

SPECIAL BRANCH
ANNUAL REPORT

1982

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The 'Peace Movement', with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the forefront, has now established itself firmly in the mainstream of British politics. The various European disarmament movements and the pressure for a nuclear 'freeze' in the United States have given encouragement to the CND and enhanced its credibility. It remains a broad-based organisation encompassing Liberals, Anarchists, Christian pacifists and members of the Communist Party. This latter group has increased its hold on the executive machinery of the organisation despite the efforts of the CND's General Secretary, Monsignor Bruce KENT. The current estimate of support is in the region of 500,000 of which 200,000 may be regarded as active members.

CND's central policy remains the pursuit of unilateral nuclear disarmament which, it believes, will lead to multilateral disarmament. Alongside its opposition to any form of Civil Defence, the organisation has set itself two priorities: the stopping of US Cruise missiles in Britain and the scrapping of the Trident programme.

The annual demonstration, held this year on 6th June, attracted 90,000 people, but the Movement's most notable achievement during the year was its campaign against the Civil Defence exercise 'Hard Rock'. The CND counter-exercise, entitled 'Operation Hard Luck', was greatly assisted by left-wing councils that declared themselves to be 'nuclear free zones' and refused to implement Civil Defence measures. Exercise 'Hard Rock' was subsequently cancelled.

CND's confidence in its ultimate success reached a plateau at the Labour Party conference this year with wide

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support from party leaders on the platform, but the year has seen a growing awareness within the movement that its aims may not be achieved by Parliamentary means based upon majority support in the country. A policy has therefore been adopted by the hierarchy that is based upon extra-Parliamentary action. Known as Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA) it involves the disruption of any defence policy based on nuclear arms. This could be achieved by criminal damage to military equipment and bases, or physical obstruction of defence areas.

By the Autumn many CND leaders were predicting that the disarmament issue would become as socially divisive in the United Kingdom in 1983 as the Vietnam War was in the United States.

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Overshadowed by events in the Falklands, the activities of the Reagan Reception Committee, formed to oppose the visit of President Reagan to this country in June, attracted very little support. Dominated by the SWP, it was intended to produce massive demonstrations on the streets of London during the period of the visit and to publicise American involvement in El Salvador. In the event, the maximum turnout was 2,700.

A new entrant into the public order field is the Animal Protest Movement. It consists of mainly local groups, whose activities during the latter half of the year have caused public order problems, sometimes serious, throughout the UK. One of the most active groups is the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), a clandestine organisation which believes that direct action is the only method that will stop the exploitation of animals. It has made numerous successful attacks on laboratory premises, at which members have freed animals and damaged property, and its members, like many of those in other groups, are highly dedicated people willing to be arrested and suffer the consequences at law for their beliefs.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has directed most of its energy towards fomenting industrial unrest and attacking Conservative government policy and the Trade Union Reform Bill. The party has been involved in strikes at Fords Car Plant, British Airways, British Rail, the health workers' dispute and has dominated the activities of the Reagan Reception Committee (qv). Owing to the continual ban on NF marches during the year, the SWP's front organisation, the Anti-Nazi

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League, has been dormant: ANL supporters taking the view that police were making any action by them unnecessary. The Right to Work Campaign, another SWP front organisation, held a 'March on Parliament' in February under the banner 'Jobs not Yops'. The four-day event ended with a rally by 1,500 at the Royal Festival Hall. The CND continues to be the object of SWP infiltration; a situation likely to remain whilst the SWP leadership considers disarmament an issue the party can use to gain influence, recruits and publicity.

Red Action was formed in January by a small group of potentially violent Trotskyists who had broken away from, or been expelled by, the SWP. It supports Irish Republican groups and advocates direct and violent action against racist and fascist groups. On occasions its members have acted as bodyguards for meetings of the Revolutionary Communist Party (another hard left Trotskyist group) with whom they have some similarity in outlook.

The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), a numerically small hardline Trotskyist group, has managed to gain more media publicity in the past year than its actual size merits. Such publicity is at the heart of this organisation's efforts and has been used to promote anti-racist propaganda, commonly recognised through its satellite organisations, East London Workers Against Racism (ELWAR) and South London Workers Against Racism (SOLWAR). It continues to support the Irish Republican cause through the Irish Freedom Movement, but with a lull in Irish activity the party has concentrated more on its anti-racial activities.

The Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) is a well-organised and affluent Trotskyist organisation with the largest paper membership of a group of its kind in the UK. Fiercely anti-Zionist, the major activity this year has centred around the Israeli invasion of the Lebanon. However, its most insidious activity is the Youth Training Scheme. There are now six

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training centres in Liverpool, Glasgow, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Merthyr Tydfil, Nottingham and Brixton, where deprived youth of the areas is offered skilled industrial training allied to political indoctrination. Unaware of its political implications, notable theatrical and sporting personalities continue to lend their names to the project. The party newspaper, 'Newslines', which complements 'Young Socialist', the weekly paper of its youth organisation, is still the only daily Trotskyist paper produced in the world.

The Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) is a Trotskyist organisation which emanated from a breakaway section of the International Socialists, the forerunner of the present day Socialist Workers Party. It has concentrated its main activities on support for Irish Republican prisoners in Northern Ireland, but, like other Trotskyist organisations, has also been active against anti-racist groups. Extreme secrecy is maintained regarding the whereabouts of its offices and printing equipment and, like the RCP, members adopt party names to protect their real identities.

Whilst retaining its international links with European trotskyist groups the International Marxist Group (IMG) has never regained the prominence it enjoyed during the 1960s through the anti-Vietnam campaign and this year has seen no variation from its policy of pursuing resolutions adopted during its 1981 conference with particular emphasis on its 'entryist' tactics towards the Labour Party, trades unions and the CND.

Anarchism in the UK has been in decline during the year and Stuart CHRISTIE, the father-figure of British anarchists, has had a particularly unfortunate year: his publishing enterprise collapsed through lack of funds, his intention to leave the Orkney Islands was thwarted by the absence of a buyer for his home and with his telephone cut off for non-payment of the rental he is no longer able to maintain contact

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with his anarchist disciples. The most significant event this year was the execution of a search warrant in April at Freedom Press and Little 'A' Printers. These East End anarchist groups printed two publications, 'Riot not Work' and 'My Little Black Book' (a guide to assassination techniques) with the intention of circulating them in South London. No prosecution was initiated, but the operation undoubtedly prevented the circulation of provocative literature on the streets of Brixton at a sensitive time.

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TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT (TOM)

The end of the Hunger Strike Campaign in Northern Ireland in October 1981 meant that those groups which agitated on behalf of Republicans had lost their most emotive issue. This year TOM has been actively grooming other issues to fill the vacuum. The Movement's principal aims, short of its eponymous objective, were enumerated at its Delegate Conference of 11.9.1982. These were:-

- (i) Against the use of plastic bullets in Northern Ireland;
- (ii) For the Repatriation of Irish "Prisoners of War";
and

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- (iii) For the abolition of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Associated with these three issues has been a campaign about the "Technology of Repression" in which TOM has sought to widen its appeal by arguing that what has happened in Northern Ireland is a precursor to what will occur in Great Britain when unemployment and racial discrimination provoke disorder here.

