



Special Branch
Annual Report

1971.



SPECIAL BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT

1971

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PART ONE

- (I) INTRODUCTION
- (II) THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT IN IRELAND
- (III) THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN
- (IV) THE CIVIL RIGHTS/ANTI-INTERMENT MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN

PART TWO

EXTREME POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN LONDON

PART THREE

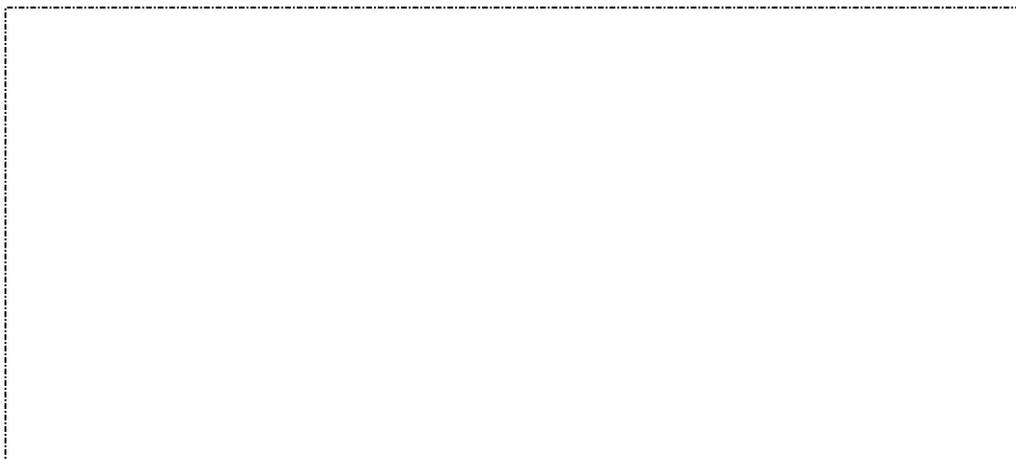
SPECIAL BRANCH PORTS

PART FOUR

ADMINISTRATION AND STATISTICS

SUBJECT INDEX

NOMINAL INDEX



Compared with 1970 I note there has been an increasing number of large-scale demonstrations on various issues, and although some have been attended by disorder this has never reached the proportions which marked similar events in 1968-69. The TUC brought 40,000 on to the streets in February to protest against the Industrial Relations Bill, and 12,000 in November to demonstrate against the rise in unemployment. The first demonstration was trouble-free but the second was marred by a large group of extremists from the London School of Economics Socialist Society, the Claimants' Union and the National Union of Seamen creating a disturbance outside St Stephen's entrance to the House of Commons which resulted in 17 arrests. The introduction of internment in Northern Ireland on 9 August produced an inevitable reaction six days later when 2,500 demonstrated under the banner of the Anti-Internment League and 21 were arrested. Another demonstration by the same organisation on 31 October drew the support of 10,000 but on that occasion there was no disorder.

It is, I think, in the order of things that the period of relatively quiet demonstrations must end soon. There are presently stirrings among the students who are protesting over projected Government control of their college union finances, an issue which is attracting very strong support. (16,000 turned out in an orderly demonstration in London in

November). This could well have the effect of giving them a taste for demonstrating on other controversial matters of wider interest. The question of the Rhodesian settlement has so far produced surprisingly little reaction among extremist groups but it remains an issue which could well bring large numbers on to the streets once again should the British Government formally recognise the independence of the country. In such a situation the patient undercover work at present being done by the Special Squad should prove of no little value to our uniform colleagues.

One remarkable feature of the year in the face of the constant and bitter tensions between India and Pakistan, ending with the recent war, has been the almost complete absence of trouble between the two communities in the UK. Supporters of both sides have held various demonstrations with over 10,000 attending at each - the largest was one of 17,000 in August organised by the Pakistan Solidarity Front which supports the West Pakistan Government. These passed off relatively peacefully, and indeed the bulk of both communities seem to be well disciplined and anxious not to do anything to prejudice their position here.

To a somewhat lesser degree this may also be said of the West Indian community, although among them in areas such as Notting Hill, Brixton and Islington exist active groups of ardent Black Power supporters who pursue at every opportunity a virulent and bitter anti-police campaign. On the whole, however, the outward impact they make is not great.





