and varied terrain. Finally we reached our destination, the coffee plantation of Ana's friends, located in the mountains within sight of Panama. Our hosts were a friendly, retired couple whose 15 children and 50 grandchildren were still living nearby and growing coffee. When we went for a walk to visit a neighbor in Panama, it was a surprise to find that we crossed the border without realizing it because it was unmarked and unguarded. *Why?* Costa Rica is a country which has not had an army for 39 years! Trust has replaced bonier guards.

by Kay Lazarus

To Madagascar with Servas

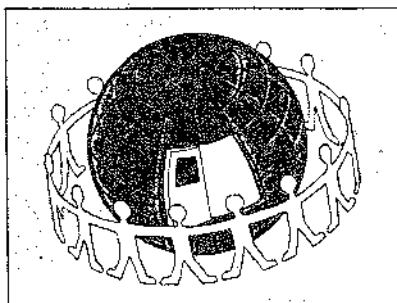
I had wanted to go to Madagascar for years, and years. When the chance finally arose, it was through Servas that I got my introduction to the Malagasy. The country at present only has one member, in the Capital, Antananarivo, so I was unable to go on a protracted 'Servas tour. However, Victor met me at the airport and saw me through my first vulnerable days in his country, the first I had visited outside Europe. Antananarivo was an immediate assault on my senses. The buildings breathed French colonialism, the lethal pavements full of holes the effluvia of sewage. The streets are flu-shed blue in summer with the Jacarandas and flaming red in winter with the Poinsettias. The urban opportunists have only recently cottoned on to the possibilities offered by still relatively scant tourism. 'But could I stay here a year? At first, confused, I decided no, but after my first excursion 1000 miles south to Fort Dauphin, exhilaration triumphed over agony and the tragic beauty of the highlands and ceaseless enthusiasm of the Malagasy won me over: in the end I only left unwillingly, as the result of a not uncharacteristic bureaucratic cock-up. I suppose typical for a developing nation, strange and often hilarious things happen frequently, logical to the Malagasy, funny only from our western standpoint which itself amuses

them. Why in Ranohira did the villager collapse laughing when I pounded nice flour for them, having imitated their action precisely? Why did they giggle when I awoke from a stupor induced by the alcohol Betsa-betsa in Sahabevava? A natural imperturbability rates at times with the most seasoned of travellers. In Betioky I once waited 31 hours for a bus, whilst in Fianarantsoa I experienced an infuriating 14-hour stop for breakfast. In Madagascar one word, Niany, means both "now" and "today. Unfortunately, this national trait of "why worry", admirable in many respects, may prove a problem in dealing with critical issues of environment, which require immediate attention if the growing population is to continue feeding itself and the unique biota, which this country owes to the world to conserve, is to survive. The Malagasy for the most part originate from S.E. Asia, whence they arrived about 1500 years ago. Plateau peoples such as Victor have distinct faces, often almost polynesian, and the language belongs to the Austronesian group. Rice is everywhere, again linking them to Asia and tending to split them, like the -rosambique channel, from their nearest neighbor Africa.

interested in foreigners, displaying generosity, concern, ubiquitous smiles and wonderful hospitality to a degree I'd previously thought impossible, right across its diverse spectrum of class anti ethnic grouping. Such hospitality already encapsulates exactly the idea behind Servas: that such acts of generosity can educate, break down barriers of ignorance, and become self-perpetuating. I went to Madagascar to see its unique flora and -fauna disappearing as everywhere else in the world and yet now considered perhaps the world's number one international conservation priority. The lemurs, indris, aye-ayes, crocodiles, dazzling chameleons, tortoises and wonderful plants are a treasure that did not disappoint. The Malagasy associate Britain with the Queen, Margaret Thatcher, the Beatles and football hooliganism. It is Madagascar's lot to be celebrated for its animals. So what if they're cute and cuddly? If only the Malagasy would realise this is their strongest claim to fame! I became, and still am, obsessed with the place. To all the Malagasy and Victor in particular, I say in fractured tongue Misaotra tompoko! Hipody aho!

Stuart Hedley
Servas England

UN-REPORTS – Jan.-July 1988



UNITED NATIONS SERVAS International Representatives:

Priorities of our representatives to the U.N. remain the same. From 31 May to 1 July, efforts of all New York based representatives (and NYC Area hosts for over 20 foreign NGO delegates) were devoted to SSD III (Special Session on Disarmament III). Though we may feel some sense of failure, SERVAS contributed an estimated 300 work hours to handling various Information Desks and distributing the DISARMAMENT TIMES. This left us very little time for attending official U.N. meetings.

From the DISARMAMENT TIMES, we report -

After 6 readings of a draft text, the Third Special Session on Disarmament decided it could not reach consensus.

The topics on which no agreement could be reached were: preventing an arms race in outer space, the relationship between disarmament and development, nuclear - weapon-free zones of peace, the nuclear weapon capability of South Africa, and the nuclear capability of Israel. The major reason for no final document was indicated by China. It said that, "a certain country which should have important disarmament responsibilities has insisted on a logic which others could not understand."

From assessment by some experts, Delegates, with few exceptions, used a new language. Disarmament was understood as a common concern, both in the sense that security must be equally guaranteed to all nations and all member states had responsibilities.

There was a growing understanding of new concepts such as non-military threats to security, and non-provocative defense. Need for multilateral deliberations and agreements has grown considerably. All disarmament measures were stressed non proliferation, comprehensive test ban and weapon-free zones, etc..

