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Conference is August 27-28, in the
West Midlands
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This bulletin contains:

Branch circular, with conference
agenda and NC agenda;

Circular on finance.

Please make sure every comrade
sees it.

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Conference finance: comrades will
be required to be paid up on dues
and paper money (see finance
circular), and there will also
be a conference fee of £5 waged,
£3 unwaged. This is £1 for IBs
and £4 waged, £2 unwaged to
cover hall hire, creche wages,
and fare subsidy to comrades
from Scotland.
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Pre-conference meetings

Scotland	Sun Aug 14	1pm, Citizens Rights Office, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh
Yorkshire	To be fixed	
Manchester	Sun Aug 21	details to be fixed
Merseyside	Thu Aug 18	7.30pm at cd Harrison's house
Midlands	Sun Aug 21	10.30am-5pm, in Coventry, details to be fixed
Oxford	To be fixed	
Basingstoke	To be fixed	
Wales & West:	To be fixed	
London*	Sun Aug 21	11am-5pm, Camden Town Hall

(* A separate meeting also to be fixed for Islington in view of clash
of area meeting with a branch fund-raising event).

AUGUST 1 1983

Conference

is on Saturday-Sunday August 27-28, in the West Midlands.

Agenda:

- Unemployed work (IB 43)
- Black work (IB 53)
- CND (Broad groups bulletin, IB 53, IB 55)
- Ireland: federalism (IB 25 pt.2, IB 52)
- Ireland : bombings (IB 25 pt.2, IB 52)
- Building the WSL (IB 50)

Documents are already in circulation on all these items, as indicated. We will produce as soon as possible a new IB bringing them all together.

Amendments, proposals to change the agenda, etc., should be sent to the centre as soon as possible for forwarding to the Standing Orders Committee.

N.C.

is on August 13, 10am to 9.30pm. Place (unless otherwise notified): Keswidee Centre, Gifford St.

Agenda:

- Conference items as above
- (we propose to give most time to the 'Building the WSL' item)

Scottish Assembly (see IB 60)

Finance

Perspectives (document to come from EC)

Sep. 17

It's important to start the campaign now. Some comrades bought tickets at the extended weekend school. Additional (numbered) sale-or-return tickets are enclosed. Please make sure all our comrades buy tickets immediately, and start approaching close contacts. When you send in money, tell us what number tickets it's for.

Youth CND

is under threat of effectively being shut down by the CND leadership and transformed into a youth department run by the CND leadership. This follows similar, less drastic, measures against Labour CND; politically, it represents the same trend as the CND decision to make nuclear freeze (not disarmament) the main slogan for its October 22 demo.

We are helping to organise protests. More information in the paper.

NC report

The last NC was on July 9.

1. We concluded a detailed discussion on implementation of conference decisions and work in the coming months (see IB 60).

The following summary resolution was passed on 'The Next Few Months'.

"We've lost the election to the Tories but we can still beat them on the picket lines. The election result did not represent a fundamental shift to the right by the voters, but the failure of

Labour's leaders in a situation where the capitalist crisis is revealing to many the emptiness of the vague anti-Toryism on which Labour has so long depended. The left let Labour's leaders get away with it because (a) the left is soft politically, (b) it did not adequately challenge the bureaucracies in the unions.

A major slogan for the coming period should be no more collaboration with the Tories, breaking links, etc. We continue to call for the left to organise, to step up the fight for TU democracy; we also hammer away at policy issues, specifically economic.

So the main tasks are:

1. Building broad groups;
2. Fighting for direct action against the Tories/for breaking collaboration/building O workplace branches/spreading the fight for work TU democracy/reviving the MCDTUR;
3. The struggles against cuts and privatisation;
4. Building LAW and in particular taking the fight into the TUs;
5. 'Wiganisation' in the US, particularly around YCND and YTS work;
6. Rebuilding WF."

2. We passed a resolution from Cunliffe to schedule a special NC discussion on a perspectives document (to be drafted) to implement the conference decisions.

3. We decided the agenda of the extended weekend school.

4. There was a move by cd. Hunt to re-open the debate on the LP leadership (whether we say vote Kinnock after Heffer is eliminated), but the NC decided to stick with its previous policy without further discussion.

5. We decided allocations at the centre:

Paper/magazine: Cunliffe and Carolan (joint editors),
Jagger, Morganfield, with part-time help from
Fraser, Christel, Kinnell.

