

Social Democratic Party Congress

Speech by Chairman Olof Palme

on the draft proposal

for a Party Program

September 28, 1975

The revision of a Program is an important event in a party's life. Our party adopted its first Program in 1897. It was revised in 1911, 1920, 1944 and in 1960. Thus we are about to write the sixth Program in our history. We are about to shape the course of our politics for quite a long period of time. This is not only a matter of creating within ourselves an awareness of the main aims of the politics we stand for. It's making decisions for the future and focussing on those objectives around which we intend to rally our forces. This gives you an idea of the Program's importance and of the responsibility that this Congress is facing.

The course of endeavor indicated by the 1960 Party Program and later by the Local Government Program have certainly left their mark on the Party's politics during the past 15 years.

We decided to put our efforts into economic progress so that we could build up the public sector and counter the discontent of frustrated expectations.

You may recall the discussions from those days? Our opponents claimed that Social Democracy had muffed its chance, that the increasing welfare had wrenched away the grounds for socialism. Besides, the industrial working class had ceased to grow numerically.

The increasing numbers of white collar workers would sweep the bourgeoisie into power. Socialism was possibly the answer for poor countries in the Third World, but not for a society with a high living standard.

We know now that it was the working class that was right. Full employment and increased economic well-being didn't make people conservative. On the contrary, it brought with it augmented demands in areas which could only be fulfilled effectively by collective measures. This necessitated collaboration and solidarity.

Along with high employment and increased well-being, expectations and demands were to arise that basic needs should be fulfilled, not only for a minority, but for the entire people. Good housing. Jobs for everybody. Care when you got sick. A chance for an education for your children. Care for the elderly.

Collective efforts with society as the means would liberate each individual.

This course of political action was shaped into a

thoughtful philosophy, first and foremost by Tage Erlander. It was presented by him in a way that everybody could understand and feel. To a large extent, this has been decisive for the Party's work during the past fifteen years. We set the sights of solidarity high. We succeeded in rallying our people around the aims of welfare. We are carrying our success with us into the future.

Still, once again we feel the necessity of reshaping the long range political course of our Party. In this we are sustained by an exceedingly lively and vital ideological discussion within the entire labor movement. This is the reason for the decision at the previous Congress that the Party Program be revised.

The background of this decision is to be found, as so often happens, in an examination of reality.

During the sixties we became more conscious than ever before of the international implications of our achievements. Our young people turned outward, toward the world.

A year or two ago someone proposed a ten-level income scale for all the world's people. The lowest level would allow 2000 calories and a glass of clean water a day. For nearly one-fifth of the world's

population, such a guaranteed minimum income would mean a great rise in standard.

The poor people's needs for justice and solidarity changed our picture of the world. It deepened our insight into the necessity for international solidarity. The war in Vietnam shook us out of the deadlocks of the cold war and laid the foundation for a new solidarity with the forces of the Third World who were fighting along in the same battle as we, for progress and social justice.

The 1960 Program was the first of our programs to have an extensive and progressive international section. Still, it was the international questions which occasioned the first demands for a revision of the program. It was the international section of the 1960 program which first lost its relevancy--its ability to express the intentions of the labor movement.

But why was it that the successful efforts of the early sixties became insufficient, all the same?

You can answer this question in many ways.

You can talk about the strains and difficulties to which

many people were subjected. The harsh pressures on the job, the competitiveness, the mass relocations, the deterioration of the environment and health, the persisting income gaps.

You can talk about the broad research and investigative activities for which we took the initiative in order to get a true picture of conditions. The Trade Union Confederation examined the working environment. The Study on Living Standards disclosed differences in living conditions and how they could be traced back to people's positions on the labor market.

Or you can turn to writers. In a brilliant essay on "The Worker who Began to Wonder", Sven Lindqvist has described a worker who goes to his job every morning past apartment houses, hospitals, schools and theaters. All these buildings look so different from his factory -- more attractive, more inviting.

They convert an old leather factory in the town into a high school. It is thoroughly remodelled, as if there were another kind of people who would be entering the building. Restaurants are built, auditoriums, rooms for recreation and for various activities. They make a determined effort to put the individual pupil in the center of things. That was great, he thought. But he began to wonder why they didn't build a factory that put the individual worker in the center of things, why they didn't make an effort to stimulate him to

take advantage of his inherent potentials.