The "Provisional" faction - Sinn Fein

The "Provisional" political wing in Great Britain, Sinn Fein, fould itself at the end of 1971 on a slightly firmer organisational footing than in the previous year, but it had not succeeded to any noticeable degree in consolidating its influence beyond the Metropolis. Its governing body, the London district executive (Comhairle Ceanntair), which is still lacking a permanent headquarters, continued to meet at the premises of the Gaelic League, Belgrave Road, SW1. At its annual general meeting on 25 November, the following were elected to the offices shown:-

Chairman:	<u>Privacy</u>
Vice-chairman:	<u>Privacy</u>
Secretary:	<u>Privacy</u>
Organiser:	Tony KEARNS
Treasurer:	<u>Privacy</u>
Finance officer:	<u>Privacy</u>
Press officer:	<u>Privacy</u>

The former secretary, Privacy took over the running of An Cumann Cabhrach, a subsidiary of Sinn Fein devoted to raising funds in aid of Republican prisoners and dependents.

In London, there were by the end of the year five branches, or cumainn, as follows:-

"Thomas Williams Cumann"	-	South London
"Terence McSwiney Cumann"	-	West London
"Roger Casement Cumann"	-	Kilburn
"Wolfe Tone Cumann"	-	North London
"Liam Mellowes Cumann"	-	East London

None of these had a permanent headquarters, but held meetings at suitable licensed premises or assembly halls; the most active were the South London, West London and Kilburn branches.

Outside London, established branches were known to exist only in Glasgow, Manchester, Oxford and Birmingham, with nuclei in Huddersfield and Bristol. None of them undertook any significant activity during the year with the exception of Manchester which, according to London members, completely mishandled the annual "Manchester Martyrs" commemoration in November.

At their annual general meeting in November, it was claimed that the combined membership of the five London branches totalled 145 persons, of whom slightly less than half were considered to be activists. It was also stated that the organisation had collected the sum of £2,294 during the year, most of which was sent to Ireland.

Fund-raising in one form or another formed a major part of Sinn Fein's activities in this country during 1971, firstly on behalf of "political prisoners", and latterly for internees and their dependents. Since August, however, its independent

- 22 -

activities have largely been subordinated to those of the Anti-Internment League (q.v.) in which - after much heart-searching regarding the desirability of co-operating with extreme left-wing elements - it has eventually played a not insignificant role.

In his capacity as president of the "Provisional" Sinn Fein in the Republic Rory BRADY arrived in this country, at Manchester (Ringway) Airport, on 27 August 1971, with the intention of carrying out a speaking tour in Great Britain for the Republican cause. With foreknowledge of the proposed tour, (though not of its exact date) a paper giving details of BRADY's background and history had previously been prepared for the information of the Home Secretary and, after being intercepted at Manchester by Special Branch officers, he was detained while discussions took place at the highest possible level, to determine whether he could be brought before a court in this country or in Northern Ireland in respect of his extremist activities. The conclusion was reached that he could not, but the following evening he was returned to the Republic of Ireland on the direction of the Home Secretary, his admission to the country being regarded as contrary to the interests of national security.

(IV) THE CIVIL RIGHTS/ANTI-INTERMENT MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN

The civil rights scene in this country during 1971 was completely overshadowed by the formation of the Anti-Internment League in August. Prior to that the movement had been slowly dying on its feet for lack of an emotive cause to espouse; in recognition of this fact leaders of the two principal organisations in this field, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) and the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC), had early in the year talked tentatively of a merger, but as in the past this came to nothing. At intervals in the previous two years ambitious schemes had been mooted for bringing all the civil rights groups in this country under one umbrella, but they had always foundered on the factionalism endemic in Irish and left-wing politics. The introduction of internment in Northern Ireland on 9 August provided the necessary catalyst to fuse those groups into one organisation, and the Anti-Internment League came into being.

The A-IL was formally inaugurated at a meeting at the Irish Centre, Camden Town, on 17 August, as a natural follow-up to a demonstration in London on 15 August, during which an unprecedented degree of co-operation between groups normally completely inimical to each other was apparent. Some 2,500 persons took part in that demonstration, which consisted of a meeting at Hyde Park and a march to Whitehall; it was at times unruly, and 21 persons were arrested for offences against public order. More important, however, no fewer than 13 separate organisations from all parts of the political spectrum were identified as taking part. Encouraged by this, the 17 August meeting was convened on the initiative of a few well-known Irish political extremists, notably Bowes EGAN (nominally politically unattached, but with strong connections with most political groupings in the Irish field and with International Socialism here), John PALMER (International Socialist), John

GRAY (People's Democracy - fled from Belfast to avoid internment), Dermot KELLY (NICRA), and several luminaries of London Sinn Fein, particularly the O'KANE brothers and Privacy Privacy Bernadette DEVLIN, MP, also lent her nominal support.

