

S. D. S.

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METROPOLITAN POLICE

SPECIAL BRANCH

22nd day of January 1975

S.B. No. 1 (Fimsy)

Special Report

SUBJECT

IMG

Reference to Papers
400/74/175

1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:

2. On Wednesday 3 January 1975 between 2.30 pm and 5 pm at the University of London Union, Malet Street, WC1, a London student aggregate meeting of the IMG took place. Fifteen members attended out of an expected forty and it was agreed afterwards that the meeting had not been of a high standard.

3. Privacy from the LSE, opened the meeting by speaking at length on 'Students and London re-organisation' and criticised the IMG student sub-committee for failing to give a lead on perspectives and organisation. Privacy continued by outlining a number of proposals for the form of student work in London; these emphasised that the final decision rested on individual comrades in the colleges, although they should be aided by a strengthened centralised sub-committee, centrally organised Red Circles, a regular student bulletin and more frequent aggregates. A vote was taken which carried this resolution unanimously.

4. The second speaker was Privacy whose subject was the perspectives for the Student Women's Action Group (SWAG). Fortunately there was little to add to the document she had prepared and distributed which outlined the formation of SWAG and the basis of its campaign, which in effect was an amended Working Women's Charter (WWC). Discussion revealed more openly that it was the intention of IMG to work through that particular movement in preference to the WWC campaign or the Women's Liberation Movement. A vote was then held on the four proposals at the conclusion of the document; all but the third were carried without opposition and Privacy accepted an amendment to that motion which, in addition to allowing that 'straights' had a role to play in countering the oppression of 'geys', contained a long tirade against aversion therapy.

5. Privacy being absent from the meeting, the subject of Ireland was not included on the agenda. This allowed Privacy to expand his contribution, "National perspectives and application in London", which was the last subject under discussion. It was agreed that IMG



Should:

MONITOR

- (a) Fight against the grant outback and increase in halls of residence fees.
- (b) Fight against 'Jenkins' Law', ie encourage support for the Troops Out Movement demonstration to be held in February 1975.
- (c) counteract anti-faism in general and arrange specifically for members to attend the demonstration planned for 18 January in Leeds in protest against the imprisonment of Privacy a student at Sheffield University. (London UMS students intend to send one coach of demonstrators).
- (d) counteract the Broad Left movement inside the National Union of Students.

These perspectives received the general approbation of all present.

6. Copies of the agenda, and documents discussed, are submitted with this report. The following are known to have attended the meeting.

Privacy

No trace
No trace
Privacy

Privacy

Unable to identify
Unable to identify

Student Women's Action Group (SWAG)

No trace

Working Women's Charter

400/74/149

Women's Liberation Movement

400/72/92.

G.T.M. Craft

Chief Inspector

TN0038

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT



AGENDA:

- i) Rota for distribution of Red Weekly-Privacy 10 mins.
- ii) Students and London reorganisation (see below)-Privacy 30 mins.
- iii) National perspectives and application in London-Privacy 50 mins.
- iv) Ireland; building for the Troops Out demo.-Privacy 45 mins.
- v) Women's work; a perspective for London & Privacy 45 mins.

STUDENTS AND LONDON REORGANISATION:

Odes. have every reason to be cynical of any new reorganisation proposals emanating from the sub-committee. A new scheme has been suggested at every aggregate so far this academic year none of which, it seems, has made the slightest difference to the way we work, let alone being a solution to the problems we face in London. The reasons for this are numerous. The inability of the sub-committee to come to grips with the situation on the ground is partly responsible but this is probably more of an effect than a cause. Of far greater importance, in this respect, is the fundamental problem that the London organisation as a whole faces, that is how we build bases with the number and distribution of odes. that we have. The uncertainty we went through in the period when the whole organisation was attempting to get to grips with this problem has been the main cause of our inability to come forward with a suitable set up for students. The way in which we organise our work in London has now been decided. I have no intention to go over that ground here; odes presumably participated in the debate in their units and at the last London aggregate. Now that debate has been concluded, however, we are in a much better position to see what form the organisation of our London student work should take:

PROPOSALS:

