Socialist Challenge FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION



Inside

The tasks of Socialist Challenge

Revolutionary press in **France**

The challenge of the Fourth International

How Socialist Challenge is produced

Meet the editors

Spot the difference

Socialist Challenge is coming on 9th June

BULDIES

Big responsibilities face revolutionary socialists in Britain

There is a shift to the right within national politics but at the same time there is a sizeable minority which is prepared to fight — a minority of tens of thousands of militant workers. It is these workers and their allies in the student and women's

the help of its readers, will

break out of the narrow

circle of far left politics

and, fighting for left unity

and, ultimately, a unified

revolutionary organisation,

will become the focus of a

Socialist Challenge is one of these footpaths, but the footprints we want on its are not simply those of the IMG. We launch it as a paper of struggle which will fight for a broad class struggle opposition in the trade unions; a paper to meet the needs of thousands of non-aligned militants who want to fight against racism, against sexism, against the Social Contract.

Narrow Circle

Secondly, we hope that

movements who signal a socialist solution to the crisis.

Most of these workers will support anti-capitalist policies but they aren't prepared to join any of the existing far left organisations. So we have to build footpaths which will lead us to bridges linked to the main body of the working class.

The far left in Britain is divided, fragmented and sectarianised. This trend has to be reversed if we are to face up to our responsibilities in the coming months and years.

will join us in the struggle to achieve these modest but very vital aims which serve the interests of the working class as a whole.

TARIQ ALI

Yourpaperneeds your money!

Revolutionary newspapers, even the best produced, work on a shoestring budget. We make no apology for that. We have only one source of income -and that is our readers.

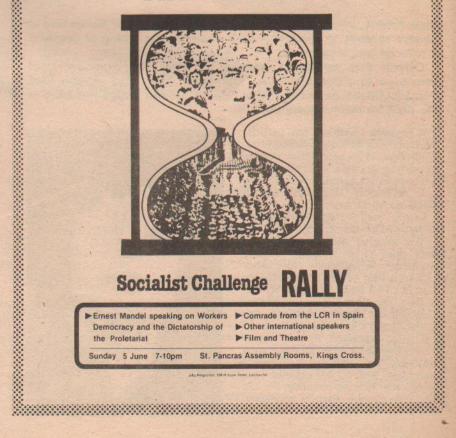
We have produced this sample issue of Socialist Challenge to give our readers an idea what the new paper will be like. And one of the things we hope to achieve with it - and again we make no apology - is to raise money for the paper.

If you want to support us the best thing you can do would be to take out a subscription;

there's a form on the back page. But the other way you can help is with a financial donation. The Red Weekly Fund Drive, whose main aim is the launching of the new paper, will be open until 9 June - the launch date for Socialist Challenge. We are more than half way to our £15,000 target, but that means a big speed-up if we are going to get there on time.

Back up your political support for the aims of Socialist Challenge with a contribution, however small. The address to send it to is 328/9 Upper Street, London, N.1.

THEIR DEMOCRACY AND OURS

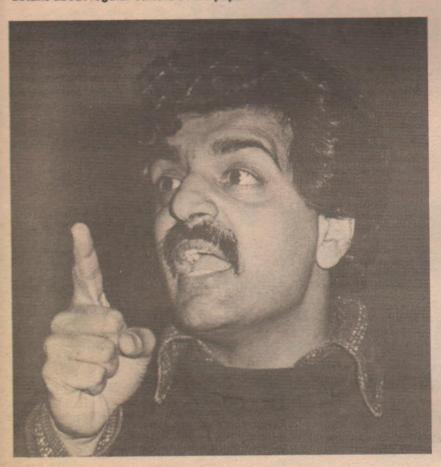


SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

MEET THE EDITORS

The editor of Socialist Challenge will be Tariq All, well known internationally as a representative of the Fourth International and in Britain as a campaigner against racism.

The International Marxist Group has tried to put representatives from its different areas of work onto the editorial board to provide allround knowledge and experience. Readers may be interested in some details about regular editors of the paper.