Dermot KELLY was appointed chairman of the A-IL, a post which he evidently regarded as a sinecure, and John GRAY was appointed press officer and principal organiser. It was soon apparent however, that the prime mover behind the A-IL was Bowes EGAN, even to the extent of paying John GRAY's salary. Plans were made for a series of street meetings throughout the London area, leading up to a "massive demonstration" on 31 October. The preliminary meetings made little impact, but the scheduled demonstration, for once justified the description "massive". The number of participants was conservatively estimated as 10,000, but there was no disorder; not even the most fervent Irish patriot could claim, however, that it was a purely Irish demonstration. The overwhelming position in the League of the International Socialism Group of trotskyists was well illustrated by the fact that 80% of the organisational banners carried were from IS branches, thirty-one of which were identified as taking part. The list of speakers emphasised the all-embracing nature of the A-IL; as well as from both factions of the Republican Movement and of NICRA, there were also speakers from the orthodox Communist Party of Great Britain, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), both main trotskyist factions (IMG and IS), and the National Union of Students.

Thus the future pattern of the A-IL was established. After 31 October came a period of consolidation and restructuring, with local branches being formed in London and the provinces; in the latter instance, several former branches of the Irish Solidarity Campaign merely retitled themselves "Anti-Internment League" and carried on as before. In London, a committee of 14

- 33 -

has been established, on which Sinn Fein is strongly represented; London Republicans hope thereby to counteract the predominant left-wing influence in the A-IL as a whole (a somewhat forlorn hope, it would appear).

The full committee of the A-IL is as follows:-

Chairman:	Bowes EGAN (following the resignation of the original chairman, Dermot KELLY)
Organiser:	John GRAY (People's Democracy)
Members (in descending order of votes received)	Michael O'KANE (Sinn Fein)
	Privacy (Clann na h'Eireann)
	Privacy (Sinn Fein)
	Kate HOEY (Spartacus League - IMG)
	Lawrence O'KANE (Sinn Fein)
	Brian TRENCH (Int'l Socialism)
	Privacy (Int'l Socialism)
	Privacy (CP of Britain - Marxist-Leninist)
	Etain ARNHOLZ (Clann na h'Eireann)
	Privacy (Sinn Fein - daughter of leading "Provisional" internee)
	Eamonn McCANN (Int'l Socialism)
	Privacy (Sinn Fein)

Gery LAWLESS, International Marxist and leading member of the Irish Solidarity Campaign, failed by a large margin to be elected to the committee; there is talk, however, of appointing him "demonstration organiser" so as not to incur his complete enmity. **Privacy** has now accepted the post of treasurer.

As well as establishing as many branches as possible, the A-IL plan to stage another "massive" demonstration in London in March 1972, this time with a target of 100,000 participants. Though this target is certainly wildly over-optimistic, there can be little doubt that the A-IL will continue to exist as long as internment measures are in force. Its advent provided a welcome cause for the extreme left to espouse, as a successor to Vietnam, Palestine, and similar causes which had become slightly outmoded; whether the remarkable degree of co-operation thus established between otherwise incompatible groups will survive the eventual ending of internment is rather doubtful, and remains to be seen.

The other group formed in August, the Labour Committee against Internment, does not appear to have lasted thus far. The LCAI was formed on the initiative of Lord BROCKWAY and a handful of well-known left-wing Labour members of Parliament, and with the apparent backing of the International Socialists, since its secretary, Privacy was a member of that body. Its declared policy was to seek the ending of internment by political lobbying and similar methods, and it stated its opposition to street demonstrations and the like as being unproductive. This moved the A-IL to denounce the LCAI as being factionalist and as debilitating the movement as a whole; the IS group then threw its weight behind the A-IL, and nothing more was heard of the LCAI.