- i) All odes. active in student work should be organised through a student cell.
- ii) The only place that any relevant discussion as to where these cells are organised is in the areas themselves. Therefore student odes. in each area should meet with the student convenor and the area organiser sometime within the next fortnight to decide this and to make appropriate recommendations to the area aggregate. In this discussion two main points have to be considered:
 - a) Does the cell structure provide the best variant for base building in the area? Obviously we have to consider which colleges provide the best opportunity for this bearing in mind the particular projects of the area and the priorities of the organisation as a whole.
 - b) As an important part of the above, does the structure provide all student odes. with a viable unit of intervention within the organisation. The main problem in working this out is the problem of isolation - the majority of our students exist in one's and two's in their colleges. There are several possible solutions to this:
 - a) The shifting of odes. intervention (and if possible the odes. themselves) from colleges where base building opportunities do not exist to where they do. The possibility of using odes not in the colleges (though preferably ex students) should also be discussed with the area organiser.
 - b) The grouping together of odes. in colleges where similar general conditions exist, (i.e. balance of forces, type of college, possibilities for campaigns etc.) We should be opposed unless there is absolutely no other option to simply lumping odes. together 'because they're all students' no matter what the conditions in their colleges are. Cells constructed on this basis would simply duplicate the work of the fraction (the student aggregate.)
 - c) Using the central organisation to back up the work of individuals in the colleges. This seems to be necessary for London as a whole and will be discussed in greater detail below.
 - d) There may be instances where it is best to move odes. in colleges where there is no possibility of base-building out of student work altogether and into some other area unit. Though of course some non-student work could be maintained.
- iii) Obviously the question of strengthening the centralisation of our student work rests largely on the political perspectives we have. Briefly, therefore, the situation where we

ificent) so many isolated odes. in the colleges combined with the miniscule size of the 'action-faction' in London indicates that in most institutions we will draw an initial periphery around us primarily either on a programmatic basis (through Red Circles etc.) or through our campaigns (at present Ireland, women, Chile and Soviet dissidents.) Consequently the centralisation of our work, necessary at present because of the isolation and therefore weakness of intervention of our odes. in the colleges, can be achieved without encountering major difficulties. This centralisation can be accomplished in various ways:

a) Aggregates should be held on a much more regular basis than in the past; I would suggest fortnightly. These aggregates would concentrate on assisting the organisation of campaigns work in London (though we must be aware that priorities will vary somewhat from area to area.) Reports from the cells should become a regular feature of these aggregates so that we can generalise the experiences in intervention of odes., so that the sub-c'tee can keep in closer touch with what is happening at the base and so that odes. can gain some experience in speaking in front of largish meetings. Educationalists on the other hand tendencies and on how our campaigns work relates specifically to the student milieu should also be arranged by the sub committee for these aggregates

b) A regular student bulletin should be produced. Again this will primarily have to relate to our campaigns work although a specific discussion on the role of the bulletin should be arranged for the next sub committee.

c) We should investigate the possibility of instituting a centrally organised series of Red Circles whereby a series of speakers on aspects of the IMG's programme could speak at several colleges each week. Some sort of leaflet advertising these Red Circles could be produced centrally.

d) Odes. intervening in the Teacher training colleges and to a lesser extent in the C. of F. E. face quite different problems and opportunities from those of other students. The sub c'tee should investigate the possibility of organising separate caucuses for these sectors.

iv) If this centralisation is to be effective we obviously need in turn, the strengthening of the sub-c'tee which up until now has been pretty weak. The meetings in the areas should elect a student convener for each area. In some areas, probably central and West it may be necessary to elect two people, in others, for instance the southern areas a convener might have to be shared. We should be flexible about this. Convener's should be on the Area c'tees and should have the task of overseeing the work of the various cells, integrating this into the general projects of the areas and of the fraction. To facilitate this these odes should constitute the sub-c'tee. The national student organiser and, of course the London student convener should also attend sub-c'tee meetings which should be held weekly.

v) The London student convener should be (and is) a member of the London bureau and the student commission. The conveners task should be threefold:

a) To give particular assistance to cells where our intervention is hitting particular problems. This may mean working with certain cells on more or less a day to day basis for limited periods.

b) To oversee the general axis of our intervention and to ensure that this is integrated into the work of the London organisation.

c) To ensure that London students are aware of, and act on the basis of, the conclusions drawn from discussions held on our student work nationally.

THIS RESOLUTION TO BE VOTED ON BY STUDENT AGGREGATE AND AT LONDON BUREAU.

Apologies for shabby typing - Privacy

WOMEN STUDENTS AND THE NUS CAMPAIGN IN LONDON.

Fusion of the two layers of the vanguard.

