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EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF PEACE
Berlin 23 - 28 May, 1954

M. Sven Hector (Sweden)

My country, Sweden, has lived in peace for 150 years. The Swedish people readily explain this state of affairs in a way that is very agreeable to them. Has not our handling of foreign affairs ^{always} been excellent? Has not our country been geographically placed in a sheltered position? Has not God given our country his particular protection? Can it not continue like that?

Thus the Swedish people have allowed themselves to be lulled by illusions and have considered the question of war or peace in a far too abstract manner. This attitude held back our work for the Stockholm Appeal and other activities for the cause of peace. But recent events, particularly the experiments with the H-bomb have roused our vigilance. Now that the winds and seas which surround our peaceable country could bring death, we are beginning to understand that we cannot escape either.

This certainty has recently been given expression in many different forms. The Peace Committee of Sweden has conducted local inquiries which have shown a considerable development in the nature of the reaction to the threat of the atom bomb.

This was also manifested in the Swedish Parliament. Senator Gosta Elfvig, editor of the central organ of the Social Democratic Party, "Morgon-Tidningen" asked the government a question in Parliament about their plans in relation to the H-bomb experiments. During the parliamentary debates which followed, just as in the question itself, a very great anxiety was shown to exist concerning the situation and the necessity of taking urgent measures. The Prime Minister, Erlander, stressed the possibilities of

6214

HECTOR

- 2 -

arriving at an agreement, primarily within the framework of the United Nations, on general disarmament, on banning the use of atomic weapons and on the control of the production of atomic energy.

Prior to the parliamentary debates the Executive Committee of the Liberal Party demanded that the government "should support all efforts within the United Nations leading to the conclusion of an international agreement guaranteeing the control of armaments and their reduction, including among others, the banning of the most horrible means of destruction". This demand was a practical reflection of the opinion of all the trade union, cultural and religious organisations, an opinion which was demonstrated by resolutions, statements made by leading personalities and by the editorials of various organs. For example, the Vice-President of the General Confederation of Swedish Trade Unions, Einar Norrman, declared "that faced with such a situation, the entire working class movement must train an army of united and determined fighters for peace". It should be said that this Confederation includes almost all the organised workers of our country and that its membership is about 1,300,000. It is in this way that the traditional desire of the Swedish people for peace is at the present time everywhere acquiring an increasingly active and more concrete content.

For a long time Sweden's foreign policy has officially been a neutral one and our country still remains, as all the world knows, outside any military pacts. But within this neutrality is concealed as well possibilities for our country to play an active role as mediator and promotor of friendship between the peoples. The Swedish peace organisations and official circles have increasingly stressed these

6214

HECTOR

- 3 -

possibilities.

Thus there took place a few days ago a meeting of the Nordic countries in the question of peace during which the Prime Ministers of Denmark, Norway and Sweden as well as the President of the Finnish Parliament spoke. At that meeting it was underlined that the different forms taken by international politics "do not prevent them from getting together on the international political question which is predominant, the safeguarding of peace". Therefore in this situation, it will be the task of the Swedish peace movement to evolve organisational forms of an increasingly solid character in order to bring together the growing movement of opinion.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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