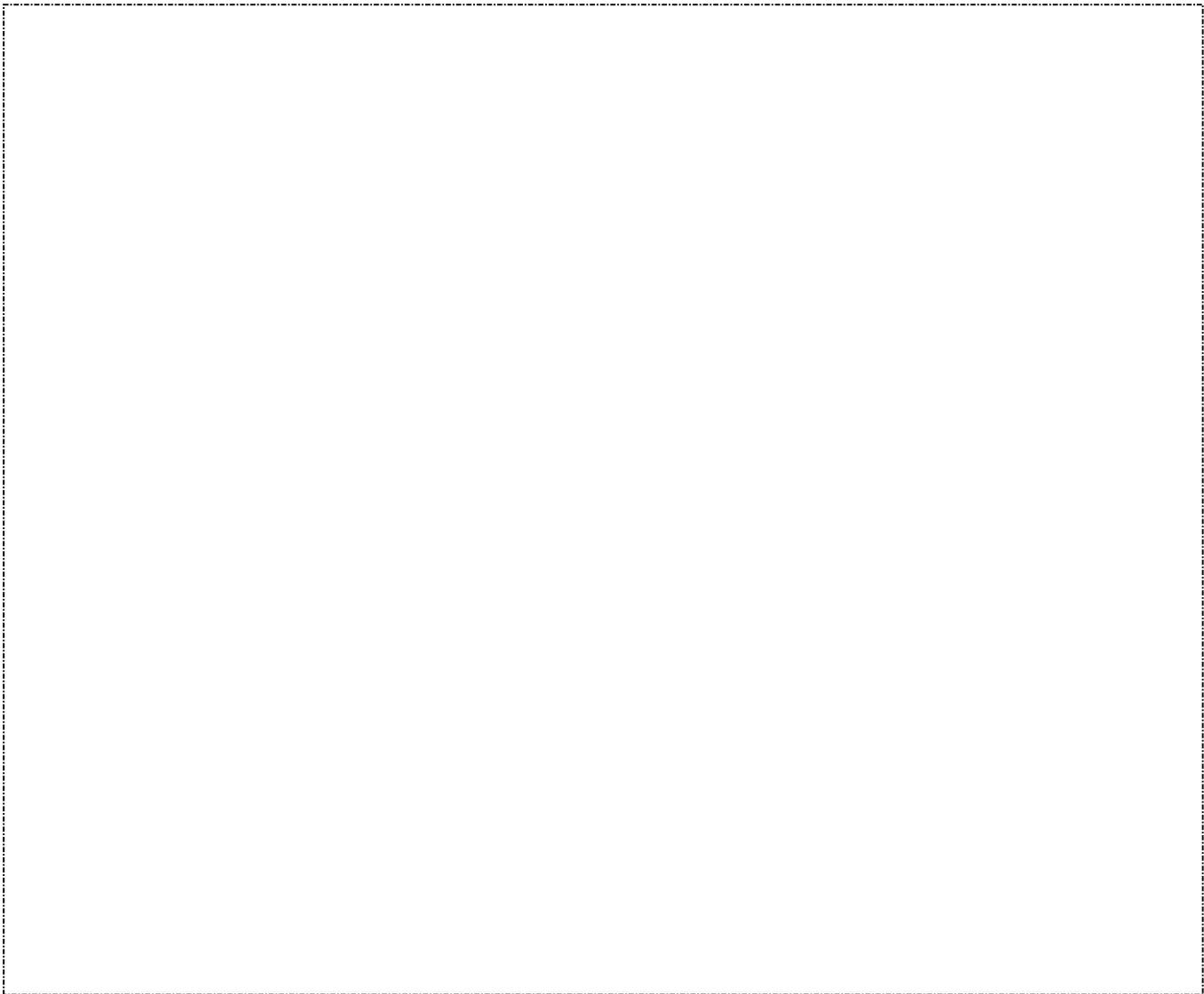
TOM saw the appointment of Sir Kenneth Newman as Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, so soon after the Brixton disturbances of 1981, as a clear vindication of its view that Northern Ireland provided the British Government with an ideal arena in which to perfect the techniques of repression, which will be used, in due course, in the country as a whole. This argument seems to have had little impact, although it is a theme which is likely to be continued. Its pursuit is in any case something of a double-edged sword, for TOM values its links with Sinn Fein and could jeopardise these if it attracts support from, usually vexatious, groups which are keen to use issues arising from Northern Ireland for their own ends rather than for the Republican cause. That Sinn Fein is nervous of involvement with such people has been demonstrated by its cautious attitude to the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC), a front for the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) and the Maoist Revolutionary Communist League (RCL).

TOM's relationship with the ISC is patchy, being good in some areas but poor in South London. It is interesting that an ISC activist recently used the IRA/Sinn Fein publication 'An Phoblacht' when criticising TOM for 'entryist tendencies'. This can be taken as a jealous attack because TOM is well respected by the 'broad left' and has good relationships with Labour aligned groups such as the Labour Committee on Ireland and Labour personalities such as the GLC councillors, Ken LIVINGSTONE and Steve BUNDRED. Although 'An Phoblacht' published this particular

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letter it is unlikely that this represents Sinn Fein's approval of the ISC.