In an encyclopedia he found that houses, hospitals, theaters and shops are buildings for consumption, meant to satisfy needs. A factory, on the other hand, is a unit of production which exploits human working power and material resources to produce goods or means of production.

Goods can be produced in one place, sold in another and used in a third. Goods don't smell, even if the workplace is stinky and noisy. And since the users of the goods never have to set foot in the production site, there is no reason -- in a class society -- to build more humane factories.

Therefore, says Sven Lindqvist's worker, a factory looks like it does and is going to keep on looking that way until my buddies and I can get in there and help decide how it's going to look.

In certain respects, Lindqvist's analysis may be unjust. Still it gives a bit of the essence of why the labor movement has made such a strenuous effort for the renewal of working life. With a kind of inexorable logic, we have begun to broaden the concept of welfare so as to encompass the conditions of production, as well. We couldn't be responsible for efforts in health and welfare, while at the same time people in production were the victims of increasing risks of accident and of being worn out. We couldn't concentrate on a

tremendous expansion of the modern social structure, while ignoring the places where people produced the goods which laid the foundation for our welfare.

We couldn't purposefully carry out the principles of equal treatment in our social legislation, while silently sitting by and watching an unreasonable division of people into categories in working life. We couldn't talk about decisionsharing in the various areas of public life, without at the same time making an effort to bring about a democratization of the workplace.

It was not enough to have a welfare policy which gives us better social insurance, a new and better school, an improved housing standard and more leisure time. The welfare society hadn't entered the factory. There social differences between various categories of employees held sway. There were health hazards and accident risks. There you were worried about being fired, or falling behind or having your wages cut. There democracy did not prevail - there the employer dominated things, thanks to his Paragraph 32. That's the way it was in working life. And there circumstances were decisive in many respects for the individual's situation outside the business world.

In the conception of a welfare state you include ideas of security and equality, solidarity and democracy. But all too often you felt that these values were set aside, when decisions in the business world were made on investments, on personnel policy, on production methods. These decisions were made on behalf of capital-owners and with the interests of private profit as a guidepost. The free market forces became brutal at times to individuals, to groups, or to entire communities.

This concerns a fundamental change in people's demands. In the fifties we talked about a discontent occasioned by unfulfilled expectations because an improved private standard of living hadn't been matched by a corresponding improvement in welfare and an expansion of the services required by society. Better purchasing power was of limited value, if you couldn't get a decent apartment, a good education for yourself and your children, good health care, or if you were subject to insecurity through sickness, or the death of a provider, or in your old age, or if society was not prepared when you wanted to change jobs or lost your old one.

We have now begun to realize many of these welfare objectives. So the horizon broadens and your eyes search in other directions. People begin to ask themselves why these welfare objectives can't have a breakthrough in the business world, and feel all the more strongly the contrast between the broad aims

of society and their own practical experience of their working conditions.

The 1975 Program has to give expression to this insight, which has permeated the discussion within the labor movement. The proposed program, which is on the Congress table, confirms the importance of work, not only for our welfare but as a part of our welfare. The Program Commission has tried to give expression to our determined will to renew working life, as seen by the Party and by the entire labor movement.

Such a renewal can only take place if those who are directly affected by conditions at the workplaces gain more influence. The Program Commission thus drew the conclusion that the time is now ripe. The principles of democracy have to be applied to economic life.

This was the main train of thought in the proposal for a new Party Program that the Commission circulated for remiss comment last year. There was also a question to our members inherent in this: are you prepared to take this step?

The response was overwhelming: 579 motions and 175 comments were submitted as a result of the program discussion.

The motions signified a uniting of forces around the

basic principles in the proposal--that freedom, equality, solidarity and democracy comprise the all-encompassing convictions of socialism and that work is the fundamental keystone of social progress. They signify endorsement for the demand that Social Democracy is to make the attainment of economic democracy its primary task. They provided support for the call for planned economizing, for employee co-determination and for strong consumer influence.

But the motions didn't just mean an endorsement of the basic principles and trains of thought. They also contained criticism of many important sections, and they brought out demands to move positions forward still further and to make certain points in the Program more explicit. The debate on the Program enhanced the clarity of the Party's ideological position and of the main trends of our politics. The Program Commission has tried to take these considerations into account in working out the revised proposal of the Party Program.

Let me present the most essential points in our view, as we have tried to express it in our proposal of a new Party Program.

