NOTES

MARXISM TODAY

Paul Webster writes: This issue of *Marxism Today* represents an important landmark in the journal's 24-year history. For the first time ever, it is available at newsagents throughout the country, and the print-run of 20,000 is nearly double that achieved for any previous issue.

This breakthrough comes exactly two years after the new format *Marxism Today* was introduced, since when sales have risen steadily to the point where our existing system of distribution was unable to cope with demand.

The national distribution follows a highly successful trial run in selected WHSmith retail outlets in the London area during which *Marxism Today* repeatedly sold out in a number of central stations.

As well as its sales through newsagents, the number of subscribers has doubled during the past two years, and there has been a substantial increase in the number of bookshops where the journal can be obtained. Sales have increased by 33% during the last year alone, and the success of the national distribution could mean a tripling of our current circulation.

Its accessibility has enabled *Marxism Today* to win readers from a wide range of occupations and backgrounds, and sales at recent trade union conferences have been particularly encouraging.

While *Marxism Today* has provided a forum for a growing number of contributors from outside the Communist Party to debate the key issues facing the Left, it has played an increasingly important role within the party as a focus of discussion, and continues to draw its strength from the support of party members. Without the active contribution of its readers *Marxism Today* could never have recorded the successes of the past two years; with continuing support, much more can still be achieved.

A SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Robin Blackburn writes: On June 20th an *ad hoc* Working Group convened a meeting in London to discuss the setting up of a new Society dedicated to socialist research, education and polemic. The meeting was attended by some 200 socialists of diverse affiliations. It agreed on the desirability of a new non-party grouping that could pool the resources and experience of socialists active in different areas. It charged a Steering Committee with exploring the project further and preparing a founding conference in the autumn. The Steering Committee met in July and August. Sub committees have been formed to prepare proposals on: organisation and finance, publications, a charter of principles, and workshops on a number of policy areas (including the state, the inner-city crisis, arts policy, international priorities). A women's group has also been established. The reconvened conference is scheduled to take place on November 28 th and 29th. Further details from: Working Group For A Socialist Society, 7 Carlisle St, London W1.

Contributions to *Notes* (brief please) are welcome. We need copy by the 1st of the month preceding publication.

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