

CHILE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN
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DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY 1985

Throughout 1984, the popular movement in Chile has grown in strength, organisation, unity and militancy. The success of the National Strike in October demonstrated to the junta that only a return to mid-70s levels of repression, with a State of Siege, could keep them in power. This sharpening liberation struggle demands ever greater solidarity from the movement in Britain.

Nineteen-eighty four has also seen the intensification of US military intervention in Central America, with a consequent encouragement of the most reactionary forces in the continent, and it is no coincidence that the State of Siege was declared within hours of the announcement of Reagan's re-election.

The delegation sent to Chile by the Campaign has had a great impact inside Chile, and has given CSC the best opportunity in many years to re-build its strength throughout the country, to carry out wider activity and to increase pressure for policy change on the British Government. It has also put us in greater contact with organisations inside Chile, and thus yielded a greater flow of information and requests for direct aid.

In 1985 therefore the Campaign must make the best use of these opportunities to both increase direct support and to renew CSC itself for what may still be a long hard struggle.

The growing repression throughout 1984, culminating in the State of Siege, together with the disappointment of the high hopes of 1983 and the continued economic deterioration, has reduced the enthusiasm for an early return to Chile for many of the refugees. However, until the State of Siege Chileans were still returning, and there had been an increase of British Government funding. How the State of Siege will affect the question of return is not clear; but CSC should continue to try to assist activists who have no other means of support.

AREAS OF CAMPAIGNING

1. Support for the Resistance in Chile

The growth of the resistance continued, as shown by the national strike, the moves towards a 'Constitutional Pact', and the failure of the State of Siege to quell the opposition protests.

CSC's delegation was a great boost to the opposition forces and to the whole anti-Pinochet population, and has greatly strengthened ties between the Campaign and the resistance, ties which were already becoming stronger, partly due to our sending regular bulletins of activity to the opposition organisations.

In 1982 CSC put a lot of work into a 'Direct Links' campaign. This may have been rather premature. Now, however, the situation is much better for this work, and many organisations in Chile are crying out for contact with and direct aid from organisations abroad - not only trade unions, but also women's groups, students, youth etc. This should therefore be a major focus of our work in 1985. To some extent, this has already begun.

Direct support from the Campaign nationally greatly increased in 1984, both in general terms and in specific appeals, eg. to help re-equip the Miners' Confederation office after it was raided, and to help the work of a radical midwife in the shanty towns. This should continue, with affiliates and local supporters encouraged to participate.

Protest campaigns against specific acts of repression have unfortunately been required with increasing frequency, and this need will no doubt persist. The positive results that have been achieved prove that this activity is worthwhile - for example, the release of Manuel Almeyda in March, and of the Miners' leaders in November, were largely due to exactly the sort of international protest that CSC organises.

2. Campaigning against British & U.S. policy

While British and U.S. governments have not changed their overall policies they have responded to changed situation, both for good and bad. U.S. policy in Central America has hardened, and Britain has continued to support it, although with some cautionary noises with respect to the threatened invasion of Nicaragua.

On Chile, the U.S. has been more openly critical of the regime's human rights record, and has called for a return to democracy, while continuing to oppose resolutions on Chile at the U.N. and backing new loans to Chile. The U.S. election results may mean attempts to lift the arms embargo on Chile. Britain has continued to sell arms, but a number of arms deals have been blocked. Britain has (passively !) supported EEC statements critical of the regime, and the Foreign Secretary has indicated that Britain might change its attitude at the U.N.

All forms of pressure - including delegations, letters, Parliamentary questions and motions, pickets, publicity and activity at Tory Party Conferences, should continue, and CSC should be prepared to prevent any attempt to lift the US embargo.

CSC has continued to have a strong input into Labour Party policy and at Labour Conferences, and this now includes the work with the PLP Latin America group. Work with the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties has been undertaken by CCHR.

In the event of future major arms deals, CSC should consider greater public activity in the relevant places, eg. Portsmouth.

3. Work with Trade Unions

In the last year CSC has strengthened its work with trade unions, and the delegation - financed by a wide range of union organisations - has opened the doors to still better contact.

Specific aims need to be mapped out for this. There should be an affiliation drive aimed at branches and districts, following up suggestions made at EC meetings. Direct links - starting at a national level - should be encouraged between British & Chilean unions, including the long-term aim of reciprocal delegations. Draft resolutions to this effect should be circulated to affiliated branches early in 1985.

Specific attention should be given to getting the video and other CSC material in use in TU education courses. Consideration should be given to involving non-affiliated unions, like NUT, in forms of solidarity work.

At least one speaking tour should be held when a suitable speaker is available. This could be combined with CSC activity at TU conferences.

4. Work with Chile Democratico and C.U.T.

The Chilean exile community has become steadily more active in response to the intensified struggle inside Chile. This has been seen in the large-scale events put on by CD, CUT and other groups in London; in the increased input of Chileans to local committees, resulting in a revival of activity; and in greater participation in CSC activities.

CSC welcomes this, and should continue to work to increase participation and joint work. The issue of the Right of Return will be a major area for joint work, with the need to campaign around those Chileans in Britain who have been named as prohibited from returning; and for greater governmental and agency assistance for those who do return.

CSC should also consider organising a joint speaking tour with a political figure from Chile, perhaps from the MDP, with Chile Democratico.

5. Student and Youth work

The student movement in Chile has revived dramatically in 1984, and needs contact and support from groups abroad. CSC has maintained close contact with NUS, and will work to establish direct links with the student movement at national and local level, as well as using the video to extend educational work amongst students here. Fund-raising events for youth and student groups in Chile should also be held in association with student organisations, the Youth Committee of

Chile Democratico, and the youth sections of British political parties.

6. Work with women.

During 1984 an ad-hoc womens' section of CSC was set up in London, and its work so far shows that it can involve women in the Campaign who would not otherwise be reached. The AGM should regularise its existence and render it national.

The group so far has been working on a pamphlet, to be produced in early 1985, and on up-dating the pack of information produced for the womens' conference. In 1985 it should develop direct links between women in Britain and Chile, and begin fund-raising for a delegation of women to visit Chile in November. The trade union delegation has shown the positive results of this kind of delegation. This should include a major social event in March.

If the delegation takes place, it will in turn result in a great deal of follow-up activity, to the end of 1985 and into 1986.

7. Cultural & Fundraising activity

In March or April, CSC should help organise a Latin American festival in London with GLC assistance; the grant for this has already been approved. In March a Quilapayun concert should be organised in London, and in October a limited tour with Inti Illimani, in cities where a profitable concert is probable.

CSC should also organise or encourage more local cultural events, with British-based Chilean groups, or with other visiting Chilean bands, as part of the efforts to stimulate greater local committee activity.

8. Materials

Chile Fights is now edited from the CSC office, and while this creates more work for the full-timers, it enables CF to fill some of the functions that the affiliates newsletter used to, and thus in turn enabling the newsletters to be slimmed down to update and action guide bulletins.

For organisational and economic reasons, it is difficult to promote bookshop sales, but experience in London shows that it can be sold well at meetings, demos etc. The publicity that the struggles in Chile are now receiving should make this easier still. Local committees should be encouraged to increase bulk orders for CF, and also to pursue bulk orders from trade unions etc.

In September 1985, the magazine will reach its Golden Anniversary. This should be a bumper issue, with some historical review, adverts from trade unions etc.

Pamphlets Nearly all the delegation reports, 'Chile Now', have been sold. The EC should consider producing a further general pamphlet during the year, as the situation develops.

The womens' section is producing an historical pamphlet about the women's movement in Chile.

Pamphlets should also be considered on: the Church in Chile; the debt crisis, and the economy; and the rebirth of the opposition since 1983.

Badge . A new badge should be produced early in the new year, perhaps on the State of Siege.

Poster There will be a need for a new poster during the summer. If a national demonstration is held, the poster could be such as could also carry the demo details.

T-Shirts The T-shirt produced in 1984 sold out, and shows the potential for this kind of product. Another design should be produced in 1985, with a sweat-shirt in the same design later in the year for the winter market.

Greetings Cards Continue to sell well, and another set should be started in June or July.

Other materials The video has shown the value of audiovisual resources. Consideration should be given to producing a slide/tape show, and a mounted exhibition.

January

Womens' Pamphlet
Fund-raiser for youth groups

February

New badge
Chile Fights No. 48
Work on mounted exhibition
AGM

March

Quilapayun Concert
Womens' fundraising concert with 'The Guest Stars'
Latin American Festival

April

Trade union affiliation drive
Speaking tour
T-shirt
One-day event on youth

May

Chile Fights No. 49
TU Conference activity
Report on health conditions in Chile

June

New poster
Start greetings cards work
TU Conferences

July

Conference on 'Challenges to monetarism'
Start work on demonstration mobilising and concerts
TU Conferences

August

Work on demo and concerts
Preparation for womens' delegation
Work on Chile Fights 'Golden Anniversary' 50th issue

September

Demonstration
Chile Fights Special 50th issue
Fringe event at TUC

October

Inti Illimani concerts
Fringe event at Labour Conference
Produce sweat shirt

November

Womens' delegation to Chile
Cards sales

December

Chile Fights No. 51
Report-back meetings with women from delegation

January

Report-back meetings

February

Chile Fights No. 52
AGM