Democracy, for us, is the heart of socialism. Democracy is what our Party Program is all about. Democracy links together Social Democrats from various countries, brings together Social Democrats from different generations.

The theoretical groundwork of democratic socialism was laid primarily by Karl Marx, but also received inspiration from the Socialist Utopians, the Christian movement, radical free-thinkers and humanists. The labor movement in various countries is its organized manifestation. It is a century old, the past century in the history of mankind. That means that, of the political ideologies, socialism is the youngest, the most modern and progressive movement.

No political movement has made such great sacrifices in the struggle of democracy as Social Democracy in various countries. No political movement has defended the democratic values with greater determination and decisiveness.

In country after country Social Democracy has been haunted.

But with inexhaustible patience and a dignity which has been in sharp contrast to the bigotted and often brutal behavior of the conservative overlords, the Social Democrats won union and political rights for the wage-earners. This proceeded, despite laws intended to silence people, such as the Åkarps law, despite resistance to universal suffrage, defense for personal royal power - during the stage which Hjalmar Branting called the brutal time of attempted repression.

The fascists in Europe tried to suppress Social Democracy by violence. For what could be a more dangerous threat to dictatorship than a movement which rallied broad masses of people around the ideas of progress? When Nazism marched victoriously forth, countless Social Democrats had to sacrifice their lives, were put into concentration camps or in exile because they refused to abandon their democratic convictions.

Later they returned and built up their countries. The fantastic thing is that all this continues, that these satanic murderers are able to go on as they are.

For the youth club members of the 1930s generation, the Civil War in Spain was an utterly predominant experience, which shaped their picture of the world and stimulated a great deal of their political commitment. The Civil War had for them just about the same significance as the Vietnam War had for the youth of the 1960s.

This, mind you, was 40 years ago. Now this regime is approaching its downfall. Everyone knows what is going to be said when it has fallen: in the utmost shame and humiliation fascism took over the power in Spain at the end of the 1930s. For nearly 40 years it has plagued the Spanish people. It is also going to fall in the utmost shame and humiliation, and the judgment of history is going to be mercilessly harsh on Franco's fascist regime. This we know, yet it still exists today.

There was so much talk after the war about building a new Europe, based on democracy. But this Europe still has this ugly sore from its past.

Its military significance is not our affair -- we don't belong to any pacts. But it must be a strange thing to defend democracy by buying bases from fascists. I believe that a prime question during the coming days, weeks and months is going to be whether this democratic Europe, where there is so much talk about building a future, has enough self-confidence so that together we'll be able to rid ourselves of this miserable memory from a dismal past.

In countries where the Communist parties--in line with the classical principles of Lenin and Stalin--had taken over the police, the army and the State administration, they systematically obliterated Social Democracy. For what greater threat was there to such dictatorships than a movement which won over the broad mass of people to the ideas of progress and humanitarianism by using democratic principles?

What has gone on in Portugal has demonstrated the plight of Leninism when they believed that you could repeat the Russian Revolution of 1917 in another epoch, in another country and under completely different circumstances. It failed because they forgot the people. But our friends--the Portuguese socialists--then went out to the people and appealed for their support.

And clearly, they received it. .And with this, elitist thinking went into bankruptcy.

In Sweden it is the Social Democrats, along with the Liberals, who carried democracy to victory and defended it.

Therefore, there is no insult more gross and vulgar than when ^{the} representative of the Conservative Establishment accuses Social Democracy of being a threat to democracy.

It not only betrays historical and political ignorance and general lack of character, it also bears witness-- which is more serious--to a lack of insight into the meaning of democracy.

For us, democracy is a question of human dignity.

And human dignity--this includes the political liberties, the right freely to express your views, the right to criticize and to influence opinion.

Human dignity--that is the right to health and work, to education and social security.

Human dignity--that is the right and the practical possibility to work with others in shaping the future together.

These rights, these democratic rights, cannot be reserved

for a certain sector of society. They have to belong to the entire people.

Social Democracy has always emphasized political democracy as being of value in itself. One sometimes hears loose talk about the "bourgeois" liberties and "bourgeois" democracy. But it is our liberties they are talking about, it is our democracy that's involved--which our people have earnestly struggled to win for themselves and which we Social Democrats are always going to defend to the very end.

At the same time, Social Democracy has always regarded democracy as being more than formal rights. We have seen it as a way to realize people's wishes, to carry out social advances, to renew society.