Central office: General admin: & Treasurer: Kinnell
Assistant Treasurer: Christel

Subscriptions - Jagger

Paper distribution - Hill

Commercial work - Christel

Organising: Circulation - Levy

Industrial - Smith (Levy and Hill will also work on
this in the short term)

O. - Hill

Broad groups - Hill

Youth - Joplin (with help from Jagger)

Scotland - Casey

Women - Fraser

6. We decided to co-opt additional non-voting members to the NC, to ensure liaison between the NC and all areas of the country.

Scotland: Casey and Dave M., to attend alternately (because two fares from
Scotland would be too great an expense)

Yorkshire/North-East: French and Ian D.

North-West - Manchester: Chorley and Gains, to attend alternately
Merseyside: Pete C.

7. The following resolution was passed on international work.

- "1. That a meeting of former TILC members and sympathising sections and others be convened in September or October.
2. That practical preparations for this meeting - fixing a place and a date, etc. - go ahead immediately, with a view to sending out a letter of invitation within 2 weeks;
3. That practical preparations also go ahead immediately for a new

Note

If you phone in to the centre with a general query, then whoever answers may be able to help or take a message.

If you can get no reply from the centre, try 01-354 1050.

international bulletin, with draft resolutions on current events, etc., for this meeting.

4. That we invite a range of groups - FSP, the Belgian group, FIT, ISF, etc - to attend the meeting as observers".

It was made clear that point 1 referred to the groups that we are still in contact with - PTT, SF - not to the RWL, LOR, TAF.

The original resolution proposed to the NC from the EC said "TILC meeting" in point 1, "TILC bulletin" and "TILC meeting" in point 3. The amendment to introduce the wording as above was put by Cunliffe and carried by 9 votes to 8 with 2 abstentions.

In subsequent discussions the PTT comrades have said that they would prefer the international meeting to be held in December in the US, rather than as above. We will obviously have to discuss this.

YTS

Following the articles in the paper, we had a brief discussion on the EC and a further discussion of EC members and comrades involved/interested in work round YTS at the extended weekend school.

The broad outline of policy that came out of that discussion was, I think, roughly that put by ed Hunt in the front-page article in the current youth paper. Obviously there is still room for further discussion.

PTT

The EC discussed with two comrades from the PTT (the group formed by the former RWL-US minority) on July 31.

The comrades reported that they had 6 or 7 members, in St Louis, San Francisco, and Seattle. Contacts elsewhere. Work in Teamsters and Hotel and Catering Union; also in Peace and Freedom Party (a socialist electoral coalition in California). See major possibilities for growth.

The SWP-US is expelling oppositionists by dozens. Many local groups of ex-SWPers exist. PTT's major competition in winning these people is the 'Morenist' IWP, which has some 100 members. PTT will be producing "Workers Review" magazine bi-monthly. Has a conference to constitute itself formally in December. As a priority, wants a WSL rep. there; could combine international meeting with that. Also wants to do a speaking tour with a WSL member in October.

Despite the shattering of the old TILC by the LOR/RWL, the PTT comrades still wanted a public, organised, international tendency; were thus dissatisfied with WSL NC decision as above.

We discussed details of how best to relate to SWP oppositionists and ex-SWPers, and how to deal polemically with the Morenists. The EC agreed in principle to the proposals about the speaking tour and the December conference; December will have to be subject to working out the financial feasibility.

FINANCE

August 1 1983

This circular reports on NC/EC decisions on fund-raising. Further details on some items cannot be given in this circular, but will be presented by EC members at branch or area meetings.

1. WHAT IS THE SITUATION?

Monthly income is about £500 to £1000 behind monthly expenditure. That means our debts rise by about £500 to £1000 per month. They are well over £10,000 now. Financially we live in a state of constant emergency, regulated by legal threats from creditors.

2. WHY?

Because income is below budget, rather than because expenditure is above budget.

The monthly fund has consistently been well below the £1,000 needed, and branches' total debts for papers, contributions and dues and levies come to about £6,500.

The situation has got worse recently because paper sales income has gone down - seriously. I.e. local paper debts have risen.

The "week's wages" campaign got us back to some sort of viability. But the fall-off in fund-raising, and the increased local paper debts, have thrown us off balance again.

3. WHAT TO DO?

The NC and the EC have decided on a number of measures.

FIRSTLY:

- a) Short-term measures to shed a proportion of our debts.
- b) Measures to save £500-£700 per month on expenditure. This will take place rapidly but will also affect the long-term.
- c) Measures to increase our income from commercial work by maybe £200 per month. If you know any trade union caucus, local Labour Party organisation, community group, student group, or small business that might give us typesetting and lay-out work (rate: £9 per 1000 words for typesetting, to be negotiated on lay-out), chase it up and let us know.