Despite the unsatisfactory outcome, there were many more successful non-governmental activities. The June 11 rally drew over 100,000 people.

Ploughshares Coffeehouse (F.O.R.) had large audiences to discuss every aspect of peace and disarmament.

None of the new ideas or proposals from SSD III need to be lost. Any or all can be proposed at future General Assembly sessions where they can be adopted by

the usual two-thirds majority vote rather than requiring consensus.

We sadly note: neither consensus or majority votes guarantee implementation; SSD's failure to establish a multi-lateral integrated verification system within the U.N.; and USA is the major, but not exclusive, obstacle to agreement. However, we believe the UNITED NATIONS shows somewhat more interest in the opinions of NGO's.

Actions recommended for SERVAS members:

1. Strengthen our own efforts toward international harmony within Servas.
2. Explore the extent to which our own members can avoid supporting military activities or industries.
3. Help SERVAS members in any country to influence governments toward accepting multi-lateralism.
4. Continue studies of ways for making the U.N. structure more effective.

Reva King.

UNIVERSITY FOR PEACE - NGO Committee.

The University for Peace Committee met regularly to explore methods of achieving the long-range world-wide goal of peaceful resolution of human conflict through peace education. The guest speakers raised the age-old issues of root causes of conflict and war: the ignorance, the closed belief systems, the rigid assumptions, misinformation, the racial and political "blindness rampant in the materialistic world within which we live at this time. They questioned what kind of thinking can move mankind to new values, to change perspective, and to transfer predatory behavior into productive, cooperative ways of doing things. This is the challenge.

It was felt that a start toward world education for peace could be the disarming of war toys and hostile games for - children, the future adults who will need to be prepared as peaceful thinking people.

A Sub-Committee, "The World Council for Peaceful Games and Toys", was established to develop a resolution for an international campaign to eliminate war toys and hostile games. When complete, this resolution will be submitted to the United Nations for

ratification.

SERVAS MEMBERS ARE URGED to find ways to participate in the implementation of these efforts in their travels and daily activities.

JG & Madrue Chavers-Wright.

From Vienna - Peace.

Because of the international peace day (March 16,) Margaret J. Anstee (Director General UNOV) noted for peace building in the future not only the concern about the danger of war is required, as never before the commitment and political will of all states is necessary. It also requires the determination and hard work of people throughout the world, other through their communities, nongovernmental organisations, institutes, or individually.

HUMAN RIGHTS - NGO Committee:

Primarily, our meetings this Spring moved toward the passage at the U.N.. General Assembly (introduced by Swedish delegate) of a resolution against the manufacture of war toys. It is hoped that the organizations, which we each represent, will endorse this and that manufacturers will switch to constructive and educational toys. To me, the most important contribution to Human Rights, this year, is the planned publication of a periodical from the Geneva office by the UN Commission on Human Rights. Thereafter, we NGO's will all have access to Information, not just the -few who attend briefings. Reading about the massacre by death squads of 10 instructors and 20 medical students in Colombia (because they worked on preventive medicine for the indigenous peoples) will not only revolt readers of such a report but should also galvanize thousands to write the U.S.A. State Department and the Colombian government. And when UN Representatives hear from witnesses of deaths by gas Iraqis against their Kurdish minority and deaths of children and women by gas on the Palestinian West Bank, 10,000 NGO's will react. Let us congratulate the Human Rights officials who will bring this news project to fruition.

SERVAS members are urged to ask their UN delegates to endorse manufacture of constructive toys and help the

Human Rights Commission with its publication.

Mary Shoiket

YOUTH - NGO Committee (NYC):

The NGO Youth Committee and its subcommittees focused on Human Rights, Global Education, Disarmament and sponsored joint meetings with NGO Committees on Aging and Narcotics Abuse. Workshops were set up for: (1) a report of the Human Rights Commission's meeting with a review of the 40th Anniversary observances; (2) a follow-up of the released War-Crimes files; (3) rehabilitation and prevention projects for youth drop-outs into the drug culture; (4) computerized projects facilitating global peace education; (5) a study at college level on the "Relationship" between Development and Disarmament.

The computerized statistical study from Jersey City College showed that there is no statistically significant association between resources devoted to "the military" and material well-being (using as indicator infant mortality per 1,000).

While concluding there is no definite proof that lower military spending automatically raises standards of living, it is certain that a reduction in military spending would release resources which can be used for production of goods and services to improve material wellbeing. This would raise questions for decision makers in each State and would be primarily a matter of political will. Would they convert savings from reduced military spending to areas that would raise the material well-being of their people?. Would the human dimension in development be emphasized?.

Jeanette Gear and Aude Da Costa.

From Vienna - Narcotics & Substance Abuse:

Now to the U.N.: Both, Robert and I have now the U.N. passes. I applied for the membership at the NGO committee on peace in Vienna in the name of SERVAS. They have interesting conferences and discussions. I give you now the report from the passed weeks:

I attended the Commission on NARCOTIC DRUGS from Feb. 8-9th in Vienna. A main effort was to co-ordinate the national efforts in the struggle against drug addiction and trafficking.

The commission reviewed the assessment of the world struggle against illegal drugs. They warned of the continued growth in drug abuse and trafficking, the threat to all societies and the difficulties between AIDS and drug abuse. Other points of interest were control programmes, the organisational background, the scheduling of substances to have

different grades of international control, and the realisations of the recommendations of the international drug conference.