The working masses who assembled for the great suffrage demonstrations at the beginning of the century carried two signs. On one it said "Universal Suffrage" and on the other "8-hour Day". They saw the connection. Democracy gave them the hope of being able to rise out of misery and poverty, to achieve their most important social desires.

The struggle for the political power became a struggle against the forces that wanted to keep the political right of decision in the hands of the well-to-do. It was this struggle which Hjalmar Branting and the pioneers of Social Democracy had to carry out and carried out successfully, along with the bourgeois left.

But their ways parted when democracy offered the possibility for the neglected people of society to push through their demands for an equalizing of social conditions. Then the bourgeoisie was united in its resistance to society's intrusion in economic life, and they tried to convince people that there was a limit for democracy, beyond which you couldn't go.

The struggle for this Social Democracy therefore became a struggle against those who claimed that political democracy couldn't be used to change the social conditions. It was the struggle which Per Albin Hansson, Gustav Möller and Ernst Wigforss carried on during the thirties.

Here is what Per Albin Hansson said: "First we're going to consolidate political democracy, then we're going to confirm social democracy and social welfare. Then the time will be ripe to tackle economic democracy."

Wigforss has continually maintained that, once you have accepted the principles of democracy, then you can't draw a limit for democracy. "Once you have openly approved the democratic principle of equality, you cannot then arbitrarily limit its application to certain areas of life."

This thought recurs in the LO report on democracy in industrial firms: "For the individual, life is of a piece. There is no sharp line of demarcation between work, economy, culture and social status and treatment.

Seen from the individual's perspective, the struggles for liberation and equality must be carried on unceasingly and within all sectors of social life."

At the same time, economic democratization is being driven inexorably forward by certain tendencies in the development of society.

Trends in the capitalist economy are toward ever greater concentration of economic power. In Sweden this is true to a great degree. But this concentration of power in our economy is a reflection of what is happening in other countries and in the entire world economy, where worldwide enterprises operate independent of national boundaries and uncommitted to the objectives set up by national governments.

The single-minded reliance on growth of production is based on an exploitation of the earth's finite raw material supplies and natural resources that is untenable in the long run. The energy crisis made this obvious to everyone in a very tangible way. The great United Nations conferences on the environment, population, food and on a new international economic order, have brought these relationships home to us ever more distinctly. Global economizing and solidarity across national borders are being called for.

All of us feel uneasy about the poisons and chemical substances that menace our health and the equilibrium of nature. This is seen by more and more people

as a result of unchecked technological and economic growth. There is ever stronger insistence that technology be controlled and its advances evaluated, also in their broader social aspects.

The international economy is currently undergoing a difficult crises. There is great unemployment, and at the same time inflation is raising prices and hollowing out incomes. The distribution of incomes and fortunes, meanwhile, becomes even more lopsided, the social damage done all the more severe. Increasing numbers of people are questioning the ability of the present economic system to master the crisis.

These are the problems around which the political discussion circles. To fend off these threats to welfare, security and justice has been the goal of a more and more advanced policy of reform. And one may well ask the question

What is it that makes the labor movement think it can tackle these gigantic problems?

The basis, of course, is our own conviction as to the significance of solidarity and cooperation among equal citizens as a driving force in the effort to build society. And there is our faith in democracy as a vital means of making the hopes and desires of our citizens become realized.

Another basis is also the experience of a peacefully progressing society. It was not individual initiatives inspired by the private profit motive which carried out the struggle against unemployment and poverty,

which was able to create security for the aged and the family, which built up health care and education. The driving force was the idea of collective responsibility and solidarity. This driving force has sufficed to build a historically and internationally rather decent society for the citizens of this country. It would be strange indeed if this experience were not able to serve as a spur for the future.

The experience we thus have had, the nature of our development and inherent tendencies, the problems our society is facing--all these circumstances lead to the conclusion that economic democratization is now going to be both natural and necessary. The conclusion of the Program Commission is that economic decentralization should be put in the forefront of our Party Program.

"Social Democracy therefore intends to replace the present concentration of economic power in private hands with a system where each person has the right as a citizen, wage-earner and consumer, to influence the direction and distribution of production, the shaping of the means of production and the conditions of work," the Program Commission writes.

As the means, planned economizing under citizen control, the employees' renewal of working life and greater influence for the consumer are suggested.

In the proposed Program, we point out eight areas where a planned economy under society's leadership and under democratic control appear as inevitably necessary.