The Thoreson document talks of the temporary fusion of the two layers of the vanguard at the Manchester Women's Conference, i.e. among those women who provided the central force for activity around the NUS Women's Campaign. However we can characterise organised women students in London as being, almost exclusively, members of the political vanguard. Women activists in London college women's groups relate predominantly to the WLM (their activity is structured through the Workshop Newsletter, WLM conferences rather than NUS mailing, CGMs, etc.) Two main factors contribute to this:

- 1) The strength of the WLM in London
 - 2) The weakness of 'student' consciousness' and identification with 'college issues' coupled with a greater orientation towards external radicalizing forces, both of which are general among numbers of students.
- These factors exaggerate the general rejection by women students of working within the student movement (due to the sexist, careerist nature of S.U.s, workerist attitude of NUS to the WLM etc.)

This illustrates in outline why the women in London who are active within the NUS campaign were initially radicalized through a general recognition of women's oppression, and were rarely wench radicalized by activity on specifically student issues, e.g. college nursery campaign, prior to developing a more comprehensive political understanding of women's social position.

Despite the paucity of action faction members within its ranks the London women's student movement can provide the arena for a very fruitful temporary fusion of this layer with the political vanguard in the colleges extending beyond its own immediate membership. Women's groups, struggling around their own demands, will in many cases provide a focus of direct action drawing in the support of the combative elements within the college. We have analysed nationally that nurseries are likely to become a central demand around which activity will be initiated within the WCC--the same may safely be predicted for college women's groups. Despite the refusal of the CP to integrate the NUS Women's Campaign with the campaign against the cutbacks, the refusal of the authorities to provide creche facilities will in many colleges provide a clear concretization of the cutbacks and a focus of direct action against them. This is especially true in London where hall and canteen price rises, delays in the building of halls and other facilities etc. will not hit the mass of students with the severity that we foresee nationally.

Therefore we can look to the initiatives of women students in London to fuse the layers of the vanguard in a limited way within the women's movement, but in a more extensive way among the student vanguard as a whole. This in turn will lead to an eventual influx of combative elements into the women's groups on a more significant scale.

Student-worker alliance

Because of the disillusionment with S.U.s and NUS, and the orientation towards the WLM, women students often realize their identification of interests with women workers on campus more readily than with male students. This means that we have had few problems in getting the WCC taken up in London women's groups, nor in extending any demands to campus workers. We must continue to use the Charter in an attempt to fuse links with women workers outside the campus (it is vital to our Charter work nationally that the socialist current which has a strong base in the colleges is actively helping us defeat the manoeuvres of the CP to sabotage the WCC.) Many women students are aware that the crisis of social expenditure hits women hardest, and women are likely to provide a sympathetic response in the colleges to the idea of a public sector alliance.

Relationship to NUS

The problem lies rather in a tendency towards an ultra-leftist rejection of NUS and of working within its structures. This arises out of:

- 1) total disillusionment with the manoeuvres of the reformist phalocrats of the NUS
 - 2) NUS workerist rejection of the WIM-72 conference passed a motion stating "Conference welcomes the advent of the WIM but remains suspicious of its class origins."
 - 3) failure of NUS to recognise that the main focus for activity within the NUS womens' campaign would be the womens groups not sexist SU Execs.
 - 4) the depth of women students identification with the WIM and the fundamental conflicts which this implies given the present policy of the NUS.
- This last point was especially sharply noted with the Margate conference's rejection of the right of autonomous organization without loss of funds to college womens groups. The CP line on this is that the acceptance of the principle of autonomy would provoke the same reaction from college authorities and the press as the Fascist and Fascist amendment and would therefore necessitate a campaign in its own right which would detract from activity around the main campaign. We must be clear that the organization of the campaign, although a separate issue, must be intimately linked with the content of the campaign. The demands of the NUS Womens Campaign cannot be won unless there is recognition that the initiative for activity has and will come from the womens' groups. If the NUS continues to block the form of organization of women students which is basic to the WIM, and essential to the self-activity of women, the NUS Womens' Campaign will never get off the ground.

The NUS has refused to give responsibility for the coordination of the campaign to the Action Committee elected at the NUS womens' conferences or to make this committee responsible to the conference rather than the NUS Exec. The pittance allocated to the campaign prohibits effective coordination from any quarter. Most women recognise that the womens' campaign is little more than a sheet of demands lying on a desk in Endsleigh Street. Attempts to change this situation through a motion at NUS Margate conference led to the now notorious bureaucratic blocking by the CP, who went as far as to put a totally misleading amendment to the main amendment which implied that it called for a womens' policy-making conference. The latest move is a statement from NUS of a refusal to call any Womens' Campaign specialist conferences over the next year.

