

SERVAS International Conference, Easter 1966, April 8 - 11

Place: Hanna Skolen, Bagsvaerd, Copenhagen, Denmark

Present: Pat KNOWLES (Representative of the British SERVAS Branch and former international coordinator)

Reva KING (U.S.A.)

Julia KJELSAAS (Norway)

Kurt SCHMID (Austria)

Therese VEDEL (Denmark)

Radha BHATT (India)

Bernhard VÖGELI (Switzerland)

8th April, 1966

Opening of Conf: 10 a.m.

1- Standing orders:

Chairman: Conference agrees that Kurt Schmid shall be presiding Chairman during Conference.

Recording Secretary: rotating one Conference delegate shall be minuting important Conference matters and reread them at the end of each Conf. day in order to have common approval to the final minutes; recording secretary for the first day: Terese Vedel.

Working Conference hours: 9 - 12 a.m. and 1.30 - 5.30 p.m.

Amendments to the "Agenda", sent out by CIC to all SERVAS Committees:

it is agreed that this agenda is just a suggestion and not a binding agenda for Conf. It shall be amended in the following points:

to point 4 a: add "reconfirmation of SERVAS Switzerland"

to "SERVAS-Peace Builders and the Peace Movements" on p. 2:

Switzerland points out that this suggestion has not been reported properly by I.C. and insists on the original proposal to I.C. of Feb. 16: "Discussion and decision about the word "Peacebuilders" in the official SERVAS title in English". Pat Knowles excuses her fault and Conference agrees to the new wording.

to point 1: it is agreed that this Conference shall have the power to make decisions as proposed and suggested by the Vienna Conference 1965. To work out the practical right to vote add: "decision making, right to vote".

Decision making, right to vote"

Conference agrees unanimous that every SERVAS branch delegating a representative to Intern. Conference shall have one vote. International Coordination has no right to vote,

Consequently there are 1966 the following countries able to vote:

Switzerland, Norway, Austria, USA, GB, Denmark, India and perhaps the Netherlands if the delegate will still arrive during the Conference.

New definitions of SERVAS status: Unanimously adopted the following new definitions, replacing the former division of "Committee" and "Correspondent":

"Branch": Where there exists a host list there SERVAS shall be considered as a "branch" including Eastern countries if they are not under government control.

"Committee Secretary" shall be called the person responsible for the committee of a SERVAS branch.

"Secretary" shall be called the person responsible for a SERVAS branch without committee.

Vote on Matters of Organisation:

Switzerland proposes that all decisions shall be taken by majority vote. USA proposes that there is only majority vote for matters not concerning purely internal matters of a branch.

GB proposes that there shall be established a referendum for decisions taken at Conference which concerns general policies.

Vote: US Proposal against GB proposal. Result: 6:1 for USA, USA proposal is accepted.

## 2. The Committee for International Coordination Report

Pat Knowles could not yet prepare a written report but gives an extensive oral report on the formation of the CIC to which belong now: (since Christmas 1965) Edna Smith (Chairman), Richard Colary, John Ford, Russel Schiller, Inge Kroeger, Pat Knowles (Secretary until May 1966). The CIC proposes that Int. Coordination shall be taken over by the US. A written summary of the work done in CIC shall be made later.

Discussion on the report: Switzerland is disappointed about the work done within CIC. Important primary matters have been handled wrong, the formation of the CIC was never known until March 66 officially to the national SERVAS branches. Switzerland also wants to clarify that not Int. Conf. 1965 (July 8th-12th) has asked for CIC instead of the international coordinator but that this suggestion was made July 13th in Vienna by Reva King, Kurt Schmid and Pat Knowles as an intermediate solution.

USA expresses her deep appreciation for the work done by the former International Coordinator and by the CIC. USA is of the opinion that CIC was an intermediate establishment and that International Conference is responsible for election of International Coordinator.

Norway asks not just to criticise at each other and keep also during Conf. the basic SERVAS spirit "international understanding" in mind.

Switzerland replies and underlines that at Conf. not personal friendship but practical work and results are primary.

Austria suggests that USA take over international coordination.

USA mention that the home committee has urged that Kurt Schmid, Austria, should take over international coordination, especially because Austria is a neutral country and Kurt Schmid will keep anyway his responsibilities concerning East-West relations. After long discussions and serious thoughts Kurt Schmid is willing to take over intern. coordination under the following conditions:

- (1) Financial support for stationary is guaranteed.
- (2) No promise that a newsletter will be published regularly, but only by necessity.
- (3) Full cooperation of all SERVAS branches.
- (4) Efforts toward development of a working advisory committee.
- (5) Shift of Austrian SERVAS national responsibility to somebody else, possibly the Student travel organisation ÖKISTA.
- (6) Transfer of all existing material from the former international coordinator and the CIC to Kurt Schmid until May 15 1966.
- (7) Designation of an assistant Intern. Coordinator for advice when needed and to step in in case of emergency.

