

**NOTE**

## **A TRADE ASSOCIATION FOR INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS**

*Sally Townsend writes:* On February 28 independent publishers from *Private Eye*, the *New Statesman*, through to magazines with a small circulation such as *Performance* and one on homeopathic medicine, met with small scale distributors and other groups involved in the book and magazine business, to discuss the formation of a trade association.

The meeting was called by the Committee for Press Distribution, itself born out of two minority press group pamphlets, *Where Is The Other News?* and *The Other Secret Service* and the initiative of the Campaign For Press Freedom.

The day was spent discussing problems such as subscriptions, newsagent and bookshop sales, levels of staffing, promotion and sales representation, and the distribution system operating in this country and in other parts of Europe. One factor was clear: many of the smaller publishers share the problem of

access to essential information, and an association financed from a levy of its members could offer this service as well as acting as a campaigner for, for instance, negotiating with the Post Office for the return of the Printed Paper Rate, or to organise a lobby of MPs to change the law relating to the distribution of journals — a law which holds the distributor and not the publisher responsible for the material in circulation.

A future meeting is planned for early in the summer. By that time, the committee, formed by representatives attending the conference, will have come up with concrete proposals to put to the association. Anyone interested in participating should contact either Chris Hemming (01-278 0911) or Paul Westlake (01-737 2658) for further information.

## **ERRATA**

We apologise for an error in the April issue. On the first page of 'The Growing Police Challenge' by Stephen Sedley, the first and second columns were transposed.