BUNDRED and LIVINGSTONE gave a public example of their astute ability to embarrass the British Government with the invitation of Gerry ADAMS and Danny MORRISON to London in December. As these two councillors come from much the same political milieu as many TOM activists it is likely that the incident will only strengthen Sinn Fein's trust in TOM and its associates, rather than in those revolutionary groups which spend so much time in arguing the purity of their political outlook that they miss the practical opportunities that the 'entryists' grasp.

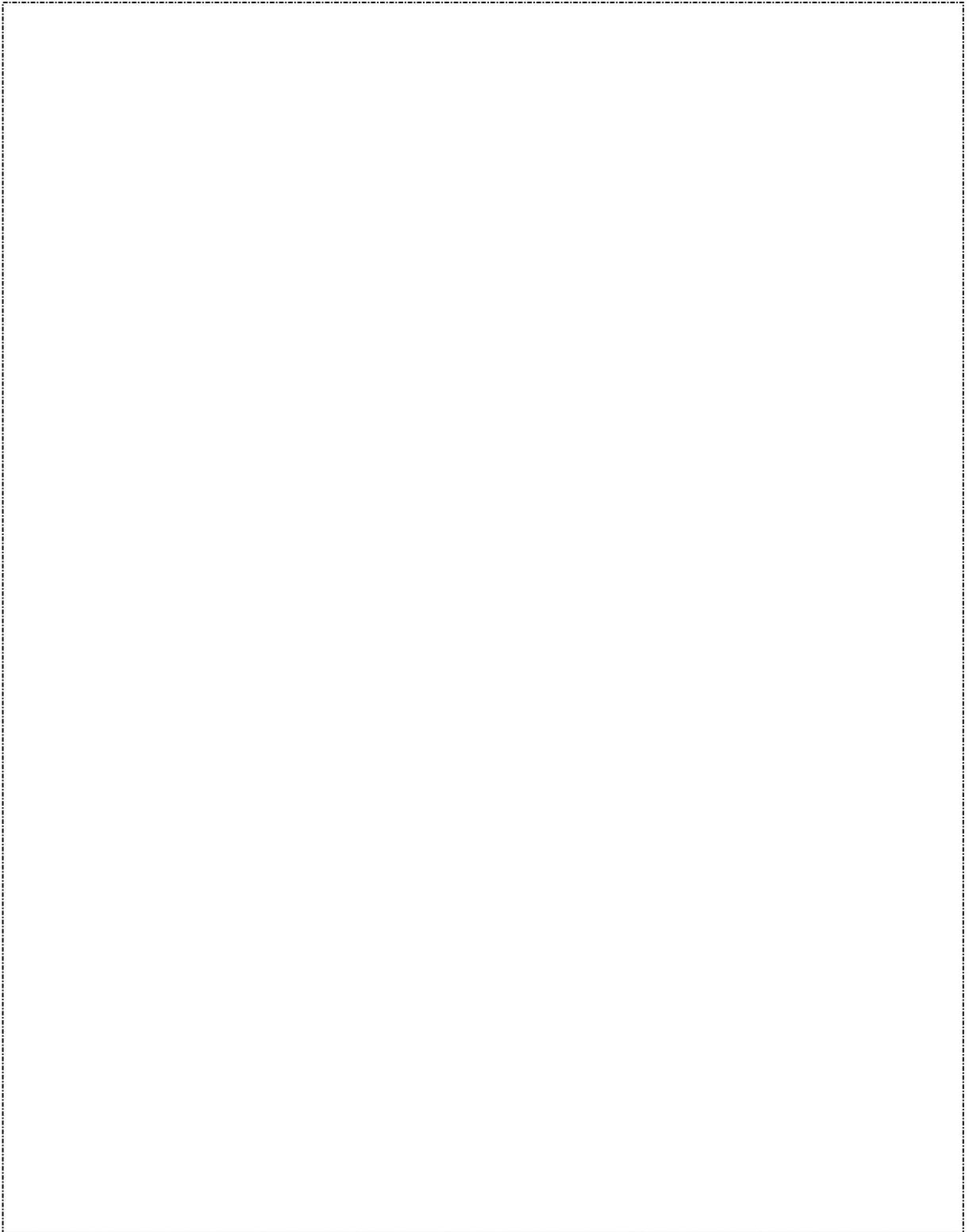


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Right to Work March

6. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), under the guise of the Right to Work Campaign (RTWC), organised a 'March on Parliament', held from 21st to 25th February, which culminated in weak support of a 'Lobby of Parliament' separately organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists (q.v.). This particular march broke with RTWC practice in that it was based wholly in London (previous events have always travelled from the provinces to the capital). The slogan was "Jobs not YOPS" - designed to attract adverse publicity for the Government's Youth Opportunities Scheme.

7. Numbers varied from day to day; ranging from a mere 70, to as many as 450 on the last day of the march. Each day's events were similar: marchers (wearing fluorescent orange jackets), preceded by a 'pop' group on a lorry, would march along their route, stop for refreshments, continue and then end the day with an evening's entertainment from 'pop' groups. The only variations from this routine were when support was given to a demonstration and picket at Islington Town Hall; a brief occupation of the office of Norman TEBBIT, Secretary of State for Employment, at Caxton House, Westminster; support for a picket outside Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Road; and on the final day, a joint rally at the Royal Festival Hall.



Observations on CND

23. Following the massive demonstration held in London in October 1982 the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) has experienced a spectacular growth in national membership, which



is currently approaching the 40,000 mark. When this is related to local CND groups, where only a percentage are national members, the CND can, with some justification, claim some 300,000 sympathisers. Predictably, groups with vested interests have tried to move the campaign in the same direction as their own politics or beliefs. Major lobbies within this field are Church groups, the Labour Party, Communist Party and, to a lesser extent, the Socialist Workers Party and the International Marxist Group. However, despite considerable energies channelled into the campaign by the above organisations, no single political body is remotely close to controlling its overall direction.

TROTSKYIST AND ANARCHIST MATTERS

Police Raids Against Freedom Collective