BUT ALSO:

- a) A dues increase.
- b) A strict ruling that members over 12 weeks in arrears on dues will be lapsed from membership. This will be automatic unless good reasons can be shown otherwise.
- c) To draw attention to the existing NC policy that all comrades must make payments by standing order unless materially impossible.
- d) A debt-clearing/fund-raising exercise.
- e) A paper sales drive.

CONFERENCE is on August 27-28. Comrades will have to be paid up to qualify as voting members. This means you must have paid:

- = Dues up to date*.
- = Paper money - either up to date, or failing that at least the last four issues.**
- = All previous conference fees and IB levies.
- = Other debts like youth conference accommodation, bounced cheques, etc.
- = The conference fee/IB levy for this conference.

* 12 weeks arrears or more disqualify you. So you need to be fully paid-up up to and including June, at least.

** 'Up to date' with paper money means no more than four issues' arrears.

4. THE PAPER SALES DRIVE

The NC decided to shift resources and appoint a full-timer - od Levy - as circulation manager. His main job in this role will be to help branches to increase sales.

Increased sales are not only vital financially: they are necessary politically.

As far as possible, we want to raise the necessary finance by turning out politically, not just by digging into members' pockets. (Though we have to dig into members' pockets as well).

5. DEBT-CLEARING AND FUND-RAISING

Branches have £5,000-plus in paper debts. The monthly fund targets total £3,000 over the next three months.

The EC decided on a drive to raise all this money over the next three months, by October 31.

Each branch will have a target made up of its paper debt (including broad group contributions) as of July 31 plus three times its portion of the monthly fund target as printed in the paper.

You will be sent an assessment as follows:

Your branch's target is:

£ paper debt; plus
3 x = portions of monthly funds;
= £ total by October 31.

The money can be raised by straight donations from members; by approaching contacts for donations; by jumble sales, book sales, socials, sponsored swims, etc; and by other fund-raising efforts.

To encourage branches to get moving promptly - because we need the money fast! - and to make it feasible to clear large and long-standing paper debts, a discount system will be operated.

Every £1 we receive from you before Sep. 17 will count as £3 towards your target.

Every £1 we receive between Sep. 17 and October 3 will count as £2 towards your target.

Every £1 we receive between October 3 and October 20 will count as £1.50 towards your target.

Every £1 received between October 20 and October 31 will count as £1.

Example: suppose your paper debt is £300 and your monthly fund target £50. Then your total target is £450 by October 31.

You could fulfill this by sending, for example:
£150 before Sept. 17, counting as £450.

Or by:
£225 between September 17 and October 3, counting as £450.

Or by:
£300 between October 3 and October 20, counting as £450.

Or by:
£450 between October 20 and October 31.

Or by some combination of payments.

This scheme should allow scope for everyone to clear their debts, and for

better branches to raise considerably more than their targets.

By separating off the arrears of paper debt into a separate account, it also allows everyone to start with a clean slate on paper/contributions money. The idea is to keep it clean. We will not credit money to the debt-clearing/fund account, and give it the corresponding discount, unless the current paper/contributions account has been covered. If you lose your clean slate, you lose your discount on the back debt.

The total nominal target for debt-clearing/fund-raising is £8,000. Allowing for discounts the system should raise us £4,000.

The EC is recommending that after October 31 the same rule will apply for paper debts as for dues debts - we will write to any comrade more than ten weeks in arrears warning them of lapsing, and any comrade more than 12 weeks in arrears on paper money will - after written warning and if there is no good reason - be lapsed from membership.

5. STANDING ORDERS

If your dues and paper money are on standing order, you cannot get into arrears - and we can be sure of a regular income without spending lots of time and money on phoning round to chase up debts.

Almost any employed comrade can get a bank account, or failing that a giro account (at any main Post Office). Payments for unemployed comrades and employed comrades who have special problems can be arranged through a standing order on a group account.

6. DUES ARREARS

Any trade union will lapse members more than a certain time in arrears on dues. There is no reason why a Bolshevik organisation should be more lax than a trade union.

If you go more than 12 weeks in arrears, you will, after written warning, be lapsed from membership. This will be automatic unless you can prove special circumstances.

7. DUES INCREASE

Despite the increase last spring our dues rates are still low compared to other far-left organisations, and our dues income is low compared to the pre-fusion organisations. Many comrades who are far from destitute are paying dues which amount to no more than a pint or two of beer, or a packet of cigarettes, per week. Yet dues are and must be our basic, bedrock, guaranteed income.

The NC decided on one increase take effect immediately - lifting the minimum rate to £2 per month.