TARIQALIcametothis country from Pakistanin 1963. Already he had been active in opposition to the military dictatorship in his country. He was suspended from Oxford University for two months in 1965 for organising a violent protest against the South African ambassador. In 1967 he joined the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and in April 1968 the IMG.

Since 1969 he has been a member of the leadership of the IMG and the Fourth International and has travelled extensively to, among other places, Bolivia, North Vietnam, North Korea, China and Japan on behalf of the International. He is banned from the USA, France, Switzerland, Bolivia, Turkey, Hong Kong and

Tariq was editor of the Black Dwarf from 1968-70 and the Red Mole, the first IMG paper, from 1970-72. More recently he is best known for the leading part he has played in the anti-racist struggles.

He is the author of a number of books, including Pakistan: Military Dictatorship or Peoples Power and The Coming British



DODIE WEPPLER, a member of the Political Committee of the IMG, will be one of a team of editors responsible for home coverage in Socialist Challenge.

She was active in the Women's Liberation Movement in Canada where she joined the Fourth International in 1967. She studied women's history in Canada and labour history at Warwick University In Canada, she was part of a collective which

published a cartoon history of that country.

Dodie was one of the activists who first launched the Working Women's Charter Campaign in 1974 and was a member of the Steering Committee of the National Abortion Campaign until joining the Red Weekly staff recently. At present she is a member of the British planning committee for the international socialist-feminist conference in Paris in June.

She has been the national organiser of the IMG's work on women's oppression for three years and is editor of Socialist

GEOFFREY SHERIDAN is an extremely experienced journalist, having worked on a number of Fleet Street papers, and a

long-time member of the IMG.

He has worked as a freelance, contributing regularly to *The Guardian* and union newspapers. He has become known as a leader of the left wing in the National Union of Journalists London Freelance Branch, leading the fight against the right, led by the publicity-hungry Bernard

Geoff has been active in a number of political campaigns in the media. Most notably he played a major part in the campaign to reinstate two Portuguese journalists sacked by the BBC and in the Campaign Against Racism in the Media.

He has contributed regularly to Red

GEOFFREY BELL, who is responsible for news and Irish coverage, was born in Belfast and has written for the Irish Times, the New Statesman, The Observer and Time Out, as well as Red Weekly and Inprecor. He is author of The Protestants of Ulster, published by Pluto Press.

He is a former member of the Northern Ireland Labour Party (expelled), Irish Labour Party (expelled), Socialist Workers Movement (left Northern Ireland) and the International Socialists (now SWP — expelled). He took part in the 5 October Civil Rights march in Derry in 1968, which started it all again.

Geoff is a long-time member of the National Union of Inversities Currently.

National Union of Journalists. Currently he is on the executive committee of Camden Trades Council. In 1973 he led a 14 week strike against a magazine and book company over victimisation and union recognition. The strikers were taken to the infamous National Industrial Relations Court, at which point the union panicked and called off its support for the

G.M. COOKSON (Red Weekly)

RICHARD CARVER is the editor responsible for the international coverage of Socialist Challenge.

A former member of the Union of Post Office Workers and the Transport and General Workers Union, he was expelled from his college in 1974 for his leading role in a student occupation.

Since then he has worked on a detailed study of the Basque nationalist movement. He has had a number of articles on the subject published, including one in a recent issue of *International*, and hopes to have a book published in the not too distant future, 'time permitting'.

Richard has been active in the Spanish solidarity movement and an editor of Spain in Struggle. He has written for the Spanish language press of the Fourth International and extensively for Red Weekly on numerous different interTHE FIRST issue of Socialist C
Labour defeat at the County Co
important electoral inroads. In
Party has emerged as a credit
remains fragmented in the face
the Labour bureaucracy.