All the other pre-internment civil rights groups are still in being, some more so than others. In London, the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC) has shrunk, as well as being overshadowed by more parvenu organisations. The West London branch of ISC, formerly IS-dominated, has faded away, leaving only the IMG-dominated Central London branch as a going concern. That this is so is largely due to the energy of Gery LAWLESS, who has tirelessly travelled the country throughout 1971, speaking to local branches and university and college groups,

He has also been primarily responsible for producing the ISC's publication "Irish Citizen" (little more than a broadsheet folded to look like a newspaper) which first appeared in April, but which has been only intermittent since then. The national leadership of the ISC remains nominally as for 1970, viz:-

Joint Hon Presidents:

Bernadette DEVLIN MP
Frank ROCHE (now at liberty after serving an 18 month prison sentence for the "House of Commons CS Gas Incident" of July 1970)

Joint National Secretaries:

Privacy

National Treasurer:

Privacy

However, in April 1971 Miss DEVLIN was talking of resigning her honorary presidency, and **Privacy** has been much too preoccupied with his other duties to devote much time to the ISC. In fact, centralised control of the ISC seems to have gone by the board, and at present it consists of practically autonomous groups, mainly in centres of higher education, and under the aegis of whichever of the two main trotskyist factions (IS and IMG) happens to be dominant in any particular area. The only public activity under the auspices of the ISC which was worthy of note during 1971 - a march in Glasgow which resulted in considerable violence - is mentioned under the heading "Protestant Reaction".

The London region of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) also lost ground during 1971. First the Chiswick branch was merged with the Hammersmith branch, which itself later became defunct for all practical purposes, most of its active membership having defected to the West London branch of Sinn Fein. A Walthamstow branch was established early in the year, and with the Highgate branch made some

effort to justify its existence; neither, however, could make much headway against the lack of co-ordination displayed by the executive. Even an effort to hold an annual general meeting on 8 November proved abortive through faulty organisation, but the attempt finally succeeded on 23 November when the following were elected to office:-

Chairman:	Dermot KELLY
Vice-Chairman:	Privacy
Secretary:	Privacy
Asst. Secretary:	Privacy
Treasurer:	Privacy
Asst. Treasurer:	Privacy

The outgoing secretary, Privacy deprecated the fact that the Anti-Internment League had emerged outside the "civil rights umbrella", a point emphasised by the ousting of Dermot KELLY as chairman of the A-IL on the very day of the AGM. He deplored the general apathy on civil rights issues among the majority of the Irish community in Britain, and hoped that 1972 would see the establishment of a "general headquarters" and the appointment of a paid full-time organiser. Despite the pious hopes, the indications are that NICRA will continue to plod in the paths of comparative mediocrity.

Two other "Irish" organisations remain briefly to be mentioned. The first, the Irish National Liberation Solidarity Front, continued the trend of 1970 in devoting itself largely to non-Irish issues such as "black power" and Arab extremism, and generally expounding the doctrines of pro-Chinese communism under its maoist founder and general secretary, Edward DAVOREN. It suffered another of its recurring ideological crises in June, when three leading members were expelled for the deviation of "nationalism", and four others walked out in sympathy. Nevertheless, the resilient DAVOREN continued his austere path with his now minuscule band of followers, ostracised by the

- 37 -

other Irish organisations, and reportedly carrying debts (in mid-1971) amounting to almost £1,500. Most of the loss was incurred it is thought, in the production of the INLSF paper "Irish Liberation Press" which by the end of the year was regularly failing to appear on its usual date of publication.

Finally, the communist-front Connolly Association, under its general secretary, Sean REDMOND, continued to follow a relatively independent course, holding somewhat aloof from the Anti-Internment League but maintaining contact through observers and occasionally supporting its demonstrations. The CA's main effort, however, was directed towards the promotion of a "Bill of Rights" for Northern Ireland, but attempts to pass the Bill through Parliament, under the sponsorship of Lord BROCKWAY in the House of Lords and Frank McMANUS, MP in the House of Commons, were unsuccessful. The CA's monthly organ, the "Irish Democrat" (editor - Privacy) continued to appear during 1971.

Although maoists were active throughout the year, their proclivity to foment disorder was seen on remarkably few occasions and their ardour was confined in the main to a series of internal feuds and schisms.

This internecine strife was particularly apparent among the various organisations at one time controlled by Abhimanyu MANCHANDA, a megalomaniac who has been a leading exponent of the Peking version of marxism-leninism for several years. Early in the summer the majority of MANCHANDA's followers rebelled against his despotic manner and, led by Mike EARLE and [Privacy] dissolved the Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist League which they later recreated without MANCHANDA as the Marxist-Leninist Workers' Association. The Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front virtually ceased to exist and the Friends of China group was plagued by arguments between the few remaining loyalists and the EARLE/[Privacy] faction. The latter also formed the London Alliance in Defence of Workers' Rights. It briefly came to the fore on 3 July when 4 arrests were made at a militant demonstration in Wood Green on the Industrial Relations Bill and 3 more at a similar demonstration a week later. Subsequent demonstrations were orderly but carried the additional theme of police brutality. The Alliance, which is run from the home of [Privacy] at [Privacy], turned its attention in the direction of tenants' associations towards the close of the year and was active in the formation of the Hackney United Tenants ad hoc Committee.