Environmental policy necessitates a nationwide goal and the means of achieving it. Otherwise we can't protect nature, preserve our land and water resources, fight pollution and contamination. Economizing with Land and Water and the Environmental Control Law are evidence that such planning is in the process of being developed.

The energy crisis definitely confirmed the fact that energy policy requires long-term planning. This concerns not only how energy is to be produced, but just as much, our use of energy. Saving and economizing is a prerequisite for the attainment of reasonable goals. These thoughts are vital to the energy policy which we are in the process of developing and to which the Riksdag has given its support.

Regional policies aim for a more even distribution of employment and services throughout the country. It will be an empty shell if it is not born out by long-range planning and effective means of supplying assistance to victimized regions and towns in our country. This is the foundation of the guidelines

for regional policy which the Riksdag has given its support and which is now being followed up by intense activity in counties and townships throughout the country.

These are a few instances of how we are beginning to plan for the future.

A few decades ago the idea of a planned economy aroused intense opposition and occasioned hard political strife. Today it is scarcely challenged by anyone. It forces its way forward in country after country and is already being carried out with great intensity by private interests from their particular points of departure.

Today the question is, instead, which objectives do we want to achieve through our planning; in whose interests should it be done--in those of the people, or of the multinational enterprises and the vast concentrations of capital--and how can we assure democratic control and participation in the planning.

The planning has to apply to all parts of our country and be given adequate resources. This is necessary in order to create a counterweight to the private concentration of power and to the giant international concerns. It is necessary so as to provide impetus to a welfare policy to cover the whole country.

Our opponents speak a great deal, in this respect, about State control, centralized

bureaucracy and "bosses". In most cases, this reflects the conservative's resistance to the inevitable conflict of interests involved, in that the trends of society are to solve problems not on the capital-owner's terms but by democratic means.

But we're not going to let a biased and class-related prejudice confuse us. The risk of bureaucratization is always there. As Social Democrats we have no interest in creating some gigantic central planning bureaucracy which may easily become cut off from reality and fettered by detailed regulations. It is an asset to be able to amalgamate this into a system of local self-government which has broader responsibilities than in any other country. It is an asset to have a strong and independent trade union movement and active popular movements which are able to involve their members and which energetically assert their interests. It is also an asset to have so many independent firms working within the framework which the legislation and planning prescribe.

Theoretically it is an advantage to have technocratic planning models which appear to create simple solutions to all the problems of society. But there are horrifying examples out in the world of how this works in practice. In a democracy it is an advantage to build upon balanced counterweights which in themselves may provide a guarantee for consideration and tolerance and create ample room for initiative and manifold variety. This is one of the many reasons why we are so determined in our effort to increase employee

co-determination on all levels. This is also one of the reasons why we so strongly emphasize the importance of the popular movements in the Party Program.

It is important to find ways and means of having broad democratic participation in the planning.

Our energy policy was formed on the basis of broad citizens' activities, where tens of thousands of people took part in study circles night after night, penetrating the factual questions and forming their own viewpoints. Not until these were on hand were we prepared to make our decision in the matter. Internationally, this procedure of conferring on the energy question was a unique example of democratic participation in the process of planning.

The county planning now in progress is following the same pattern. During the past year tens of thousands of people have also delved into the problems of their own towns and counties, determined what their state of affairs is today, and considered their lines of action for the future. This is also--from the international view--a unique example of democratic influence on the planning process.

This is the way we are going to continue to do things. Planning is no act of mindless machinery. It is founded on people's participation. Its purpose is to serve people.

Recently I made a visit to Skaraborg. There there's a place called Hällekis. It's lovely in Hällekis, and the people are intimately bound to their town.

Hällekis' existence rests on three resources.

One resource is a large firm which has created a productive plant there that provides a living for people in the town. It is the only company there and it answers for the overwhelming number of jobs.

The second resource is the society which has been built up to make a nice life for its inhabitants. For generations they have been working hard to build schools, meeting halls, houses, streets and roads to fulfill people's desires for a well-ordered community.

The third resource is the people who live and work there. They are rooted there, they feel good in their town, and there's where they want to make a future for themselves and their children.

Should any of these resources disappear, one of the links in the chain breaks and the place falls apart. Now the big company has said that it wants to shut down its plant, although no decision has as yet been made. The town feels its existence threatened, it runs the risk of a tremendous destruction of capital. People are profoundly worried about their

futures. They turn to society for help. The authorities are called in. All the planning resources are employed. The so-called bureaucrats and "bosses" work for weeks and months trying to find a solution. Their work is still going on.