Renate Harringer.

DECADE FOR WOMEN - NGO Committee:

The Committee on the United Nations Decade for women met regularly on subjects related to the UN programs for the advancement of women and provided consultation on the themes of the NGO committees on the Status of women, identifying strategies.

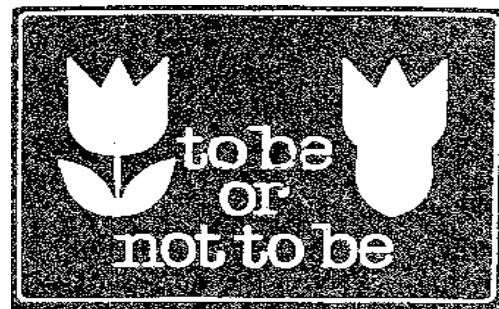
The effect of the proposed International Year of the Family (designed to improve conditions in the family) might have on bettering the contributions and rights of women was discussed with recognition that (1) the contribution of healthy families to human development and the legitimate rights of women had not been sufficiently acknowledged in the past, and (2) the family as the basic unit of society was under great strain in today's world.

The family needs to be liberated. Some participants questioned the usefulness of the proposed International Year of the Family, expressing the feeling that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women already contained a number of well-articulated measures dealing with marriage and family, and if adhered to would strengthen families throughout the world.

It was recognized that we live in a frightfully fragmented time with hunger for unity, for meaning, for self-identity, national identity, global and cosmic identity along with the historic divisions of class, race, sex, political persuasions, and the most volatile of all ... religion. Solid Scholarship is needed.

It is required of women that we seek to strengthen relationships and promote respect for the differences between all women, and also accept the differences among women of color and others within the same faith, i.e. Christianity.

N. Chavers-Wright.



Working for Law and Peace

Stanton first heard of Servos in Australia in 1970. After his return to Britain in 1982 he officially joined as a host, but before that he had been living in the spirit of Servos for the intervening 12 years. For about 20 years, I have been involved in various forms of war tax resistance. I was living and working in Australia at the time of the Vietnam War and the reports of atrocities committed by the American and Australian forces stimulated me to divert 17% of my tax (the military proportion) to relief organisations. Later, I reduced my income to below the tax threshold, living a simple lifestyle, growing most of my own food organically and occasionally accepting relief milking contracts to keep myself solvent. Soon after my return to England in 1980, I was very glad to hear a Quaker solicitor and member of LND (Lawyers for Nuclear Disarmament) speak at a peace meeting about the unlawful nature of nuclear weapons. He explained that weapons of mass destruction are illegal according to international, Domestic and Military Laws, because they endanger civilian and innocent people and because their use would cause irreversible damage to the natural environment. The more I researched and studied the issues, the more convinced I was that both the use and the threat to use weapons of mass destruction is a 'crime against humanity and that the Law should be on my side. Since the British Government seemed intent on increasing unilaterally our destructive power with the development of Trident, I resolved to continue my war tax resistance. The basis for my withholding tax would be not only for reasons of conscience, but also because I felt it would be a good way to uphold important laws which are vital to our survival. In my correspondence with the Inland Revenue, I said I would be glad to pay all my tax if they could send me a written assurance that the money would be used only for legal and peaceful purposes. But alas it was not to be. Eventually I was summoned to the County Court where I was courteously received; but the Judge seemed to have predetermined the case and he gave no reasons why all the laws and precedents which I had referred to should not be upheld. Indeed none of the Judges in the High Court or County Court have denied my claim that weapons of mass destruction are illegal.' As there is nothing in the Taxation Act that requires the individual to pay for illegal acts, I maintain there can be no valid reason why I or any law abiding person should be forced to pay for such operations. A Declaration of Legal Responsibility is being prepared by various groups working for Law and Peace and this should be soon available for signatures. The Declaration is quite separate to the affairs of the Peace Tax Campaign and hopefully will be supported by many people outside the peace movement. Please contact me for further details: Edward Stanton, Smyth Cottage, Witherslack, Grange-over-sands, Cumbria LA1 1 6RW Witherslack 044852-216

From the seventh World Congress of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War

In less than seven years IPPNW has become the most rapidly growing medical organization in the world. Our success relates to two factors. First, from the very inception, we embraced the new way of thinking urged by Einstein at the dawn of the atomic age. A fundamental precept is that cumulation of arsenals of overkill foster national insecurity and not military might. In the nuclear age, security is indivisible; it is either common or non-existent.

Second, IPPNW promotes cooperation, not confrontation. We refuse to be mobilized as cold warriors in crusades that demean our humanity and threaten the continuance of life on earth.

Let me touch on two of the misdiagnoses, the deceptions, which these times have spawned. The first is the characterization of nuclear explosives as weapons. Weapons are instruments of force and coercion that exact some advantage or ward off some threat to the user. But when their use simultaneously inflicts genocide on the victim and suicide on the aggressor, they cease to have military purpose. "Weapon" is a grotesque misnomer for an instrument of genocide.

Second, in the public mind deterrence is the only justification for acquiring awe-some arsenals of nuclear weapons. Yet how can threatening the "final solution" of nuclear annihilation be the guarantor for human survival?

On the basis of deterrence, responsible governments are holding entire nations hostage with a suspended sentence of mass murder ready for instant execution. If deterrence is the objective, what is the intent of accumulating more than 50,000 nuclear devices -- equivalent to three and a half tons of dynamite for each person on Earth?