The strife also had repercussions in the field of "Women's Lib" where the Women's Liberation Front, previously controlled by MANCHANDA's wife, Diane LANGFORD, was taken over by the EARLE/[Privacy] faction in September. Women's Liberation groups have existed in this country since early 1969 but it was not until 5 of their supporters were arrested at the "Miss World" contest in November 1970 that they began to attract any appreciable publicity. Since then their

activities have become increasingly widespread, more militant and at the same time more politically orientated as extremist bodies saw a potential reservoir of recruits in such groups. The Front and the maoist Union of Women for Liberation played a dominant role in the movement until mid-October when they received a severe set-back at the first conference of the allegedly non-sectarian Women's National Co-ordinating Committee at Skegness. There, by their dictatorial methods, they alienated themselves from the other organisations involved and left the way clear for a take-over by trotskyist groups, such as the Socialist Women Group and the Women's Caucus - both dominated by the International Marxist Group - and the IS Women - a branch of the International Socialism Group. In the field of public order, a rally in London on 6 March, organised by the Co-ordinating Committee, attracted 3,500 persons and passed off without disorder but a demonstration by about 100 supporters, together with 20 men representing the homosexual Gay Liberation Front, on 10 November outside the Royal Albert Hall during the "Miss World" contest developed into a general melee and resulted in 4 persons being arrested.

Ed DAVOREN's Irish National Liberation Solidarity Front, mentioned in Part I of this report, and Anti-Fascist Revolutionary Co-ordinating Committee of National Minorities, formed in 1970 in an attempt to extend his influence to coloured extremists, were active during 1971 but generally evoked little support. The most successful venture, in terms of publicity, was a series of protest meetings at the alleged "brutal police treatment" accorded to a young Borstal abscondee, Stephen McCARTHY, who died in January after being rearrested by police. A demonstration on the issue in Islington on 16 March resulted in the arrest of 18 of the participants; including 4 members of the dead boy's family. Later in the year the inevitable revolt occurred against DAVOREN's autocratic methods, and he was left with a personal following of about twenty and debts amounting to well over £1,000.

The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) remains by far the largest of the pro-Chinese communist groups in this country, with a membership of about 300. However, the hard-core consists of trade unionist supporters of Reg BIRCH, the Party's founder and an executive committee member of the engineering section of the AUEW, and the organisation played little part in the general extremist scene. A well-produced monthly paper, "The Worker", was published from the Party's offices at 155 Fortess Road NW5.

The small but fanatically dedicated English Communist Movement (Marxist-Leninist) appeared to be somewhat subdued during the year, possibly as a result of the arrest of 35 supporters outside Canada House on 25 October 1970 and a further 12 at a meeting in Birmingham on 27 March. The Movement is commonly known as The Internationalists but it has operated under more than 20 different names since 1967. Functions held under its aegis in July and October to celebrate Chinese anniversaries attracted audiences of up to 250 persons, predominantly of asiatic or negroid origin, but there was no disorder. The Movement continues to operate, under the guidance of Privacy Privacy and Privacy from a commune at 569 Old Kent Road SE1, where the twice-weekly paper, "Workers England Weekly News", and the periodical, "Communist England", are produced.

Other small maoist groups, such as the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding and Working Peoples Party of England, continued to exist during the year but undertook little public activity.

During the year the trotskyist movement with its hitherto turbulent history passed through a comparatively calm period. Apart from the Irish question there were few causes sufficiently emotive to bring trotskyists on to the streets in large numbers and the more established organisations used the time as a breathing space for consolidation and political manœuvring. As a result the International Socialism Group undoubtedly gained ground over their more dedicated rivals the Socialist Labour League but the overall position remains very much the same as 12 months ago - the League drawing its main support from the factories and trade unions, the Group continuing to appeal to a broader front including trotskyist intellectuals, with the International Marxist Group looking to youthful activists for the bulk of their membership.

The principal aspects of trotskyist activity have traditionally been the production of propaganda material, agitation, and covert entry into established parties and bodies for subversive purposes. During the year the main groups confined themselves to action in the first two categories. However, while there appeared to be an increasing readiness among left wing extremists to listen to trotskyist utterances, the ability of the various groups to initiate any campaign of significance, save on broad emotional issues, is minimal and they have no capacity in themselves to sustain such a campaign once begun.

