

LOOSE MINUTE

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THE SWP AND SDS

With reference to your Loose Minute of 22 July 1981.

2. Whilst essential, especially for our London coverage, cooperation between this desk and SDS could be strengthened:

(i) Individuals - This type of report is often the only way to identify new members who have come to SDS' attention but is often confined to (a) certain geographical areas (see also (ii)(a) below) or (b) identifying particulars which could if necessary be derived from other sources (particularly true of known members). They often contain details of, for example, workplace or of other party members who live at the same address, this could be expanded for an analysis of the extent of local SWP influence.

(ii) Meetings - The most numerous and therefore sometimes repetitive. Intelligence mainly derives from showing a branch and an individual's level of commitment.

Failings -

- (a) for obvious reasons there is little variety in reporting both geographically (see Annex A) and organisationally (meetings are usually those of the branch and our district knowledge, arguably more important, is therefore more limited).
- (b) much time is spent processing reports which might be produced in composite form.
- (c) Annex B shows the sort of intelligence that might be derived; particularly important areas are the leading personalities, the decision-making processes, the impact of national policy/directives, the degree of local autonomy enjoyed (important in determining local responses to, for example, Central Committee policy as regards 'Womens Voice' or to mobilisation calls against the 'fascist threat' or during civil disturbances). Often it is not clear where branch and/or individuals channel their activities (for example, local industrial disputes, ANL, CND, RTWC, internal politics).

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New Areas -

(d) It would be interesting to know which meeting-places are the most frequently used and [redacted] (particularly for meetings of London District Organisers etc).

(e) Although periodic coverage of public meetings is of interest, aggregate meetings are of more security use.

(iii) Branches - Following on from para 2 (ii)(c), we need to know actual membership figures as well as the average number of those who just happen to attend meetings which are covered (ie. proportions of nominal to active members). It would also be interesting to see how people join (for example application procedure) and, if possible, why they join (especially if it is because of active branch/issue/individual campaigning).

3. Some districts used to be the subject of 'position papers' without details of branches, officials, numbers, personalities, concerns etc but these seem to have stopped. This sort of report would/particularly useful in:

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South - SW, SE and S London Districts, all figure in National Office preoccupations, especially given the impact of Brixton, and are currently in state of flux (for example, the new Kennington and Crystal Palace branches).

West - W Middlesex would appear to be moribund yet CC policy towards minority ethnic groups, the proximity of Southall, and the fact that [redacted] is a prominent district member suggests that we might be missing something.

North - Other sources suggest that these Districts are the most important and they would therefore seem to offer the best potential.

4. Finally, should SDS have any requirements which they feel that we might be able to help them in (for example [redacted] in July 1981), we will obviously do all that we are able.

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6 August 1981