Despite a political setback
sections of workers have launch
standards. The Port Talbot elect
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Edito

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Organised socialist opposit

Socialist Challenge will mak socialist opposition to fight the in the forefront of the campirevolutionary left. Both these ta advance in the face of the seriou. One starting point for this tendencies within the trade uniresist the attacks which have be Socialist Teachers Alliance is group militants — including muthe Government's disastrous union's bureaucracy.

union's bureaucracy. Such initial moves need exte be structured on a national so extend across union boundarie such as campaigns and mov of socialist opposition would a leaders of the labour bureaucra

Far left divided

The unity of the revolutiona organised left wing. Today the splits occur daily on disagreer fundamental questions of programments. of a programmatic nature thi organisations. Confusion and

to suppression of internal organisations of the British left
The political campaign to la
to begin this discussion about This debate will continue in t thorough-going debate and conceptions in practice, any Unless the far left fragmentation political positions, it will dissipate the socialist Challenge will fight

and the vanguard workers. E organisation we will be trying revolutionary party in this cour or organisation will achieve si Socialist Challenge — based fi International but committed to provide an opportunity to achie

Interview with Alain Krivine

Socialist Challenge can learn

from Rouge

Alain Krivine, editor of the French Trotskyist daily paper Rouge was in London recently to speak at a rally where the launching of Socialist Challenge was announced.

Certain that we could learn a lot from the experiences of comrades in other countries, journalists from Red Weekly and Socialist Challenge asked Krivine how successful Rouge had been in the fight for revolutionary unity.

For Socialist Challenge one particular experience of Rouge was especially relevant, as the new weekly intends to open up its pages, as has Rouge, to organisations and individuals who do not necessarily share the overall positions of the paper.

Krivine outlined how Rouge had

progressed in this regard:

'We declared publicly that there was this "free tribune" facility available — especially for other organisations of the revolutionary left. We had many problems with it at first. The other groups told us that they did not want to reinforce our paper. It was a kind of sectarianism. Krivine explained that a major factor in helping to break down such attitudes was the recent electoral agreement with far left organisations which saw striking advances for the far left in the French municipal



'Our conception was to use the paper not just to present our line but to use it also as a tool of debate. The election campaign itself gave spur to this process. Now we have had this type of unity in action there is much more willingness to use the "free tribune" columns.'

There has also been an increase in the use of such columns by organisations associated with particular issues. As Krivine explained, 'we give pages to the women's groups, the ecologists, the soldiers groups and so on. Again at first there was some hesitation, they were suspicious of helping Rouge, but now we have such contributions almost every day'

Krivine stressed that what Rouge was attempting was part of a general struggle for revolutionary unity and

regroupment:
'There exists in France today, to the left of the Communist Party, hundreds of thousands of workers and students who perhaps in a very confused way are attracted by revolutionary socialist perspectives, but do not see themselves as being in the extreme left organisations. Most do not understand the divisions of the far left, and in a sense they are paralysed by them. It would be irresponsible of us not to make any attempt to try and heal these divi-

It was such thinking which led to the election agreement around the French municipal elections.

Krivine pointed to other successes for example the joint revolutionary left contingent in the French May Day demonstration was the first of its kind. There are also moves to have even closer cooperation with

Lutte Ouvriere. As Krivine explains: 'We have had talks about fusion with LO before, but they broke down. Now they have started again and we are making some real progress.

'There have of course been many difficulties, but it is probable that the next step will be four common pages in their weekly and in our daily. These will be written together and will have a joint editor. Again this

would be a major step forward.'
The experience of the French comrades cannot be directly translated to this country. That Rouge was a daily paper gave it an attractiveness which Socialist Challenge will not have. It is also notable that there was a greater willingness to participate in Rouge after major steps to unity in action had been taken.

But in Britain particular developments such as the rise of the National Front make similar attempts to forge unity in action not just a 'good idea' but a concrete need of the anti-fascist

struggle. Krivine and the new Socialist Challenge are at one on this:

'It would be irresponsible if we did not make an attempt to heal the divisions'.



SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

Editor: Tariq Ali, 328/9 Upper Street, Telephone 01-837 6954

enge appears in the wake of a massive cil polls. The National Front has made tland, the bourgeois Scottish National alternative to Labour. And the far left

ered by the working class, important bitter struggles in defence of their living ans have not been hesitant in stating that enge to the Social Contract. And on a acism and women's oppression — broad resist the reactionary offensive which

central goal the fight for an organised ects of the capitalist crisis. And it will be for a principled regroupment of the are vital if the working class struggle is to

the light to consider class strays is to unite advanced workers prepared to art and parcel of the capitalist crisis. The ep in that direction. It has been able to the ep of far left organisations — to tackle sies in the face of complacency by the

ng. A class struggle opposition needs to Firmly rooted in the unions, it would wuniting with other working class forces nts fighting on social issues — this kind ocreate a clear alternative to the present

ft is an essential component of such an itish far left is divided. Expulsions and s over tactical questions rather than on me. But even where there are differences es not automatically warrant separate rrect positions on this question have led ocracy, the political life within most the political education of their cadre.

Socialist Challenge has already helped a principled regroupment would entail. ages of Socialist Challenge. Without a opportunity to test different political sty regroupment is doomed to failure. overcome on the basis of clear principled as rapidly as it has been achieved

r a new relationship between the far left ampaigning for a unified revolutionary establish a correct basis for building a This is a task which we think no one group y through their own growth. A paper like on the politics of the IMG and the Fourth olicy of open and polemical debate — will hese political tasks.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The Economist and Newsweek have unleashed a campaign of calumnies against it. The American House of Representatives has had a thick dossier printed on its activities and labelled it the 'Trotskyite Terrorist International'. Its name is linked to actions in Latin America and Quebec, to striking workers in Pampiona and to school students' mobilisations in France.

In many cases the reports are rubbish pure and simple, but they reflect something deeper: an awareness within ruling class circles of the potential threat offered by a revolutionary organisation spanning 60 countries and all the continents.



While its leaders make no false claims regarding its real strength, the Fourth International is the largest revolutionary Marxist organisation in the world. Socialist Challenge will be an internationalist paper. That is not a matter of abstract faith, but an answer to the international Lature of the world capitalist system.

Our enemies will use chauvinism and perty patriotism as a way of dividing the working class. Perhaps the single greatest political weakness of the workers' movement is its readiness to respond to the capitalist politicians' calls of 'national interest' enthusiastically backed up by reformists of all shades.

Of course imperialism is rent with national divisions, but that is something we can only turn to our advantage if we are united internationally. When it comes down to it, though, our enemies are united in their determination to protect their own interests by stamping out the gains of the working class internationally. The operations of the multinational companies are a graphic illustration shifting their enterprises around the globe, always moving where the profit margins are highest and using national divisions as a weapon for holding down wages and sacking indiscriminately.

The Fourth International represents the continuous development of the international communist movement from the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. It arose out of the split in the Communist International after Lenin's death with the rise to power of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

The Fourth International was founded in 1938 on a programme which represented the highest development of Bolshevik politics. It stands for all those things which Stalinism has rejected - for the revolutionary road to socialism, based neither upon the single party bureaucratic state nor the 'parliamentary road' but upon socialist democracy,

In contrast to the idea that the construction of socialism can be completed in a single country, the Fourth International defends the theory of Permanent Revolution. This means both a recognition of the interrelationship of revolution inter-nationally and an understanding that capitalism can no longer solve the problems of democracy and economic development in the colonial and neo-colonial countries. Only a socialist revolution under the leadership of the working class can do that.

We combine defence of the workers' states in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China against the capitalist countries with a fight for full socialist democracy in those countries, a fight which can only be won by a political revolution, overthrowing the present parasitic bureaucracies.

Although the Fourth International

rejects the Stalinists' bureaucratic idea of the role of the party in a workers' state, we stand by the need for an international revolutionary party which can provide the common programme for socialist revolution. Within that international organisation, of which the present Fourth International is the nucleus, we fight to build sections in each country which can fight to take the leadership of the struggle for socialism in their own country. Those tasks can only be carried out with the fullest inner-party democracy, both within the national sections and international-

For many years a small number of people, isolated from the mass of the workers movement, guarded this political heritage from the twin threats of Stalinism and the attacks of fascism and repression. But in recent years things have changed. Particularly since 1968 the rise of working class struggles internationally, and the role which the FI has played within them, has been reflected in the numerical growth of the organisation and an expansion of its political influence.