The Socialist Labour League still operates from offices at 186A Clapham High Street SW4 with Gerry HEALY remaining as its autocratic general secretary. The League appears financially sound and meetings held during the year were well attended and orderly. Activities by its members, estimated at just over 1,000 were concentrated on a campaign demanding that "the Tories should be forced from power and a Labour Government pledged to socialist policies returned". The campaign was concentrated in the industrial field where the

League played an active part in labour disputes at Fords, the Upper Clyde Shipyards, and Plessey's Alexandria works. Its daily publication "Workers' Press", published by Plough Press from 180 Clapham High Street SW4, was also mainly concerned with attempting to influence industrial matters. Now in its third year the paper's daily circulation is reported to have risen to over 20,000 and there is no doubt that its quality has improved during the year.

The League's youth section, the Young Socialists, now boasts some 1,300 members and its fortnightly newspaper "Keep Left", has a circulation of 22,000. The main events organised by the Young Socialists were a rally attended by 2,000 persons at the Alexandra Palace on 14 February against the Industrial Relations Bill and a Summer Fair held at Highbury Grove School on 10 July, where a reported £1,202 was raised in aid of the 60 employees sacked by Pilkingtons Glassworks. A number of well-known theatrical personalities took part in the proceedings.

The All Trades Union Alliance, which is the League's answer to the communist-dominated Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, appeared to meet with only limited success in London and its main strength lies in the Midlands.

The International Socialism Group, already assured of a following in the universities, redoubled its efforts during the year to win support from factories and trade unions and met with some success, especially in the printing trade. However, although it claimed that membership increased from 880 to 2,300, the new recruits still seem to be attracted predominantly from among intellectuals, many of them from the teaching profession. At the annual conference held at Beaver Hall, London, on 10-12 April the Group aired ambitious plans for the establishment of a broad left-party developed from

dissident Labour Party and Communist Party members, as well as non-committed persons. In furtherance of those aims, the post of national political secretary was created, the first incumbent being Duncan HALLAS, a protégé of the Group's founder - Tony CLIFF. The Group continues to operate from 6 Cottons Gardens E2 where a thriving printing business has been established and where the weekly publication "Socialist Worker" is produced. The paper has a circulation of approximately 10,000 copies and plans are in hand to publish it twice weekly next year.

As mentioned in Part I the Group made efforts to re-assert themselves in Irish affairs and to regain the influence they lost when the Irish Solidarity Campaign was taken over by the International Marxist Group. Although they have comparatively little representation in the Anti-Internment League, they do have greater influence in the other co-ordinating body in the anti-internment field - the Labour Committee Against Internment.

Although International Socialism Group membership was successfully boosted during the year this was offset by a split in the organisation. It was caused by a faction known as the Trotskyist Tendency, formerly the Workers Fight, which joined the Group in 1968 in response to an appeal for unity of the Left. The faction led by Sean MATGAMNA and Privacy never showed complete loyalty and a special conference to discuss its position within the Group was held in Birmingham on 4 December. It was decided by 205 votes to 120 that the association should cease and that members would be allowed 28 days in which to determine where their allegiance lay. Should all the Tendency's followers leave the Group, the latter's membership could be reduced by up to 30%

Despite internal factional disputes which caused an apparent lack of animation in the International Marxist