Military strategies of first strike, not deterrence, account for the increase in nuclear bombs year by year. The public is largely ignorant of the underlying reasons

for a race in which the runners are no longer in control of their limbs.

IPPNW works for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. We are uncompromising abolitionists. Our profession has a sworn duty to eradicate agents threatening mass death, whether these be due to cholera or schistosomiasis; to AIDS or nuclear weapons.

Four decades of history teach that the nuclear experts are capable of complicating -- but not resolving -- the momentous issues propelling the arms race. Until Reykjavik, nuclear abolitionism was property of the visionary few.

The question on the public agenda is now reduced to a single one: ' Shall we eliminate missiles before launch, or be ready to shoot them down after launch?.'

When people East and West realize that their true enemy is not one another but the mushroom cloud -- only then will survival be assured.

Co-President Bernard Lown of IPPNW.

If we define a city as having 100,000 people or more, there are only 2,300 cities on Earth. The United States and the Soviet Union could, targeting two nuclear weapons per city, destroy every city on Earth and have almost 20,000 strategic and 40,000 tactical weapons left over.

If the function of a nuclear weapon is to discourage a potential adversary from using his nuclear weapons, a tiny fraction of the existing arsenals would suffice.

By the testimony of the program's advocates, Star Wars cannot protect the civilian population of the United States. That was, you will remember, the objective in the President's speech where he talked about making nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete". But since then there has been a change. Now Star Wars is justified as: "Well, it will defend our missile silos." But the Soviets could outfox Star Wars. They can underly the system because it does nothing against a low-attitude or cruise-missiles delivery system. I remind you that small airplanes filled with bales of marijuana penetrate the United States every day, and that a single-engine plane landed in Red Square.

Star Wars cannot protect the civilian population of the United States. It can be underflown and overwhelmed. It is ruinously expensive. And it is likely to increase the chances of nuclear war. Except for that, it's a terrific idea.

-- Astronomer Carl Sagan.

What are the lessons to be drawn from the Chernobyl accident?. First, we Soviet Scientists and physicians now know from practical experience what it means for the atom to be beyond man's control -- even during peacetime. In a nuclear war, notions such as "borders," "outside aid," and "smooth functioning of state, economic, and social institutions" will lose all meaning.

Second, Chernobyl was an excellent example of efficient and heroic work by thousands of medical specialists. Yet Chernobyl was a small explosion compared to even one nuclear weapon. In a nuclear war, medicine would be helpless -- not only in treating the victims, but even in elementary attempts to ease their horrible plight.

Nuclear weapons are incompatible with life on Earth.

-- Leonid Ilyin, Chairman of the USSR. Commission on Radiation Protection.

I regret to say that America thinking about the Soviet Union is now utterly militarized. We have lost the ability to think about the Soviet Union politically.

Seeking national security in the nuclear age solely through military means has made the United States and the world perilously insecure.

To make matters worse, the same kind of militarized policy and thinking has also become dominant in Moscow.

-- Stephen Cohen. Professor of Soviet Studies, Princeton University.

Our prime recommendation to the governments of the USA and USSR has been and remains the declaration of a mutual moratorium on all nuclear explosions, to remain in effect until the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban treaty. Since such a measure is verifiable, it would not require trust. Since it is substantive, it would promote trust.

We oppose all nuclear weapons in all places. In -so affirming, we reject the notion that fewer nuclear weapons imply more conventional weapons.

Victory over nuclear arms would help staunch the hemorrhage of world military spending -- a wound that bleeds more than two billion dollars each day.

IPPNW Statement of Principles.

Open Doors open wider in Hungary

We are happy to inform you that Servas has been legalized in Hungary. In late February a group of more than 200 assembled in Budapest to set up Servas Hungary and, according to our latest register, close to 300 people are looking forward to receiving Servas travellers. In view of the travel eases introduced on January 1, 1988 and be-cause of legalization, more Hungarian Servas members are expected to set out mainly for Western Europe and the United States.

In the introduction of our host list we already asked for patience and understanding towards the Hungarian hosts and travellers whose majority are still lacking experience in Servas even despite the abundant supply of information during the interviews. Enthusiasm, however, is running high. At the end of April nearly 200 people met in the private room of a Budapest confectionary for exchange of experience with Servas travellers who have been to the United States.

We want to be full members of Servas, and our application for patronage by an organization called Patriotic People's Front for practical reasons was the result of the cobwebs of Hungarian laws. In to-day's home political life the Patriotic People's Front is becoming a collection place for grass-roots initiatives and the prospective cradle of a sort of pluralism which is not necessarily based on parties, but may comprise different groups of political or explicitly political orientation. The relationship of Servas Hungary to the Patriotic People's Front is formal. Our friendly circle is entirely independent and free from political affiliation. So far there has been no outside interference in our affairs, and the new association law to be enacted probably next year will eliminate the need even for this formal patronage. The latest issue of Servas News associated the possible formation of Servas Hungary with perestroika, but the main point is not this. In 1983, when the Hungarian Ministry of International Trade banned the organization of Servas with reference to economic and financial reasons, the political atmosphere in Hungary was more tolerant than in Breznevian Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, bureaucracy still stood firm in the way of grass-roots initiatives. The prohibition of Servas Hungary was clearly attributable to clerical bureaucracy, for that time keeping contact with foreign citizens was no longer a political problem. The ban was especially painful because of its sharp contrast with the Hungarian practice which was definitely liberal by East European standard.