This growth has found its expression in the expansion of our press. Each section has its own newspaper. In every major capitalist country there is a weekly paper of the FI. In France a year ago a daily paper was launched. It has successfully led the section to further political gains and presents the possibility of unifying

the revolutionary left in a single organi-

In Colombia a joint paper has been the way in which three Trotskyist organisations have brought about full unity under

the banner of the Fourth International. The real meaning of revolutionary internationalism was shown three years ago when a successful international campaign was mounted to launch a weekly Trotskyist paper in Portugal. Now a similar campaign is underway in Spain.

Already the massive growth of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria and its implantation in the working class has made it possible to move from a duplicated journal to a well-produced, printed newspaper with a circulation of some 30,000 and that is leaving aside the sales of newspapers in the languages of the oppressed

nationalities in Spain.

Socialist Challenge will be able to make use of all these advances. Already the daily paper in France provides us with invaluable news material. More recently we have managed to extend our network of foreign correspondents who will write directly for the new paper, providing an unrivalled source of news coverage and political analysis.

But above all the strength of Socialist Challange will be the political strength of the Fourth International and its programme. We stand or fall by that - and we are confident which it will be.



Producing a revolutionary paper

There must be an easier way the week goes on.

There must be an easier way of producing a revolutionary paper. That's the thought which flashes between pairs of lean and hungry eyes late every Monday night — or early Tuesday morning. But that is Red Weekly. When Socialist Challenge arrives it will be rather

But even Socialist Challenge's most enthusiastic champions would be hard put drastically to change the schedule of producing a weekly revolutionary paper.

The week starts on Wednesday (where else?) when the editor presents the provisional list of contents to the editorial board. The editorial board will be open to representatives of political organisations participating in the paper, and of other journals, as well as individuals and representatives of the International

Marxist Group and the paper's staff. After a sometimes prolonged discussion the basic shape of the week's paper is decided, a shape which will be maintained throughout the frequent revisions made by the staff as

Red Weekly tends to be produced week by week. In other words there is too little of an overall plan of the paper's contents in the long term. With Socialist Challenge we will be trying to plan over a longer period by commissioning feature articles fur-

ther in advance. Nevertheless the paper is to be a paper and not a news magazine - a sort of lefty Time or Newsweek the bulk of the paper will still have to by written week by week in response to events as they happen.

Frequent meetings of the editorial

staff revise the plan in the light of important developments and — unfortunately just as often - nonappearing or disappearing copy. By the weekend, however, the contents of each page are fairly finally decided. The copy deadline for letters has already passed, so that is usually the first page to be typset and passed on to the design staff.

If we are on schedule — an event so rare we savour every moment — a number of pages will be laid out before the weekend is over. More likely, everything will be finished in a frantic rush on Monday, our press

Monday also sees the emergence of the most important political story of the week. Our certainty on this point is the product of many years of front page lead articles rendered superfluous by the onward march of the class struggle! There must be an easier



SUBSCRIBE to Inpre-cor, fortnightly journal of information and analysis produced in four languages by the Fourth International. Recent issues have included Ernest Mandel on 'Eurocommunism', Livio Maltan on the crisis in Italy, Pierre Frank on the French elections, an open letter from Leonid Plyushch, as well as features on Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, China, East Timor, India, Middle East, Namibia, Pakistan, Portugal; ysis produced in four Pakistan, Portugal; Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Zaire and the internat-ional women's movement. Subscriptions are only £7 for a year [25 issues] or £3.75 for six months. Order now from: Inprecor, clo Relgocrest, 32819 Upper Street, London N1.

Socialist Challenge



Port Talbot strike committee. Shop steward Tommy Lyons has said 'We are able to contribute to the closer working of the left groups. I was discussing with some of the people ...and they were telling me about Socialist Challenge. He says he will be calling for support for the paper —in a personal capacity.