London S.W.A.G. (Student Womens' Action Group)

London SWAG was initiated at a conference called by those women from London colleges who attended the Leicester NUS conference. It has held two open conferences attended by about 65 women representing over 20 colleges, and will almost certainly continue to draw in wider forces. It has adopted as a basis of a London campaign a revised WWC with amendments:

- 1) which provide for student demands, e.g. equal grants for married women students, maternity leave for students, end to sexist curricula, etc.
- 2) general amendments e.g. sliding scale of family allowances, State-financed, community controlled nurseries.

These amendments have gone to the coordinating committee of the Charter and will be discussed at a future Charter conference. SWAG also intends to have a full rep. on the coordinating committee.

SWAG itself is organized through monthly general conferences and has a 13-woman coordinating committee which is recallable and accountable to conference.

The stated objectives of the SWAG are to support struggles of individual women groups and those of working women, the SWAG will also boost the confidence of some of the smaller groups and therefore lead to the initiation of struggles. It is hoped that as the SWAG expands it may be able to go into Techs and F.E. colleges and help to set up womens' groups, this will provide the IMG with one vehicle for making contacts in this sector where we are at present very weak.

Relation of the IMG to London SWAG

We are at present the only organized force working within the SWAG. Both the CP (tokenist) and IS (nurseries and contraception as national demands making up a national campaign) lines have been rejected as too limited by the SWAG although there is no general awareness of the organizational origins of these lines. Although we have so far encountered no real opposition to any of our proposals, we must be aware that the rejection of working within the reformist organizations (NUS, LP) has its echo in an extremely cautious attitude towards the organized left and 'male-dominated' revolutionary politics. We must be seen not only as members of the IMG but also as activists within our own college womens groups. Any display

of sectarianism would be suicidal. However, although there may not be prospects of mass recruitment from the SWAG, we must recognize the central importance of the womens movement to our student work in London. Our numerical representation at SWAG conferences has so far been extremely weak (2 candidate members). Both members have been elected to the coordinating committee but fear of IMG or 'politico' domination will be intensified if the same personalities are seen to be speaking and taking positions at every meeting. It is therefore vital that all London members working in womens groups attend every SWAG conference and that we caucus every month.

Perspectives for the SWAG

1) The SWAG has formally accepted that it will most effectively be able to pressurize the NUS through its own self-activity. Nevertheless there will continue to be confusion on this position until it is seen to be working concretely through activity undertaken by the SWAG. We should therefore attempt to pose some kind of London initiative which will call for NUS support which can clearly demonstrate the organizational line of divide with the NUS and the CP. We should attempt to direct the political vanguard organized in the SWAG towards the action faction in the colleges to draw in their support around this initiative. The most probable development will be a demonstration or picket of the DES to demand nursery provision for all London colleges which can use the nursery campaign which have now got off the ground in at least four colleges to initiate support for the general demand.

It may also be possible to initiate area campaigns in the boroughs axed against the local authority (Camden has been suggested as a possibility) which can link the demand for nursery provision for all workers and students in the borough. Nursery campaigns must continue to be linked into the Charter to maintain the worker-student alliance.

2) We must also work within the SWAG for support for our political campaigns. There is a section of the women in the SWAG who are aware of the necessity of its activity beyond 'womens issues'. The coordinating committee has agreed that there should be a large London women students contingent on the Bloody Sunday demo, and that their contingents on all demonstrations must be well organized, efficiently stewarded and highly visible; two members of the coordinating committee have been struck off with specific responsibility for this task.

It is vital to remember that in canvassing support for our political campaigns we must relate to the SWAG and to womens groups rather than to women as individuals, for two reasons:

- 1) support for ~~the~~ external campaigns will still be filtered predominantly through the WLM
- 2) however militant individuals may be within the womens movement women generally still lack the confidence and assertiveness to make an individual political stand
- 3) it is vital for general support for the fight against womens oppression that women are identified as supporting wider political campaigns

3) We are the only tendency on the left who are prepared to provide any real support for the struggle against the oppression of gays. We must therefore be especially active in any campaign to fight discrimination against lesbians. Straight members of the organization cannot, however, initiate activity in this sphere as this would be equivalent to men initiating struggles against womens oppression.

4) The refusal of the NUS to take up the autonomy campaign demonstrates its fear of taking up political campaigns which meet with extreme hostility from college authorities, the press, etc. We have predicted that this is one of the factors which may lead to the eventual breakup of NUS. The self-organization of women militants within the NUS takes on increased importance within this perspective, and our attempts to develop a revolutionary pole within the NUS.

Privacy

for London Student Aggregate, 8/1/75