The alleviation of official routine concerning the formation of associations and friendship circles was, in my opinion, not so much the result of the perestroika winds blowing from Moscow, as the consequence of a home political fermentation which has gained particular speed in the last one year, and the weakening self assurance of a party less and less capable of autocracy.

Apart from the political aspects, what matters most to us is the smooth legalization of Servas. The zealous organizing work rallies people who remained ardent adherents to Servas even after the banning and those who have joined and committed themselves to the cause in the recent years. Our members vary widely by age: the oldest was born in 1919 and the youngest in 1970. The most frequent occupations are economist, teacher and engineer.

As the news of Servas is spreading fast mainly in the capital, we expect to shortly become a European "power-house" in the strength of membership. It would be sad if the great many hosts were waiting in vain at

the open doors. We would like to receive far more Servas travellers than so far. Hungary is becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination in Europe. Why not in Servas, too?.

Janos Kurucz Servas Hungary.

Letter From a Traveller

My brother and I had a wonderful trip through Eastern Europe. The hospitality we received from Servos members was truly extraordinary; it transformed what easily might have been a trying encounter with inflexible bureaucracy into a profound experience, both emotionally and intellectually. I cannot imagine a better perch from which to observe the current ferment in E. Europe than the kitchen tables of the various Servos members who hosted us.

To report we arrived in Warsaw and stayed our first night in an inexpensive hotel. This is supposed to be necessary to get the police stamp on your visa. In our case this proved unnecessary - our papers were not even examined when we left Poland. It's probably a good idea just the same. We had not written ahead, but found almost everyone we reached on the phone happy to host us on short notice. People did not seem to expect letters ahead of time, as the mails to Poland from England seem to take at least a month at present.

According to the people we stayed with, Servos could choose to become legal if it wished to do so. It chooses to remain underground - because legalization would entail opening the organization to anyone who wanted to join, which would mean police infiltration of meetings. As it is, in things are quite open. We observed precautions like not mentioning Servos on the telephone, but found the people we stayed with uniformly unconcerned about it - most considered our caution rather funny. We stayed with hosts only in Warsaw and Krakow: none of them seem to get a very many visitors, and some - especially outside was, Ewa and Bogdan were unwilling to seem somewhat offended if you insist on moving to another home in the same city. The thing to do, I think, is offer to find another place, knowing that the suggestion is likely to be refused. We ended up staying just one night with Zofra and Stefan Garczynski, an equally delightful older couple who live in the centre of Warsaw, before leaving for Krakow.

In Krakow we - stayed several nights with Janina Lutoslawske who has a big house and is always happy to have people. No one who calls her will lock a place to stay in Krakow. We were, however, a bit distressed by her habit using Servos visitors as fodder for her English students. Everywhere we went in Krakow, we were forcibly accompanied by a coterie of blushing seventeen year-old girls asking us questions like "Do you like to attend movies?" They were very helpful with practical matters, but we didn't want to take them with us when we visited the U.S. Consulate, or to Auschwitz - something Mrs. Lutoslawska found difficult to understand. English speakers are, at a premium in Poland, and one sometimes finds oneself being used for practice. One other point of etiquette: as things are remarkably inexpensive in Poland for

Westerners, it is tempting to overwhelm hosts with gifts. One must be careful not to seem to be offering charity in the form of commodities like coffee and cigarettes: we found it was better to limit ourselves to flowers, wine, and books. In particular people were anxious to have books in English about Solidarity and Polish history. There is no difficulty about bringing these into the country: searches are rarely performed and the worst penalty is confiscation. Next was Prague, where we didn't call any Servos hosts. Rule-skirting is not as tolerated as in Poland, and we got the feeling it would be risky for anyone to have us stay in their home. As we had non-Servas friends to meet for meals and walks we did not call any of the day hosts either. We continued on to Budapest where we stayed with Zsuzsa Bence, the mother of Anno Sipos who is I stem^{ms}. In the directory Anna and her husband have moved to a new flat where they don't have much room for guests, but her mother is happy to host visitors: she is a delightful woman, though her English is quite limited. She was looking for a new apartment and may not be at the address given in the list for much longer. Servos is, of course legal in Hungary now and one can use it more or less as one does in a Western European country. I got the impression Hungarian hosts get many more visitors than their Polish counterparts. In Romania we certainly did not call any of the three names on the Servos list. It is not only illegal for Romanians to host Westerners, it is illegal for them even to talk to Westerners. Things have degenerated to a remarkably low level: travel is very expensive, you can hardly get anything to eat (we carried Salamis from Hungary in our packs), and everyone is watched very closely. The population is terrified by the omnipresent secret police; it's a fascinating place, but a real Stalinist hell. There is no way Servos or any other independent organization can function there for the time being. As the rest of Eastern Europe loosens up, Romania is sadly tightening the noose.

That's about it. If anyone else from the group is planning to visit Eastern Europe, I hope you'll have them call me for further advice. I'll be working at Newsweek in London for the summer and can be reached there at (01) 629 8361 after 20 June. They usually know where to get in touch with me.

I haven't seen the new issue of the Newsletter - am I on the list? At any rate, I hope to speak to you sometime soon. Yours sincerely,

Jacob Weisberg

Chernobyl and the Way of Travelling

Reflections of a technician about the energy consumption of the holidays.

I consider travelling and knowing new people and countries one of the best cultural activities, particularly if done in the right way. Anyway I must confess to you that every time that I begin long travel using traditional means of transportation, I have some feeling of guilt.

Why? For several years I have been interested in the study of the problems of energy, become more known after the accident of Chernobyl. I know that I was born in that side of the world constituted of industrialized countries, whose standard of life or ability to use the resources of an always more exploited environment can be measured from the Equivalent Petroleum Tons (EPT) consumed per capita every year.

From known tables about the total average energy consumption, comes out that in my country the average per-capita energy consumption is 2.6 EPT against the 1.4 of the world and the 0.4 EPT of Africa.

It is acknowledged that every way of producing energy, (including at the moment, the "soft" ways that for scarce investments in their research are not enough developed yet), mainly the nuclear and coal way, produces risks and pollution. The harm connected with the production of energy strikes also the inhabitants of the non industrialized countries, unfairly, because these people lack advantages from the production of the energy.

Unfortunately, our way of life and our society pushes us to make, also during the travels, some sizeable energy consumption. Naturally, with same kilometers run, various ways of transportation have a different energy consumption, so as a technician, I always try to use, as much as I can, in my travels, means of transportation with the lowest energy consumption.

I admire those rare people (and I met several of them with SERVAS) who are able to make long travels, even thousands of kilometers by foot, the way of travelling devoid of pollution; I do not know if I would be able to do that, I shall tell it only when I shall retire, because I don't have the time before.

Personally I can say that when I can, also for the long travels, I use the bike. This is easy for me since I use the bike every day. Sometimes I combine the use of the bike with the public transportation; in the case of the train I send the bike as registered luggage or I disassemble the wheels, put it in a special bag and bring it with me as a normal baggage(*)).

If I travel without bicycle (and I suffer it) I prefer the train (reserving the "couchette" for long travels) or the couch to the air plane.

If I cannot do without the airplane (for

example in the case of intercontinental travels), I try at least to use Charter or Stand-by flights that, occupying all the places of the vehicle, use it at the maximum.

It is also possible to bring the bike with you in the airplane, paying a supplement if the total weight (baggage plus bike) is more than 20 kg (42 pounds). If you have a good bike and like to use it this is a good possibility.

To the irremediable fans of the private motorcar (which I have since long time thrown to the nettles) for the long travels, I warn them for the same distance it consumes almost as an intercontinental jet, so I advice them at least to fill it as much as possible with persons.

With regard to this there is in Europe a network of associations that arrange for you a share-the-expenses trip with a private motorcar and people that you didn't know. They ask you a contribution for their service (**).

I hope that who reads me shall not comment saying: "an other catastrophist. Why should I be worried about pollution and energy consumption?. Anyway the world will

not change for us few."waste society should be based on the conviction and cooperation of the people rather than on laws inapplicable because nobody believes in them. This is one of the fundamental principles of the nonviolent method of struggling.

Gianni Catania.

For someone interested I can send a copy of an article in Italian about this operation called "cycle-baggage

" In Italy this organization is called Stop- phone, in Germany Mit-fahr and in France Allostop.

" For this reason the SERVAS travellers travelling by bike are particularly welcome in my home.

Personally I have not given up totally to travel by airplane from time to time, but I think that everybody should think about these problems and try to do something by himself (***)). The alternative to the

In the right Direction

In traditional English usage, the words 'travel' and 'journey' also meant work or labour. A journeyman was a craftsman working towards the mastery of his craft. His 'journeys' were as much voyages of self-development as actual physical travels. In many ways this meaning of travel was preserved in Servas, as it was originally constituted. The founders of Servas saw travel as part of a programme that included work and study. The goal was to work towards over-coming prejudice and partiality through 'travel' in Servas. Not only would the Servas programme help to develop greater understanding and tolerance but it would also serve to build bridges across the huge cultural and ideological divides of that time. If a sufficient number of people could work and travel in this way, they could become a tremendous force for change. Some of their ideas, springing from a world recently ravaged by war, seem a little quaint to today's thinking. The black and white issues of 1945 are greyer today, the problems we face more complex. Servas today Operates against a backdrop of social, economic and ecological crises which less readily avail themselves of an answer. However, it is worth looking back at some of the original concepts in Servas, to see how far we are actually achieving our goals. How successful are our 'journeys' in deepening our perception of the world's problems? To what extent are we able to feed our experiences back into society? Is Servas in danger of becoming a travel bureau (or introduction service)?

With the arrival of 'glasnost' it is encouraging to see many travellers make use of the opportunity to travel with Servas in Eastern Europe. Cheaper travel has made it possible for more travellers to travel to the so called 'third-world' and India, Africa and Latin America have all become popular destinations. We should be pleased

that Servas is being used in this way and not just as a cheap way for young travellers from developed nations to 'do' Europe. Whether anything of lasting value will come from these travels will depend on how much these travellers can 'see' of their host country. It will

depend on the extent to which their hosts can 'open doors' into the real life of the country, that which doesn't get shown to tourists. It will also depend on whether we can help travellers feed their perceptions back into the life of our country.

We could do more to help travellers prepare for their travels, to make better use of the experiences they may have. If we are not to incorporate study into our programme then we need incorporate something that will take its place. Travelling is definitely a skill that is not inborn, as some of the travellers we have hosted have shown us. One traveller may go everywhere and 'see' nothing whilst another may not venture far but 'see', if not everything, then a glimpse of the essential nature of the country. There are many experienced travellers in Servas whose skills we could do well to draw on.