The Conference unanimously is in favour and enthusiastic about Kurt Schmid's willingness. On the working basis of the written US propositions about responsibilities of the intern. coordinator, the Conference works out the following binding regulation for future International coordinator: on each paragraph a vote is taken. (Result behind each paragraph).

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF SERVAS INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR:

The responsibilities of the "international Servas coordinator" are as follows:

- (a) To receive, acknowledge, and coordinate information about existing Servas branches. (7:0)
- (b) To prepare this information as often as necessary for publication in a Newsletter composed of material submitted by the national branches (7:0).

- (c) To receive information about interesting developments and prepare this for publication and/or distribution (7:0)
- (d) To coordinate activities for setting up new secretaries and branches including the delegation of related responsibilities to existing branches when indicated (7:0)
- (e) To give provisional approval of new secretaries and branches pending final decision by International Servas Conference (7:0)
- (f) To receive (according to an annually agreed percentage of total income of national branches) and spend money for postage, paper and necessary travel expenditures for this work (7:0)
- (g) To receive copies of LIS's of travellers coming from countries without SERVAS branches and from travellers to and from Eastern countries. (7:0)
- (h) To receive at least two weeks before Intern. Conference annual complete statistics of all SERVAS branches. (7:0).
- (i) To designate Servas representatives in relation to other international organisations (7:0)
- (k) To coordinate annual International Conference and implement the work as directed by the Int. Conf. (7:0)
- (l) These responsibilities shall superceed all former documents concerning International Coordination (7:0)

Conference then discusses whether an assistant International coordinator is necessary. After a vote about the necessity (5:2), unanimously Reva King is elected as assistant international coordinator, Conference moves to the following issue:

Discussion and decision about the word "Peacebuilder" in the official Servas title in English

The proposal was made by the Swiss Servas branch and the Swiss delegate briefly explains the reason to this step and refers to the detailed explanation in the printed and distributed Swiss annual report of 1965, p.2 "Future of Servas Switzerland". An intensive and serious discussion about this issue starts with the following main statements:

SWITZERLAND wants Servas to be a completely neutral organisation, this means non alligned to any ideology or tendency, such as pacifism or other philosophies.

GREAT BRITAIN explains the basis historically of the word "peacebuilder" within Servas and feels it has to be kept.

USA feels that when dropping the word peacebuilder and any connections with the word "peace", as for instance in the basic policy statement of Servas in the Peace Diary or in the charter of US Servas Committee Inc., which is suggested by Switzerland, Servas would loose its uniqueness and many people presently working for Servas would resign.

AUSTRIA supports the Swiss suggestion, Servas needs a new working basis and Servas shall give young Servas secretaries a chance to use their changed ideas.

NORWAY has the opinion that the word "peacebuilders" doesn't mean anything in Norway. Therefore we can cut it out. We can work for peace without using great words.

DENMARK supports Norway's opinion and Switzerland's proposal.

INDIA supports also the idea but explains the real peacebuilding work the Indian Servas secretary is doing, but in his professional capacities and not mainly in his aside responsibility in Servas.

USA distributed detailed recommendations in response to CIC suggestions. Except as mentioned above, the Conference was unable to discuss other recommendations by USA. (Reva King)

Pat KNOWLES acknowledged that Swiss proposal re Peace Builders was inadequately reported and asked Switzerland to substitute original statement.

Close of the session April 0: 6 p.m.

MINUTES FOR APRIL 9, INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
NATIONAL REPORTS

This session opened with the following announcement by the Swiss delegate, Bernhard Vögeli:

"The delegate from Switzerland is leaving the Conference. Having an overall impression of the Conference (from both formal and informal discussions), the delegate from Switzerland is unable to work with the 1966 Conference.

This is not a final decision as to whether or not Swiss SERVAS will cooperate in the future with SERVAS as this must be discussed with the Board. Upon return to Switzerland, a final statement will be submitted to the SERVAS International co-ordinator."

The Swiss delegate then submitted a written report of activities in Switzerland and withdrew from the official Conference Sessions.

The rest of the meetings on April 9, consisted of reports for the various countries. Statistics from these reports appear in the attached table. Details may be secured from the respective countries. The most important items are listed for countries in alphabetical order.