Why? Simply because the most important resource is, after all, the people, their sense of security, their faith in the future. And when the troubles come there is, in the end, only a broadening of solidarity to rely on as a possible way out of the difficulties.

This is the heart of the matter. The planned economizing we talk about is no technocratic invention. It has to have a human dimension, above all, designed to serve people, in an effort to give solidarity content in practice.

The planned economy as a step in the democratization of the economy has its corollary, in relation to working conditions out in the factories, in our desire for a renewal of working life.

In the introductory statement of objectives to the proposed Party Program, it says:

"Social Democracy maintains that work is the foundation of all welfare and that people's will to work is the nation's most important resource. Each person has the right, according to his capacity, to do his share of work. Each person has the right to a job he can feel

is meaningful. Work has to be part of a social relationship, where the fruits of work are used to satisfy individual and collective needs. Therefore the right of decision in production has to be put in the hands of the entire people. Production has to be organized in such a way that each person is met with appreciation and respect for his work. It must be organized in such a way that each person can feel secure about his life and his health on the job. Therefore the employees have to gain the right of decision over conditions in the company."

We talk about the right to work. A word of warning is in order here!

There are 15 million people unemployed in Europe and the United States. Unemployment has now been increasing for several years and it's getting worse and worse. As I listen to the international debate, I find something happening that is rather frightening. In various quarters people are beginning to grow accustomed to a large number of people being unemployed--perhaps not a million, but half a million or a few hundred thousand people. You wrinkle your brow and say, "This is all part of the technical age and all that. We'll have to count on having very many people unemployed in the future."

I read someplace in a magazine that in the future perhaps it will be a privilege to have a job. Well, if you have the attitude about work that it's a kind of torture,

like a necessary evil, then this becomes a way of defending the unemployment you allow in your country.

If the Congress accepts the program that has been put forward, then we obligate ourselves ideologically to the view that work is no necessary evil, but has to continue to be the central thing in a person's life. And if we've said that, then we can't tolerate it when large masses of people are permanently out of work, but instead we have to make an unceasing effort to evolve methods to assure full employment, to expand employment opportunities for men and women, for everybody in the country.

This we shall say here in our country, and this we shall say internationally. We're going to try to dissolve this impotent mumbling which is spreading in international circles about unemployment as a necessary and permanent evil.

We uphold the value of work in the modern industrial society. We believe that employees have the right of co-determination in production because it is there they invest their productive capacity, their working contribution. What we're after is a transfer of power from capital to work.

Here again there is the interplay between democracy as a desirable value in itself and the hope that,

by using democracy as the means, to change reality. The workers at the beginning of this century said: Give us the vote and we can get the 8-hour work day and do away with poverty. The employees today say: Give us co-determination and we'll create decent working environments, greater security on the job and better working conditions.

And we encounter basically the same narrow-minded arguments from the defenders of the status quo. When there was talk of suffrage, then they raised the spectre of "the parliament of the streets". When we talk about democracy at the workplace, the Conservative leader, Mr. Bohman, starts to say that metal-workers don't understand anything and that they would sleep badly at night if they were in there sharing the responsibilities for the firms where they work. The stripes never fade...

The 1971 LO Congress and the 1972 Social Democratic Congress were the starting points. Since then, the reforms have come along, one after the other.

The other day I had a visit from abroad. They asked me what economic democracy actually meant to the people on the shop floor. My answer was this:

The law on safety inspectors --that means, among other things, the right for a safety inspector to stop production if his working comrades are subject to serious risks of accident. And I told them about

vinyl chloride.

The law on job security--that means, among other things, protection against unwarranted dismissal. This is important, above all, for a person who has come up a bit in years.

The law on employment-promoting measures--that means, among other things, that adaptation teams can go in and see to it that the workplaces are changed so that a person who has become handicapped can stay on at the job and so that people who do not have full working capacity have better chances of getting jobs.

The law providing for company pay to union officials--that means that union officers can move around freely in the firm and carry out the duties the members have elected them to do.

The law on the right to a leave of absence for studies--means that a person who wants to educate himself has the support of the law to take time off, without risking losing his job.

The law on board representation--that means that thousands of blue and white collar workers have been able to enter the board rooms, receive information and insight, represent their comrades in the long-term decisions about the development of the firm.

