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INTRODUCTION

Paolo Borioni

The present collection of essays contains an in-depth analysis of social democratic internationalism at the moment when this political culture was at its height (1950-1980). Such development was promoted mainly by the correlation between, on the one hand, the radical reform of capitalism in Europe, and, on the other, the Global North-South relations in a decolonisation framework. Thanks to, in particular, leaders of non-colonial countries or countries other than the Great Powers, the Socialist International overcame the legacy of “progressist” colonialism, and tabled a political approach based on the idea that a “welfare world” – i.e. a global economy that rejects exploitation, and promotes equality – was at the core of stability, both within countries and between blocks. Such approach was in blatant contrast with neoliberalism, as promoted by Reagan, and also encountered problems inasmuch as it did not manage to defend an increasingly wage-led growth model.

Keywords: welfare, internationalism, Socialist International, social democracy.

QUITE A DIFFERENT APPROACH. WILLY BRANDT'S NORTH-SOUTH CONCEPT AS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL TO US INTERNATIONAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES 1974-1989

Wolfgang Schmidt

In his late years, dealing with North-South relations was of central importance to Willy Brandt, as he considered a fair balance between industrialised and developing countries to be crucial for peace in the world. His thinking and his agenda for action were primarily formed by the Independent Commission on International Development Issues (ICIDI), which under his chairmanship delivered the so-called “Brandt Reports” of 1980 and 1983. Studying his vast North-South activities from the mid-1970s throughout the 1980s shows that the former German Chancellor followed quite a different political and economic approach towards the countries of the Global South than several US administrations and the World Bank did. Based on an economic model that can be called “Global Keynesianism”, Brandt strived for an alternative to the US style of capitalism.

Keywords: North-South relations, Brandt Report, Keynesianism, Willy Brandt, USA, World Bank.

THE MORAL DIPLOMACY OF DECOLONISATION: SWEDISH RESPONSES TO THE RISING GLOBAL SOUTH, 1950S-1970S

Carl Marklund

This article revisits the debates on Sweden's possible contribution to the international developmental debates as an exemplary neutral, a developmental model, and an aid donor. While these debates exemplify diplomatic elements and activities, understood metaphorically as the art of negotiating conflicting interests, they also fed into, and informed Swedish positions vis-à-vis the emerging Global South, diplomatic outreach, and foreign policy initiatives on the part of successive Swedish Governments from the 1950s to the 1970s. As such, these positions have only rarely directly impacted upon actual Swedish policy behaviour. But they have over time aggregated into a widely shared and oft-cited understanding of Sweden as "the darling of the Third World". This article seeks to trace the origins, motives, and main themes of this moral diplomacy – directed inwards as well as outwards.

Keywords: decolonisation, Global South, North-South debate, NIEO, Swedish model, moral diplomacy.

SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT AID IN POST-1977 SRI LANKA

Darshi Thoradeniya

Development aid is a double-edged sword. The donor expects to develop the receiving country by facilitating development programmes planned by the latter. Of course, development aid comes with strings attached – the donor has its own terms and conditions over the receiving country. However, it is very difficult to predict the way development works at the ground level of the receiving country.

This paper explores how Swedish aid in the 1970s facilitated a particular type of development that turned out to be ethno (Sinhala) religious (Buddhist). While the largest development programme of the day was in progress in 1978, how did an ethnic conflict break out in 1983? What was the development discourse put forward by the Government? Did development include all ethnic groups in the country? By revisiting the Kotmale hydropower generation project funded by Sweden under the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme, this paper attempts to answer the above questions.

Keywords: development aid, SIDA, Sri Lanka, hydropower generation, nationalism.

BRUNO KREISKY AND AUSTRIA'S INTERNATIONALIST ACTIVE NEUTRALITY

Andrea Cicchinelli

The global ideas of social democracy in the economic, political, and social fields were also taken up and developed by the Kreisky Commission for Full Employment in Europe, financed by the Norwegian, Finnish, Swedish, Luxembourgish, and Austrian Governments. Renowned personalities such as Galbraith, Michel Rocard, Raymond Barre, Paavo Lipponen, and representatives of OECD, ILO, UNICEF, and the European Commission participated in the Kreisky Commission.

The final project drawn up by the Kreisky Commission focused on the need for future investments in education, technology, and infrastructure, as indispensable preconditions for the creation of new jobs.

Keywords: Austria, social democracy, internationalism, active neutrality.

THE REFORM OF FAMILY MONETARY TRANSFERS IN ITALY: THE CHILD BENEFIT

Piergiuseppe Cossu, Marco Di Marco, Paola Tanda, Alberto Violante

The paper presents the results of a microsimulation of the distributional impact of law no. 46/2021, which introduces a single universal child allowance replacing both personal income tax deductions for dependent children, and other monetary transfers for children, in the context of a wider reform of family policies (Family Act). Law no. 46/2021 lowers the age to be considered a dependent child from 24 to 21 years, and establishes that the new allowance can be reduced as income and wealth increase, as summarised by the Equivalent Financial Status Indicator (ISEE). In this paper, after a brief overview of child transfers in some European countries, a microsimulation scenario of the reform is outlined based on the law already approved. The results show that the reform improves income distribution, and reduces the poverty risk especially among households with children.

Keywords: welfare, family policies, child benefit, microsimulation.

USING ADMINISTRATIVE DATA TO EXAMINE THE DEMAND FOR DISCONTINUOUS WORK IN ITALY: FROM 2009 TO COVID-19

Michelangelo Filippi, Manuel Marocco, Roberto Quaranta, Sergio Scicchitano

This article examines the trend of short and very short-term labour demand over the last decade in Italy. The analysis is conducted with the use of administrative data from the Statistical Information System of Compulsory Communications (SISCO). The results show that five years after the end of the economic and financial crisis and in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis, the labour market seems to have profoundly changed. Today, labour demands appear to be much more discontinuous over time than in the past, with periods of employment, most often less than one year, alternating with periods of inactivity or unemployment. The Covid-19 pandemic is impacting the demand for discontinuous work: job losses in the emergency period mainly concerned fixed-term work. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) is a unique opportunity to restructure Italy's labour market and to fund the currently inadequate active policies.

Keywords: discontinuous work, administrative data, compulsory communications, fixed-term contracts.

FIRM-LEVEL LABOUR DEMAND IN ITALY FROM THE GREAT RECESSION TO THE PANDEMIC CRISIS

Enrico D'Elia, Alessandra Righi

The paper analyses labour demand at firm level, and its relationships with the turnover outlook, as correct understanding of firm behaviour is crucial to designing effective employment incentives. The descriptive analysis shows low elasticity, as micro-level estimates tend to underestimate total effects of demand shocks. We therefore use ordered logit models so as to analyse main firm characteristics and business strategies influencing the firm response to a 10% permanent output increase. The demand outlook, firm size, and plant capacity utilisation are the variables that, in addition to the activity sector, make the difference in the elasticity of labour. According to the estimated models, in the period after 2016, the year of the *ad hoc* module of the Business Surveys carried out by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat), the activity sectors showing greater elasticity of labour are: information and communication, financial and insurance activities, professional, scientific and technical activities, and administrative and support service activities.

Keywords: ordered logit model, labour demand, Business Surveys.