I. AUSTRIA+ - Reported by Kurt Schmid, Secretary.

Outstanding activities:

- 1. Travelers - most successful year; arrangements for GROUP travel to Japan (1966), and to USA (1967), are being made with the World Friendship Organization.
- 2. Publicity - extensive with articles published through ÖKISTA, IVS (Austrian Branch), Austrian Esperantists, Arbeiter-Zeitung (newspaper of Austrian Socialist Democrats), and German Quaker Magazine.
- 3. Committee - includes 8 members who met 3 times in 1965.
- 4. East/West Developments (see separate report).
- 5. International Sponsors - agreement by two prominent Austrians: Dr. Hans Thirring and Dr. Robert Jungk.

II. BENELUX+ - Reported by Arthur Sietsma, Secretary.

Outstanding points:

- 1. Difficulties in work with peace movements; skepticism about SERVAS activities other than "open-door" activity.
- 2. Committee - not needed in countries with activities so modest. They can be managed by one capable person.
- 3. SERVAS major needs at present:-
  - a. More travelers.
  - b. One address in each country where travelers may secure help in planning their trips and contacting hosts.
  - c. Transfer of European Servas Coordinator to Austria, the best link between East and West countries.
  - d. Travelers from the East (recommendations reflected in separate East/West report).
  - e. Traveler recognition of the many differences among European countries thus requiring longer visits for real understanding.

+ Detailed report was duplicated and distributed at Conference

III. CANADA - Reported by Reva King, USA - for Canadian Secretary, Louise Murphy.

1. Ongoing responsibility in a transitional state with USA assisting on a temporary basis.
2. Louise Murphy temporarily unavailable.
3. Continuing attempts to develop a National Canadian Committee unsuccessful thus far.
4. Subcommittee being developed in Montreal in cooperation with Esperantists - Leader, Gastao de Mauro Florencio. (Conference approved steps taken to separate SERVAS identity from HISPANO - Luso Travel Service, employer of Gastao).
5. Host list corrections 1966 submitted by Louise Murphy to USA for duplication and distribution.

IV. DENMARK - Reported by Therese Vedel, Secretary since 1965 Steps thus far:

1. Letter to hosts introducing new secretary, review of SERVAS, and requesting small donation.
2. Completion of new host lists - 1966.
3. Contact with Committee for International Cooperation (Work Camps), and follow-up planned.

Plans for Future:

1. Meeting May 1, 1966, with those people showing a real interest in SERVAS to review International Conference and discuss future plans.
2. June 15 meeting with all hosts.
3. Letter to hosts giving report on developments including especially East/West.

V. FRANCE - Written report from Chairman, Joseph Girard, submitted by Pat Knowles. Principal points:

1. French activities somewhat limited so far this year because of health and job difficulties.
2. French host lists are generally accurate, but do require a few alterations.
3. A meeting of the French Committee is planned.

VI. GERMANY - Reported by Reva King, USA, for Jean Naves & Erika Roth, Co-secretaries.

1. In accordance with Conference decision of 1965, and in cooperation with Jean Naves, numerous German Servas travelers were contacted in regard to work for German Servas.
2. Leadership is now in a transitional state during the orientation of Erika Roth by Jean Naves; a last minute family accident forced Erika to cancel Conference reservation; there is a nucleus of a committee.
3. Host lists for 1965 are reasonably accurate. (The Conference endorsed the authority of a sponsoring Committee to develop a new committee in another country in cooperation with the existing Branch, if any, or with the International Coordinator pending the next International Conference).

- VII. GREAT BRITAIN - written report from Secretary, Connie Thorpe, submitted by Pat Knowles. Outstanding developments:-
1. Cooperation with Women for Peace and with BUSTA (British University Student Travel Association).
  2. Ongoing meetings with travelers -
    - a. Outgoing - for orientation
    - b. Returning - for self-programming activities.
  3. Financial report delayed; apologies extended.
  4. One committee meeting - supplemented by frequent telephone conferences.

VIII. INDIA - written report from Secretary, H. Parikh, was circulated at Conference but failed to reach Recorder. Statistics are included in the attached table. Recommendations submitted by India prior to Conference were sent to all countries, but were not discussed.

IX. ISRAEL - Kurt Schmid reported on a meeting in Israel, December 1965, with former Israeli Secretary, Joseph Abileah, who may be willing to help in the re-development of SERVAS in Israel.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE makes the following requests of Joseph Abileah:

1. That he be an International Sponsor;
2. That he find a person to take responsibility for re-development of Israeli SERVAS;
3. That contact be established with Kibbutzes to be co-ordinated with SERVAS family visits.