We could do more to help and encourage hosts to show travellers the real life of this country. Many hosts put themselves to great trouble and expense to show travellers local tourist sites and, sadly, this is what some travellers seem to want. How much more useful it would be if those hosts could-introduce travellers into their workplace, their social and leisure activities or find ways for them to meet and exchange with others who have less enlightened points of view than their own.

We could do more to find ways in which travellers can use their experiences to challenge, stimulate and enrich the community at large. It is not enough for us to foster a cosy little coterie of like minded people who share a similar outlook on most things. If Servas is to make a genuine contribution to building peace, we have to reach the community at large and address the ingrained prejudices and misunderstandings that stand in its way.

If we are to assess our success in travelling the road to peace, I think we ought to consider whether there is enough of the original meaning invested in our 'journeys'.

James Souttar F B I

END Convention in Sweden

Since the annual END (European Disarmament Campaign) convention was held in Lund, Sweden, in June, I thought I might have a chance to tell the peace people about Servas. I had only a vague idea about that chance at a convention with about 1000 Participants(35 countries). They were actually most limited. Out of 55 work-shops it was possible to attend only nine, two of which gave me a chance to present Servas.

The first one, Detente from Below was attended by 40-50 people two of whom presented themselves as Servas hosts, when I, before the start, distributed our pamphlet; one Danish (wellknown), one British. The rest revealed no know-ledge, and I gather that the majority of the 1000 people probably didnt know Servas either, (although at least the many members from Danish END (NtA) in their newsletter could. read a reprint of 'Go East from SIN 27). At one point I got about 2 minutes to explain why Servas is the medium for East- West contacts at grassroot level. In the program it said: Why is detente from below an important part of our work?...Its potential for rehumanizing the images we have of each other...implies the belief that changes in East-West relations need to be rooted in societies ("below) as well as in governmental/political relations (above).

I am probably a poor sales-woman. People were encouraged to contact me for more information after the meeting. Two did. Myself, I contacted the Polish panelist, who seemed interested in contact. - A Canadian teacher, who stayed with me in Copenhagen after the convention was most surprised when I mentioned my disappointment. He didnt remember having noticed me at all!

He, however, like everybody else marvelled about a fascinating Soviet woman, who talked about women's role, and got thundering applause, when at the end of her speech she told each of us to hug our neighbour. It was obvious that although there were apparently as many women at the convention as men, most speakers - were men, and the chairmen often tried to favour the female participants in discussions, (there were usually more who wanted to contribute than time would allow).

We have now over 500 hosts in Eastern Europe, and I felt that the audience would have to keep me busy for hours ,after the meeting. - No such luck. At the second workshop Twinning Cities only 20 people took part, among them some from Soviet and Poland. Everybody was enthusiastic and it is obvious that there are plenty of possibilities for 'tinnings, though bureaucracy is heavy. The small group was very relaxed with plenty of opportunity for further

discussion. Though Servas is not group-oriented I felt we could contribute *even* here, the main objection from Westerners being that in the East visitors could not stay with private families.

On the whole this convention was a success. In previous years there have been quarrels with the official de-legates from E.Europe, when END had invited exiles and even some "unofficial" peace people from there. Last year, in



Kringsatt av Flender

(Till Ungdommen)

Northal Grieg (Norway)
Otto Mortensen (Denmark)

Kringsatt av friender, ga

Inn I din tid!

Under en blodig storm

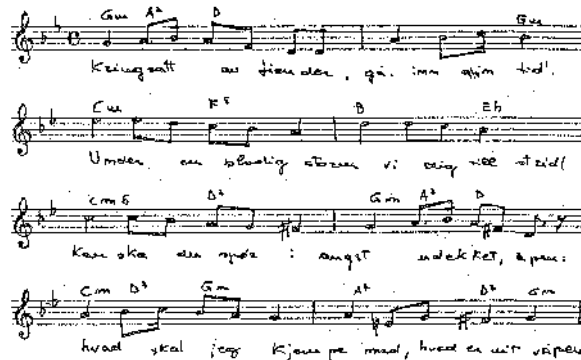
Vi dig til strid!

Kanske du spor I angst,

Udekket, apen

Hvad skal jeg kjempe med,

Hvad er mit vapen?



Foes are Surrounding you

translation by B. Damsgard and B. Whitehead

Foes are surrounding you, and threaten your life Go, face the mortal storm, take up the strife Fearful you well may ask, standing without a shield, "What is my weapon now - what sword can I wield?"

Here is your trusty sword and this will not fail Faith in humanity truth shall prevail

Seek it and cherish it, though you may have to die

Strengthen for future life, values to live by.

Still turn conveyor belts, and arm us for war, Halt now their drift to death! What is it for? War pours contempt on life, Peace can create and build, Serve it with all your strenght - Death must at last yield! Noble is humankind, earth is replete; Hunger and suffering come from deceit; Falsehood and greed are wrong - let us destroy them! Spirit and light and food - all must enjoy them! Brothers and sisters come, and all make a vow Save for humanity earth's riches now! Kindness and light and warmth softly enfolding Earth like a precious child Which we are holding!