I can't claim that each law would mean changes for every employee. But there are probably few employees who are not affected by any of these laws.

So we have begun. And now we continue with the new employment rights -- to get rid of Paragraph 32 and similar laws. Thereby we open the field for employees, through their organizations, to achieve co-determination in all the areas which they feel are important.

And now the labor movement has begun concrete discussions on how the employees are to take part in the capital growth within industry. The interesting thing is that nobody denies the justice of this demand. In that case, the employees should be allowed to discuss these questions on their own terms. Many people have failed to see that the debate on employee funds grew out of a desire to protect solidarity. It obviously takes for granted that employees demand rights, but are then also prepared to assume greater responsibility for the expansion of production. It is a tremendous asset for a society when this feeling exists among large numbers of employees.

The Party Program is no detailed blueprint for the democratization of economic life. As usual, we will be taking one step at a time and working out the next step on the basis of the experience we have had.

With each step our awareness and knowledge will increase. The practise is just as important as the theory.

We harbor no illusions that progress is going to come easy. It's going to take a lot of hard and patient work to carry through the reforms at our workplaces, so that they have tangible content in the daily working life. Any union man who works with the new laws will bear this out from his practical experience.

As usual, it is going to be a matter of growing into the new patterns of working and thinking, where it's an advantage if we can avoid divisive disagreements and can gain constructive contributions from various parties.

The Congress points to the direction in which we are heading. The decision of the Party Congress--if it accepts the main thoughts in the proposal of a Party Program--means that the Swedish labor movement has come to the third stage of its long struggle for a basic transformation of capitalist society.

The decision of the Congress will also be a contribution to the ongoing international discussion on the various roads to socialism.

The task of effectuating this decision is not unrelated to the struggle for liberation which is going on all

over the world. The longing for peace and freedom, social justice and progress, is shared by people everywhere, we state in the international part of the program proposal.

For a long time it looked as though the fate of the world were to be decided in a tug of strength in every conceivable area between capitalism and communism--the two systems embodied by the superpowers. For quite a few generations the prospect of a nuclear confrontation between the two of them was the overwhelming threat to the future of mankind.

We therefore welcome heartily the easing of tension which has found expression in the Security Conference, the so-called SALT talks and the broadened contacts between the Great Powers. In our opinion, détente and peace pave the way to a freer and more open discussion of basic political and ideological questions. As democratic socialists, we enter this discussion with our history of peaceful social progress and our vision of socialism in liberty. Open criticism does not mean a desire for confrontation, but esteems the value of a discussion among representatives of different ideas and social systems.

We understand and respect that every people must find its own way to a better society. But we see how ideas of solidarity and justice break forth in people's consciousness and are continually renewed in the quest for practical action.

We certainly know that we will never have a world in security and peace as long as injustice increases and underdevelopment persists. A new economic world order must be created. Then the rich countries have to lend a helping hand to the poor ones. Then the rich countries have to be able to found their societies on solidarity and justice.

Capitalism represents no dream of freedom. To our own youth, who are engaged in supporting national and social liberation movements, it has been revealed how capitalism relies on the support of repressive regimes. In the Third World there is scarcely any example of domestic capitalism. In some countries there is merely a foreign one that is protected by domestic military forces and oppressors.

Today nobody dares to promise people who are victims of the problems of industrial society that prosperity is just around the corner--if only we bank on more capitalism. Nobody is deceived any longer into believing that it is democratic to leave the decisions in the hands of a financial elite.

International Communism--stained by the brutality of Stalin--represents no dream of freedom. What attraction does communism have for those who want to have more to say at their workplace, who want to evolve local self-government, who want to go in for expanded activities and increased involvement for more and more people in political life? Communism responds

to them with democratic centralism and the dictatorship of the proletariat and with gray theory instead of living, practical political work.

Our movement carries the dream of freedom onward.
Socialism is a liberation movement.

We want to rally people around the idea of community and solidarity as the driving force in our social structure. Socialism is a popular movement.

Tens of thousands of people in our movement have become deeply involved in the process of shaping our view of socialism. Why? This is what Ernst Wigforss once said:

"If the renewal of society is of value, if socialism is of value, it is precisely because by means of it we create better conditions in which people can love and suffer, work, hope and believe, live in nature, among friends and comrades, poignantly experiencing that life is worth living."

Thus I move to accept the Program Commission's proposal of general principles.