X. ITALY - Telegram received April 9, 1966, from Luisa L'Abate reporting new provisional Italian Secretary:-

Mrs. Anna Trogu-Stoppani  
Via Bruzzeri 37, Milano

Kurt Schmid reported that:-

1. 12,000 SERVAS leaflets in Italian are ready for distribution.
2. Mrs. Stoppani could not attend the Conference because of financial reasons.

Conference decision:

Transportation expenses, up to \$ 20. were authorized for Mrs. Stoppani to go to Vienna for orientation by Kurt on the following conditions:

- a. Mrs. Stoppani indicates a realistic interest in developing Italian SERVAS.
- b. Funds are available from the International Co-ordination balance.

XI.

JAPAN Reported by Pat Knowles.

1. The Japanese Branch is well organized and is trying to get a better cross-section of hosts.
2. Hosts are concentrated in the cities, but each city can take only about 5 travelers at a time - therefore:
  - a. groups of travelers should be spread out accordingly;
  - b. travelers should write Masuo Amano before leaving their home country indicating any personal arrangements and the number of hosts they wish to visit;
  - c. travelers spend their first night at the International Student Hostel while M.A. completes final arrangements with hosts;
  - d. orientation of travelers can best be done by returning travelers; incl. possibly, a leaflet, "How to Visit in Japan"

Kurt Schmid reported briefly on plans for a study trip to Japan by a group of Austrians in 1966; Masuo Amano is making arrangements.

- XII. LATIN AMERICA - Written report from Kitty Fialkin, US secretary responsible for assisting with development in Latin American countries. Major points:-
1. Gradual expansion with 4 new hosts in Mexico and travelers from Latin America approved for travel in the U.S. and various countries of Europe;
  2. Need - more travelers to visit Latin America to maintain interest of hosts.
- Future plans:-
1. Pat Knowles will try to send copies of all Latin American Secretaries to all SERVAS secretaries;
  2. All future International publicity will be mailed to all Latin American Secretaries.
  3. Any Secretary having a potential traveler who might help with developing Latin America will write to Kitty Fialkin (U.S. SERVAS, c/o Sloane House, YMCA, 356 W. 34 St., NYC, N.Y. 10001) and send a copy to International Co-ordinator, Kurt Schmid,
- XIII. NORWAY - Reported by Julia Kjelsaas, Secretary.
- Highlights:-
1. Special meeting with hosts and travelers to discuss various interests and to encourage friends to become hosts;
  2. Ongoing contact with Indian Embassy;
  3. Publicity of SERVAS to local newspapers, peace groups and workcamp organizations;
  4. More travelers are needed to visit hosts in Northern Norway- (transportation facilities are available);
- XIV. SWEDEN - Reported by Kurt Schmid.
- Recent activities:
1. Conference invitations sent to former travelers (Barbro Löffler and Britt Arwidson) who after indicating request to stay with Danish hosts, responded that they could not attend the Conference after all.
  2. Letter from Ulla Berglin - indicating
    - a. new host list to be duplicated after further study;
    - b. inability to attend International Conference;
    - c. a possible contact for Finland .
  3. Leaflets - "What is Servas?" in Swedish given to Ulla Berglin for distribution.- Future Servas Responsibility in Sweden - Decision deferred pending clarification of the availability of Christopher Cowley, Christina Palm (SSTO), or other resources to be coordinated through Kurt.
  4. Continuing attempts to publicize Servas through Quaker Magazines, etc.
- XV. SWITZERLAND - Reported by Bernhard Vögeli, Secretary. Highlights:
1. See written report distributed at Conference by Bernhard Vögeli giving detailed account of Swiss Servas revival and many accomplishments during 1965-66 and describing cooperative arrangements with SSTO. See announcement at beginning of International Conference Minutes, April 9, 1966.

XVI. USA - Reported by Reva King, US International Correspondent  
See US Recommendations Distributed at Conference.

Special activities, 1965-66:-

1. Continued cooperation with International Student Service.
2. Continued "At Home" nights for foreign visitors.
3. Cooperation with Citizen Exchange Corps.
4. Theater benefits for fund raising.
5. Letters to Southern newspapers, Arizona, and Salt Lake City in attempt to secure more hosts in those areas.
6. Traveler publicity sent to industries, hospitals etc. with adult foreign trainees.
7. Continued growth of National Working Committee.
8. Continued efforts to develop Regional Committees and first National Conference, Dec., 1965.
9. Television program by New England Committee.
10. Formulation of statement of US SERVAS policy in relation to conflictual issues such as Vietnam etc.