Logically that also lifts the 'floor' for all other rates by £2, and thus increases everyone's dues by £1 per month. We are suspending that revision, however, until the NC decides on an overall package of dues revision. This is what the EC will be proposing:

Minimum and 'floor' rate - raise from £1 to £2

% rate on take-home pay (after deductions) of £200-£300 per month - stays at 10%

% rate on £300-£400 per month - raise from 10% to 20%.

% rate on income over £400 per month - raise from 25% to 30%.

The EC also decided to tighten up application of the existing rules on dues:

dues:

* Comrades cannot make any deductions from their dues for rent or mortgage payments. We are not opposed to comrades finding pleasant places to live: we are opposed to the WSL being used as a mortgage-relief agency.

* The same phone, car, child etc. cannot be claimed for twice by two different comrades.

* 'Adult dependent' means an adult who has no income other than a portion of your wages. A spouse who has a waged job does not count as an adult dependent.

* No comrade can claim deductions for more than one car, or more than one phone.

As always, comrades who reckon they have special circumstances can consult the Treasurer. And, please, consult before we get to the 'final written warning' stage.

8. SUMMARY

These measures should enable us to surmount the immediate crisis and to maintain viability in future -- to avoid both huge debts from the branches to the centre, and huge debts from the centre to our creditors.

They will not and cannot work, though, unless comrades put the necessary effort into paper sales and fund-raising.

We only need to sell 1500 Rightback to raise the £150 for the issue after - so please send in your donations to 105 Landseer Road, London N19, to get us started... or we won't have a paper to raise that £150 from sales with!

And those groups who haven't sent in money from sales of the last issue of Rightback, please take note, and send us your money quickly.

Finally, an advertisement for women in the T&E. After the T&E conference held recently, and the impact made there by the "women's motion", Rightback has heard of some women in the T&E who don't want to let it go at that, and are interested in holding a national meeting of women in the T&E.

It may be an informal meeting rather than any great conference. Is there anyone you know who may be interested? Please send names of women in the T&E who may be interested in some form of organisation in the meeting, or in keeping in touch, to 105 Landseer Road.

Yours in solidarity,
Garry Wynne,
Tony Fisher

Please return to 105 Landseer Road, London N19.

I would like to order.... copies of Women's Rightback no. 27.

I enclose £.... advance payment (10p per issue) and £.... donation for copies of "Women's Rightback", please.

I would like a Women's Rightback agency for my trade union branch/area/entry women's section/other group.

Name:..... Address:.....

10B Landseer Rd, London N19

August 1 1983

Dear Sisters,

After a break the next issue of Women's Fightback is being produced, and should be with you by or soon after the weekend of August 13-14.

The paper will concentrate on the situation facing women in the light of the election result, by focusing on the labour movement and its capacity to respond: will it continue to press forward with the fight for women's rights, or will it backtrack, and will our fight be lost in the general "we've all got to stick together" attitude of union and Labour Party leaders?

The forthcoming Tory cuts, more drastic than ever, will hit women both as workers and as users of the services: how can we fight back?

The paper will be being laid out from Thursday August 4 onwards: articles are best sent to the address above, or phoned in to the lay-out office (01-607 7182) up to Saturday 6th. We hope the paper will go to the printers on Thursday 11th.

The biggest task facing us in producing this paper will be to raise the £150 to pay the printers. The last Fightback National Planning Meeting (EGM) called for waged women who support Fightback to give donations of £10 or £5, as they could afford, as a way of getting us back on our feet until paper money from sales came in. Some money was raised, but had to be spent on the bulletin we produced for NUPE conference, so we're repeating the appeal.

We only need to sell 1500 Fightbacks to raise the £150 for the issue after - so please send in your donations to 10B Landseer Road, London N19, to get us started... or we won't have a paper to raise that £150 from sales with!

And those groups who haven't sent in money from sales of the last issue of Fightback, please take note, and send us your money quickly.

Finally, an advertisement for women in the T&G. After the T&G conference held recently, and the impact made there by the "women's motions", Fightback has heard of some women in the T&G who don't want to let it go at that, and are interested in holding a national meeting of women in the T&G.

It may be an informal meeting rather than any great conference. Is there anyone you know who may be interested? Please send names of women in the T&G who may be interested in some form of organisation/ in the meeting/ or in keeping in touch, to 10B Landseer Road.

Yours in sisterhood,

Jenny Fisher
Gerry Byrne.

Please return to 10B Landseer Road, London N19.

I would like to order copies of Women's Fightback no.27.

I enclose £..... advance payment (10p per issue) and £..... donation (cheques to "Women's Fightback", please).

I would like a Women's Fightback speaker for my trade union branch/Labour Party women's section/other group.

Name:..... Address: