

NOTE

MARX MEMORIAL LECTURE

Andrew Davies writes: This year's Marx Memorial Lecture is to be given by Tony Benn on 'Democracy and Marxism: A Mutual Challenge' at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square on Tuesday 16 March, 1982 at 7.30pm. The subject of the lecture is particularly relevant in view of recent events in Poland and the widespread employment of the term 'Marxist' as a form of generalised abuse, an attempt to characterise Marxism as somehow 'alien' to this country. And this despite the fact that Marx himself lived and worked here for many years. With the centenary of Marx's death coming up in 1983, it is high time that the role of Marxism in the British labour movement is discussed and Tony Benn's lecture will be a valuable contribution to this process.

BIRMINGHAM WLM FAIR

Jane Woddis writes: Our fingers froze as we handed out leaflets advertising the first ever Birmingham Women's Liberation Fair to pre-Christmas shoppers in the city-centre, and, despite the cold, nearly a thousand people made their way to this long worked-for event.

At it they found dozens of stalls and dis-

plays showing the wide range of activities of the Women's Liberation Movement: arts and crafts; literature and exhibitions from women in the trade union movement and political parties; there were entertainments including musicians and poets, photography and video projects, and the refreshments room did a roaring trade. For the children there was a creche (the only thing run by men) and a collage-making session organised by the WLM playgroup.

The idea for the Fair had come up at a meeting of WLM activists last summer, and was a determined attempt to build on the achievements and experiences of the Birmingham WLM in the People's March for Jobs and in organising the conference 'Against the Cuts: A Feminist Strategy for the 80s'. The two main points which had emerged from these events were the need for the WLM to put forward a public face, and to make links with other movements, notably trade unions.

So the Fair was conceived to present the demands of the WLM as a whole, and to draw on support from as many quarters as possible. We wrote to all the trade unions in the city, all community groups and non-WLM organisations, as well as political par-

ties. The response was most encouraging — nearly 15,000 leaflets and hundreds of posters went out — through trade unions, public libraries and adult education centres as well as the WLM itself.

One of the great strengths of the Fair is that the group that organised it covered almost every trend within the WLM: socialist feminist and radical feminists, women active in the trade union movement and in the community, long-standing feminists and women new to the movement. But perhaps the surest sign of the Fair's success is that all of us who organised it are now eager to make it an annual event. By the time this appears in print we'll have begun planning for 1982!

AES SEMINAR

Peter Samson writes: The international aspects of the alternative economic strategy give rise to many difficult problems that need to be tackled urgently. Import controls and withdrawal from the EEC have so far received the most attention, but there are many others, for a sustained expansion of the British economy will require a transformation of our trading and financial relations with other countries. The Economic Advisory Committee of the Communist Party is

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holding a residential seminar on 'Britain in the International Economy' from Friday April 16 (supper) to Sunday April 18, at Beechwood College, Leeds. On Saturday the subject will be 'International Economic Policy Aspects of the AES' opened by Dave Currie, with additional material on the EEC, Japan, West Germany, East-West trade and the Third World. On Sunday Ben Fine will open on multinational companies and the AES, while other participants will analyse multinationals and particular industries, including motors, food, textiles and telecommunications. The inclusive fee is £35; please write to: Peter Samson, Secretary Economic Advisory Committee, 16 St John Street, London EC1 4AY.

NATIONAL FUND

Roger Trask writes: The Communist Party's single biggest source of income is the annual National Fund Appeal. This year the target is £85,000 and the Appeal runs from 22 February to 28 March. The income from the Appeal helps to finance the national work of the Communist Party: its paid workers, leaflets, conferences, pamphlets, the fortnightly *Comment* and, of course, *Marxism Today*.

The target is raised through a diverse range of activities, of which the great majority are organised at a local level. An important component is individual donations. We would be very grateful if readers of *Marxism Today* would make a contribution towards this year's Appeal. Send donations to Gordon McLennan, National Fund, 16 St John Street, London EC1M 4AL.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND HOW TO CONTROL THEM

Shelley Adams writes: Next time an employer

argues that employees are 'contractually obliged' to do something, he or she could be in for a shock — at least if the employees have read this new Labour Research Department booklet on terms of employment. Unlike most law guides it is not about how the law works in tribunals and courts — in fact it starts off with five good reasons for avoiding the courts. It is about dealing with legal arguments *in negotiations* — since that is where most disputes are settled.

It aims to answer the sort of everyday enquiries received by the LRD from affiliates about their terms of employment; to explain not just what the law says — but how to argue with the law. The booklet looks at three things: the different sources of employment terms (collective agreements, judge-made rules, custom and practice); how to argue about conflicting terms; how to control terms of employment.

Terms of Employment and How to Control Them aims to shatter some of the myths about the law; it shows that, when it comes to employment terms there are very few hard and fast rules and it has plenty of case histories to prove it. In addition, the booklet contains a detailed chapter on how unions can control the different sources of employment terms — so that when it comes to arguing about them they can make sure that the legal odds are weighted a bit more in their favour.

64 pages in length, the booklet costs £1.10 (including postage) and is available from: Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF.

ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE

Norma Manchee writes: The daily incursions and attacks by the South African regime against its newly independent neighbours have received scant attention in the media here. Two pamphlets published by the Campaign to Stop the War Against Angola and Mozambique highlight these violations which have been carried out over a number of years. The first, by British barrister Lord Gifford, chronicles the abduction and murder of South African and Namibian patriots who have fled to seek refuge in the front line states, while in the second Jan Marsh meticulously documents the frequency of the military incursions by the South Africans during the last six years. Since British Buccaneer bombers and other British military equipment were used in the attacks against the Angolan people, it is all the more imperative that we acquaint ourselves with the facts in order to help end this shameful collaboration.

South Africa's Record of International Terrorism by Tony Gifford costs 40p; *'Stop the*



War Against Angola and Mozambique by Jan Marsh costs 75p; both are available, post free, from: The Campaign to Stop the War Against Angola and Mozambique, 9 Great Russell Street, London WC1.

Contributions to *Notes* (brief please) are welcome. We need copy as early as possible.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Eileen Phillips works at the City of London Polytechnic.

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Beatrix Campbell works on *City Limits*.

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