Adjourned 5:00 P.M. April 9, 1966

Reva King, Recorder



## NATIONAL REPORT STATISTICS -INTERN. CONFERENCE

BRANCH & Secretary	Latest host lists	Number of hosts	Number of count- ries vi- sited	TRAVELERS		Financial Support (Source of support)
				In	Out	
AUSTRIA K & U Schmid	1966	28	13	52	12	Travelers, hosts & other contri- butions + + + +
BENELUX A, Sietsma	1966			31		Hosts & trave- lers + + + +
		7	3		2	
		35	6		6	
CANADA <sup>+</sup> L. Murphy	1965 <sup>++</sup>					
DENMARK T. Vedel	1966	25	+++	+++		Hosts + + + +
FRANCE J, Girard President	1964 <sup>++</sup>			Estimated total-63		+ + +
GERMANY J. Naves & E. Roth	1965	20-25	+++	+++		Travelers++++
GR. BRITAIN C. Thorpe	1965 <sup>++</sup> (fairly up to date)	73	50	50	10	++++, Travelers
INDIA H. Parikh	1965	many	6 plus 17 approved by US	36 plus (18 visitors from US Sane & 20 from Canada University)		+++
JAPAN + M. Amano	1964	65- 70	+++			
LATIN AMERICA <sup>+</sup>	1965	16	10			+++
NORWAY J. Kjelsaas	1966	39	6	31 (mostly Americans)	5	Secretary only. No other income
SWEDEN +						
SWITZERLAND B. Vögeli	1966	27	45	19	45	Travelers & SSTO
USA F. Inkeles	1966	1150	99 (74 approved by US; 25 Amer. ap- proved by other Branches)	214+++++ 99 (about 60 came approved by home country; 154 were approved in US)		Travelers; Fund raising plays; CEC; Comm. mem- bers; miscella- neous donations

+ See special report attached

++ Current Corrections being made

+++ Information not available or yet received.

++++ Additional Expenses paid by Secy.

+++++ Excludes about 40 foreign visi-  
tors who attended cozy "at home"  
nights but could not travel.

DISCUSSION ON EAST/WEST PLANSConclusion

- (1) Travellers in this scheme should use the system only if already coming for some specific purpose through another organisation, e.g. a specific study programme sponsored by an educational organisation.
- (2) All travellers should have some knowledge of an appropriate language e.g. English, German, French.
- (3) New "Eastern" branches should have lists of Secretaries only; they should deal directly with them or with designated persons who would take special responsibility in that country for the E/W scheme. These should brief travellers personally, interviewing them if possible and planning their trip. Travellers should wait for a reply from hosts before visiting them. Hosts may take travellers for more than two days if willing.

Travellers when given Secretaries' address should write stating:-

1. Sponsoring organisation.
2. Special interests.
3. Plans they have already made with dates.
4. Places they would like to see.

On this basis, Secretaries can interview travellers, brief them and plan their trip. At least a month's notice is necessary.

Secretaries in all countries are asked to select and interview all travellers very carefully.

Hosts It will be necessary to inform all hosts of the special needs and requirements of these travellers.

a. That they have a minimal "pocket money" allowance only. (All travel expenses, however, can be prepaid in the country of origin).

b. That extended stay may be desirable. (This may involve more than the general 'obligation' of the hosts, who may wish to opt out)

A Family Exchange Scheme

This was suggested by the Czechoslovakian guests. The main purpose of this was to facilitate financial arrangements. To recruit a limited number of hosts for this special purpose, Secretaries would need to know:-

- a. How many persons could a family take?
- b. How many persons in that family would wish to travel?
- c. For how long?
- d. Which languages were spoken? Professional &/or personal interests.

Note: The Position of Eastern Travellers in the West

It was understood that although we should expect our contacts in Eastern countries to select travellers carefully in respect of personal integrity, we could not be responsible for their actions in the West and their return to the East. Hence the need for them to come with some specific purpose under the sponsorship of some official organisation or tourist agency.

Developments so far

Austria has already taken Eastern travellers privately into families. These came through official sources in groups of about four - six people.

Czechoslovakia

CSSR has already produced a list. They can also help development in Warsaw and Budapest. They are hoping to develop personal contacts and official ones by degrees.

Travelling to "Eastern" countries

Our guests assured us that we should not be apprehensive for our travellers' safety. If they are people of integrity who behave well and if they find out about and keep the regulations of that country, especially in regard to currency.

Recorder: Pat Knowles

10th April 1966

Present: Radha BHATT, India  
 Reva KING, USA  
 Julia KJELSAAS, Norway  
 Pat KNOWLES, Great Britain  
 Kurt SCHMID, Austria  
 Arthur SIETSMA, Holland  
 Theresa VEDEL, Denmark  
 Dr. Bohumil PUSKAILER, Czechoslovakia  
 Jan PUSKAILER, Czechoslovakia