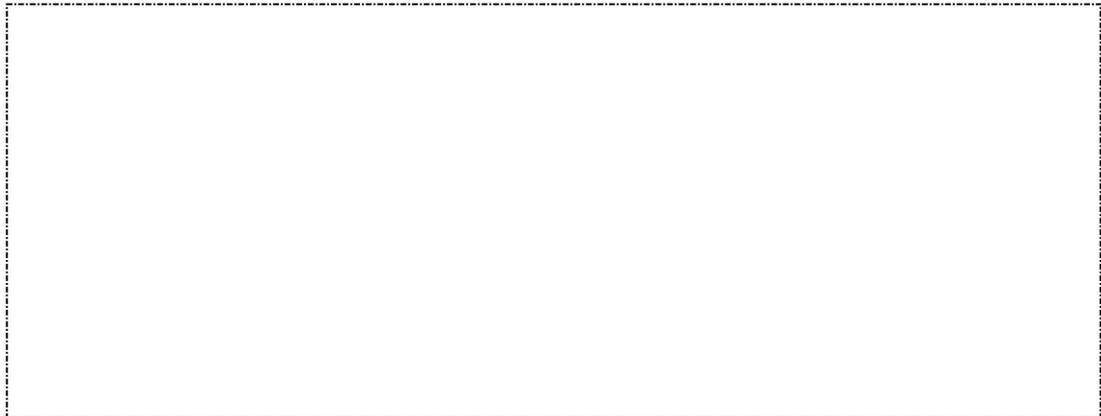
Group itself, the organisation remained active through the medium of its front organisations - the Spartacus League, the Vietnam Solidarity Committee, Red Circles, the Irish Solidarity Campaign and the Black Defence Committee, as well as in Women's Liberation activities. The Group still conducts its affairs, including the publication fortnightly of "Red Mole", from its office at 182 Pentonville Road N1. Pat JORDAN continues to act as secretary and membership remained constant at approximately 250. The nominally autonomous youth section, the Spartacus League, also has about 250 members, mainly students from universities and technical colleges.

The Group remains the British contact for the IVth International and meetings with representatives of that body were held during the year. In the field of public order a deputation of 18 members, led by Tariq ALI, entered the Sudanese Embassy in London on 29 July to protest at the execution of communists in that country. When asked to leave all but two did so and they were ejected by police. After a short demonstration, the participants dispersed without further incident. A small number of militant members, known as the Red Defence Force were alleged to have received training in unarmed combat but, apart from mounting a round-the-clock guard at the Group's headquarters, did not bring themselves to notice.

Finally mention must be made of the Claimants' Unions (q.v.) which, although not basically trotskyist in nature, are being used by the International Marxist Group in particular as a medium to propagate their own particular brand of marxist philosophy. Last year the Unions were dominated by anarchists and carried out their activities with little publicity but during 1971 they became more militant and in recent months it was evident that the Group was wielding increasing influence.

A London Branch of the trotskyist-influenced Institute for Workers' Control, which has its main offices in Nottingham, was formed during the year. Its energies were largely directed at industrial relations at Heathrow Airport, where it became active towards the close of the year under the guise of the Airport Workers' Control Group.

Other trotskyist orientated groups such as the Socialist Current group and Revolutionary Socialist League are still in existence but did nothing during the year to merit mention.



There was little organised activity by the Anarchist Federation of Britain or the London Anarchist Group although their publications, "Freedom", weekly and "Anarchy", monthly, are still published by Freedom Press at 84B Whitechapel High Street E1. The most noteworthy event was a meeting on 28 April organised (in the loosest possible sense of the word) by "Anarchy" and intended to initiate the formation of a Head Liberation Front (a "head" being one who indulges in LSD "trips"). The meeting soon degenerated into a free-for-all with speakers being shouted down and balloons and paper-darts filling the air. Although some 400 persons were present it was significant that the political activists were far outnumbered by hippies and drug-addicts.

However, two fields in which anarchists found an opportunity to express themselves were the London Squatters' Campaign and Claimants' Unions.

Having achieved comparative success in Lewisham, the Squatters focused their attention during 1971 on Southwark, where the Southwark Family Squatters Association was formed last year, largely through the efforts of two anarchists of long standing - Ron BAILEY and Jim RADFORD - both of whom are now working for the Family Squatting Advisory Service. On 22 April some 40 members of the Southwark Squatters led by Derek HATTON, an anarchist, barricaded themselves

- 77 -

into the council chamber at Peckham Town Hall but left peaceably after a short occupation. On subsequent dates in May and June the Association held similar sit-ins at Transport House and at Southwark Borough Council's Social Services Department. Although the Borough Council refused at first to enter into any agreement with the Squatters over the use of empty houses, they later relented and have now agreed to co-operate to a certain extent with the Association. Squatters organisations in Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Lambeth, Brent and Camden claimed similar successes during the year.

The Claimants' Unions, which first came to notice in March 1970, were formed to assist and guide people claiming supplementary benefits from the Ministry of Social Security. They achieved considerable success during the year and there are now ten established branches in London alone. The activities of the Unions are co-ordinated by the National Federation of Claimants' Unions based in Birmingham. In their early days the Unions were predominantly anarchist inspired but it became increasingly apparent as the year progressed that the International Marxist Group (q.v) had seen the militant potential of the Unions and was rapidly infiltrating their ranks.