4. On 1st April, a joint team of officers from Special Branch and C13 executed search warrants against the Freedom Collective of anarchists and the Little 'A' printers: both premises in the East End of London. The officers seized printing plates and several thousand pamphlets which dealt with the manufacture of explosive devices, home-made guns, assassination techniques and booby traps. Police believe the intention was to distribute the pamphlets in selected areas of London prior to Easter in anticipation of a recurrence of last year's serious disturbances. Seven known anarchists were found on the premises:

Privacy

Privacy

Privacy None was charged but a report has been submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

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IRISH MATTERS

Irish Freedom Movement

5. A public meeting of the Irish Freedom Movement (an offshoot of the Revolutionary Communist Party, formerly known as 'Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act Campaign') at Holborn Public Library on 7th May was attended by 80 people who listened to speeches from two fathers (representing the 'Silent Too Long' organisation) whose sons have been killed in accidents with British Army vehicles in Northern Ireland. The chairman, Mike FREEMAN, would not allow questions and the meeting ended after little more than an hour.

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MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

CND Demonstration in Central London

17. On 6th June, a national demonstration held in Central London under the auspices of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament showed that the movement has lost none of its momentum or broad appeal to the many left-wing groups which have traditionally supported its ideals. Three marches, starting from South, North and West London, terminated at Hyde Park where a crowd of 90,000 listened to speeches interspersed with entertainment. In the hope of maximising publicity and support, the demonstration, originally planned for Greenham Common, Berkshire, was moved to London to coincide with the visit of President REAGAN. As the three marches got under way, a petition was delivered at the American Embassy by Joan RUDDOCK, Chairperson of CND, and Susannah YORK, the film star.

18. The rally at Hyde Park, chaired by Joan RUDDOCK, was addressed by a number of CND personalities and representatives from other organisations. Notable amongst these were, Myrtle SOLOMON from War Resisters International; Judith HART MP; Dr Kenneth GREET, Secretary to the Methodist Conference; Professor Michael PENTZ, Vice-Chairman of CND and a founder member of Scientists Against the Bomb; Arthur SCARGILL, Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers; and Tony BENN MP. A disturbing feature of some speeches was the call for more direct action, particularly civil disobedience, in furtherance of CND's aims. The rally ended with Joan RUDDOCK reading a declaration on behalf of the European Peace Movement.