Coventry the Hungarian Peace Council's members sensationally signed END's charter (which puts the blame for the armsrace on East as well as West). That meant that in Lund there were a number of "inofficial" people from Hungary. This year the -sensation was Poland. Several members of illegal or half-illegal groups had got passports, among them Jacek Kuron from KOR and Janusz Onyzkiewicz, a leader from Solidarnosz (who had been in prison in the Spring).

His dramatic trip on board the ferry from Swinoujsee to Sweden was by some major Swedish newspapers who otherwise hardly mentioned the convention found of interest to their readers. J.O., who had entered the ferry with passport & visa, after several hours was called to the captain and told he would have to go back on another ship. He, said, in that case he would jump the ship. In the end he was allowed to continue, and the ship arrived with 4 hours delay. His jumping the ship would be too embarrassing! The Polish police had found out, too late, that there had been too much glasnost. It was an experience for the "official" Poles to meet the "inofficial". Onyzkiewicz and Kuron were gefundenes Erressen for interviewers.

The Soviet delegates from the Peace Council in contrast to earlier conventions were apologizing, even sorry because a dozen people from the Trust group had been refused visas; one of them outspokenly attacked their authorities.

From The German Democratic Republic there was, no response at all to invitations. The Czech Peace Council was to

send 4 people, but two days before the start they informed the secretariate that they were not coming due to late events. Meaning?: A group of people from 14 countries were invited to a seminar with Charta 77 members in a private appartement. After 10 min. the police interrupted the meeting and arrested the Czechs.- A second meeting was arranged, and again interrupted. The foreigners were, taken to the police station and after 6 hours told to leave the country before midnight. Though none of these people, from peace and human-rights groups, had broken any laws, the Charta people were accused of "subversiveness and, hooliganism". After sharp criticism from abroad the delegates were probably not eager to go.

In Coventry it was the British government who wouldnt give visas to Bulgarian delegates. In Lund there apparently werent any, nor were there any Rumanians. In the 50s the ' British wouldnt have any East-Europeans at all, so a Peace Congress (which was arranged by the World Peace Council) had to be moved from England to Warsaw in the last minute.

Let's hope that next year Czechoslovakia and maybe even DDR will tolerate - what the END is trying to do: meet with people in Eastern Europe as if the declaration of Helsinki has already been realised. It seems to be OK in Hungary, who has also allowed its people to travel wherever they want. For the Poles it is not so sure who will get an exit permit. Hence the big surprise in Lund.

July 1988

Birgitte Damsgaard

Mothers for Peace

Frances Voelcker-of Gwynnedd, Wales
' writes:

"We have just been hosts to two women from the Soviet Union: They were part of a delegation of ten Soviet women to Britain, under the auspices of "Mothers of Peace" (Ten "Mothers for Peace" from the USA visited Britain at the same time, and two of them stayed with my neighbour).

I showed the Soviet mothers our Servas book, and explained how Servas worked. They saw our visitors book, with the signatures of all the visitors that we have had over the 3½ years as hosts, and were very interested indeed. They intend writing an article about the organisation in the *Soviet Women's Committee* journal, and thought it might be possible for Soviet families to be hosts, and for Soviet citizens to join Servas and travel in this way".

"Mothers for Peace" was the brainchild of two elderly Quakers, Lucy Behenna and Marion Mansergh, who took to *heart* the words of a Quaker poster "World Peace will come through the will of ordinary people like yourself", and pooling their life savings set up a fund to send ordinary mothers to the USA and the USSR with messages of peace and friendship. Eight



mothers participated in these first visits in May 1981. In May 1982 Soviet and American mothers were invited to pay return visits to this country. Fifteen delegates toured in three groups.

All these visits were so successful in terms of fact finding and in building bridges of friendship that a part-time office was established in September, 1982 to further the work and service two needs: to promote contacts with mothers of other nations in order to increase understanding and lessen fear and suspicion which prevent disarmament; and to cultivate a wide base of support in this country to facilitate East-West contacts and raise funds.

There is now an international mailing list which keeps in touch with women from many parts of the world by way of a Newsletter, and this and further information is available from:

Mothers for Peace,
70 Station Road,
Burley in Wharfedale,
Ilkley, West Yorks LS29 7NG

Editor's Note

Unfortunately, we couldn't bring the minutes from the European Servas Conference in London in June, due to delay and post strike in England. DEAD-LINE FOR SIN 29 will be on January 15th 1989.

I have visited every country I wished and felt at home everywhere among their people. I have met and heard the statesmen and been impressed by only a few. I count not on leaders for the progress of society but on the qualities I have found all my life in the strength of character of unknown people.

-Roger Baldwin (1884-1981)
Founder, ACLU

For Non Members What is SERVAS all about anyway?

"With every true friendship we build more firmly the foundation on which the peace of the whole world rests." -

M.K.Gandhi.

Servas is an international co-operative system of travellers and volunteer hosts, established to help build world peace, good will, and understanding by providing opportunities for contacts between persons of different cultures and back-grounds.

Hosts (mostly individuals and families, plus some community groups) provide information about themselves for listing in a national host directory. Approved Servas travellers choose the hosts they wish to write to, or telephone, about possible visits (usually two nights), to share life in the hosts' homes and communities.

Servas charges travellers a small fee. No money changes hands between travellers and hosts. (Ideas, we hope, pass freely between them.)

Servas is nonprofit, interracial, and interfaith. It has consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organization with ECOSOC in the United Nations.

SERVAS INT. NEWS



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