Agitprop, which for some years has acted as an information and publicity service for the ultra-left, continued to be active during the year but remained in severe financial difficulties. The Agitprop commune, led by Harris Privacy GLECKMAN and situated together with the body's offices and bookshop at 248 Bethnal Green Road E2, retained close associations with 'underground' activity and had firm links with the notorious Grosvenor Avenue commune and with known Angry Brigade terrorists.

The Anarchist Black Cross continued to operate unobtrusively from its offices at 10 Gilbert Place WC1 but suffered a serious

- 78 -

setback on 21 August when its leading personality, James Stuart CHRISTIE, was arrested at the Amhurst Road flat used by the "Angry Brigade". In his enforced absence, Albert MELTZER and Miguel GARCIA now produce "Anarchist Black Flag" but it is not published regularly and has a limited circulation.

While the Syndicalist Workers' Federation and Dr Christopher PALLIS's London Solidarity Group continued to exist they undertook no noteworthy activity

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The lessening of tension in the nuclear arms race and de-escalation of the war in Vietnam deprived pacifist groups in this country to a large extent of their "raison d'etre" and the year saw a marked decline in their fortunes. Such activities as were undertaken made little impact for, in the main, the anarchist and trotskyist interest expressed over the past decade in exploiting this field waned and the resulting small and orderly demonstrations attracted little publicity.

Notwithstanding this, the Vietnam Solidarity Committee was resuscitated by the trotskyist International Marxist Group for a demonstration on 24 April to coincide with an attempt in the United States to heighten feelings against American policy in Indo-China. It manifested itself in the form of a "Spring Offensive", but there was little reaction in this country, only 1,500 persons participating in the demonstration compared with the 25,000 attracted by the same body to the "Autumn Offensive" in 1968. Although there was a minor scuffle outside the Hilton Hotel the proceedings presented no serious threat to public order. Internal activities continued to take place, but little more of interest was heard of the Committee and at the close of the year it was virtually a list of contacts maintained by the International Marxist Group.

During 1971 there was little evidence of the campaign against apartheid in sport which characterised the extremist scene last year. Peter HAIN, the leading light in the Stop the Seventy Tour Committee, visited Australia early in the year to add his weight to the militant and violent demonstrations at fixtures of the touring South African rugby team. He is currently awaiting trial in this country under a private prosecution for criminal conspiracy to disrupt sporting events involving South African teams in Britain. Fund raising to meet the legal costs of both sides has been going on, for HAIN among the liberal elements in this country and for the prosecution among sympathetic elements in South Africa.

- 90 -

The Anti-Apartheid Movement remained the most vocal organisation opposed to apartheid in South Africa. It was involved in campaigning on a number of issues during the year, often in conjunction with such organisations as the Dambusters Mobilisation Committee, the South African Non-Racial Open Committee, the Defence and Aid Fund, the Action Committee against Racialism, the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea and Liberation. Among the topics which provoked demonstrations were the projected sale of armaments to the South Africa government (which also led the Movement's secretary, Abdul MINTY, to fly to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in Singapore to present a petition condemning such a sale), the Wimbledon tennis championships, the proposed Immigration Bill, British commercial involvement in Southern Africa - especially in the Cabora Bassa Dam project - and the visit of the South African Minister of Defence to this country. Disorder occurred briefly on the last mentioned occasion when on 10 June smoke-canisters and tomatoes were thrown at the Minister but two persons were arrested and order was quickly restored among the 28 demonstrators.

In all, however, these activities invoked only small numbers of anti-apartheid supporters and sympathisers, and in general the violence which marked the Stop The Seventy Tour Campaign was missing.

The situation which arose towards the close of the year regarding the Rhodesian constitution aroused remarkably little activity among left-wing groups. The Anti-Apartheid Movement organised several small demonstrations, one in Downing Street on 26 November resulting in two persons being arrested for using threatening behaviour, but the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, which retains the support of the majority of coloured Rhodesians in this country, and the Zimbabwe African National Union remained quiescent.

Tariq ALI and other like-minded West Pakistanis sought to capitalise on outraged Bengali opinion by forming West Pakistanis in Solidarity with Bengal. The group had close associations with the International Marxist Group but achieved little success.

The issue attracted the usual expressions of sympathy from left-wing extremists in this country but few took an

active part. Supporters of Action Bangla Desh proved an exception. Formed to provide relief to refugees, this group came under severe criticism for spending more on air flights to and from Calcutta than on actual relief work. Included among its 40 supporters were several militant pacifists and a number of well-organised demonstrations in London were held under its aegis.