19. Apart from isolated arrests during the rally for public order offences, the only serious incident occurred when an aggressive group of 'punks' ran down Oxford Street behaving in an offensive manner towards the public. Firm action by police resulted in 26 arrests for public order offences and possession of weapons (an ammonia spray and flick knives).

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Reagan Reception Committee

23. The visit to this country by President REAGAN of the United States was marked by a weekend of events that started with a mass CND demonstration in Central London on 6th June (q.v.). The following day, a 2-hour picket outside the US Embassy by some 2,500 supporters of the Reagan Reception Committee (a group dominated by the Socialist Workers' Party set up for the express purpose of protesting against the President's visit) was addressed by Ernie ROBERTS MP, Gordon McLENNAN (General Secretary CPGB), Ernie ROSS MP and Pat ARROWSMITH. A delegation of five, led by ROBERTS and

ROSS, handed in a petition to the Embassy before the demonstrators abandoned the picket to march to County Hall. The only disorder occurred when 11 'punk' anarchists were arrested for minor offences in Duke Street, W1 whilst police organised the marchers. The march ended peacefully after short speeches from ROBERTS, ARROWSMITH and Paul HOLBORROW.

24. On 8th June, an all-day 'Festival of Peace and Freedom', held at Central Hall, Westminster, organised by the Chile Solidarity Campaign, attracted 600 people representing 13 organisations including the CND. Events included films, discussion groups and talks of an anti-US/Imperialist nature. At midday a group of 25 left Central Hall to demonstrate at Downing Street for the arrival of the President's cavalcade and later in the day 150 attended an anti-US meeting, organised by Ernie ROBERTS MP, in the Grand Committee Room at the House of Commons. The Festival ended with a 3-hour folk concert which included short speeches by Joan RUDDOCK and Tony BENN MP.

Animal Rights Movement

8. Although identifiable groups within the animal rights movement have traditionally regarded violence as unacceptable as a means of attaining their goals, many supporters are becoming more active in their struggle to oppose cruelty and win legislation for the protection of animals. The fringe groups feel frustrated by the democratic process and may well cause public order problems in the very near future. This situation arises from an increased awareness of ecological issues, the involvement of radicals in such groups and the consequent acceptability of 'direct action' as a legitimate means of protest.

9. The Left has largely ignored the issue as liberal sentimentality, but as four-fifths of the public are allegedly opposed to animal experiments and two-thirds apparently reject fox hunting, the potential support for any group that succeeds in capturing the public imagination regarding these issues is enormous. The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (founded 1894) has demonstrated this by increasing membership from 2,500 to 14,000 following a take-over by radicals two years ago after a carefully planned programme of "entryism". The greatest obstacle for the group that manages to unite this massive support is that the fundamentalism of many supporters tends to alienate moderate opinion.

10. On 16th November 68 supporters of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection demonstrated outside the Royal Society of Medicine in Wimpole Street in protest at the AGM of the Research Defence Society. After an hour 20 demonstrators pushed aside barriers, threw fireworks and attempted to enter the premises. They were prevented by police who made one arrest for threatening behaviour. During the night a brick was thrown through a window of the premises causing damage valued at £200.

Letter Bombs

11. An incendiary device ignited at 10 Downing Street on 30th November when the house manager was opening the post. Inside the package was found a claim by the Animal Rights Militia. Four similar padded packages were intercepted by sorters at the Palace of Westminster. These were addressed to Mr FOOT, Mr STEEL, Mr Roy JENKINS and Mr Timothy RAISON, Minister of State at the Home Office. The established animal rights groups say they have never heard of Animal Rights Militia but the attack is evidence of the extremism of fringe groups.

CND Demonstration

12. 32 supporters of CND were arrested for highway obstruction on 13th November whilst taking part in a 'sit-down' demonstration at St Margaret's Street, SW1, near the Palace of Westminster in protest against the siting of Cruise and Trident missile systems in the UK. All pleaded guilty at Bow Street Magistrates' Court and were bound over to keep the peace for 12 months.