Socialist Challenge

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Please send me a 10-issue trial sub- scription [cost of £1 includes postage].	
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Please send me a 1 year subscription [cost of £5 includes postage].	
Please send me copies [state number] of Socialist Challenge each week for sale.	
I enclose a donation of £ [state amount].	
I am willing to donate £ each month [state amount] to the Socialist Challenge Fighting Fund.	
Total amount enclosed: £	
[block caps] NAME ADDRESS	

Red Weekly Socialist Challenge

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

'This Socialist Challenge sounds all very fine', you are probably saying, 'but won't it just be a revamped Red Weekly? Where's the difference?'.

The first answer to that question is before your very eyes. This sample issue should show you that the new paper will look different. Red Weekly design has improved dramatically in recent months — everyone is agreed on that — but it is still a mish-mash of various styles of design, reflecting different stages of the paper's evolution.

unified revolutionary org-

anisation in Britain. Red

Weekly has long argued

against the divisions within

the British left, explaining

that our agreement on poli-

tical principles and pro-

In design as in journalism, we have decided to wipe the slate clean and start with a new and unified idea of what the paper should look like.

That isn't the most important thing. The big problem facing Socialist Challenge is to build on those aspects of Red Weekly which we think are worth keeping — its union coverage and its international coverage, for example — while introducing a series of important changes.

For example, we aim to use the paper to help build an opposition to the betrayals of the labour leaders. That means a fight for the policies of class struggle rather than class collaboration.

Socialist Challenge will fight for the policies which it thinks are needed to build such an opposition.

such an opposition.

So far no difference.

But we will do more than that. We will provide a forum for workers in struggle, for campaigns against racism and for women's rights and so on. In other words we will open our pages to any individual or group which is fighting for that class struggle opposition, whether or not they agree with the overall politics of the paper.

More letters

This also means that Red Weekly's letters column, which has long tried to be a space for frank debate on the left, will be expanded. We want to make the letters pages the place in the paper that everyone turns to.

This sort of editorial policy isn't confined to the home pages, either. International solidarity campaigns and emigré political organisations can also be given space in the paper, particularly those who have no press of their own.

The main strength of Red Weekly's international coverage - the result of being part of an international organisation - will be extended. There will be more space for up to the minute reports from foreign correspondents and thorough analysis of events in the international class struggle. We'll be paying particular attention to those areas such as Eastern Europe where we feel that we are able to offer a service to the whole of the revolutionary left in Britain.

The other main task which Socialist Challenge has set itself is the fight for a

Weekly's Battle of Ideas supplement will continue as a regular bi-monthly feature. More than that, we are prepared to open our editorial board to any revoutionary organisation which is genuinely committed to these same aims.

So you can see that Socials.

So you can see that Socialist Challenge will be produced in a rather different way — and will look rather different — from Red Weekly.

There will be other changes too.

We want to set up a network of local correspondents for the paper, people who will be responsible for providing coverage of evwe have correspondents from all the major towns and cities.

But a paper can't have too many correspondents. If you think you can put pen to paper — or even if you're not sure you can — keep us informed of events going on in your area.

We need other sorts of contributions too. If you take photographs, or draw or have any other skills which would improve the paper, your help would be welcome.

Of course the big difference which you can't fail to notice is that the new paper will have 16 pages. This will allow us to fill in a lot of the gaps in the old Red Weekly.

Culture

Culture — television, film, theatre and book reviews — have all been neglected in the past. A new series of new regular columns will aim to set that right. And the history of the labour and socialist movement — a rich source of experience for our movement today, which has tended to be ignored — will provide further regular features of Socialist Challenge.

Above all, Socialist Challenge will be an open forum. Not at the expense of its politics of course. We make no bones about what the political line of the paper will be; it will reflect the politics of the Fourth International and its British section.

In that respect it will follow in the tradition of Red Weekly. Red Weekly has seen that the opportunities to build a unified revolutionary organisation and a class struggle opposition in the labour movement are greater than ever before. But Red Weekly also understands that within its own confines it can't carry out all the steps needed to take advantage of those opportunities.

Socialist Challenge will be able to, building on the progress made by Red Weekly.

And that is the only difference.



gramme mean that there is no real obstacle to revolutionary unity.

But more than that is needed. The real differences that do exist must be discussed publicly, not to score sectarian points, but to ents all over the country. This will be the backbone of Socialist Challenge's news coverage.

Through the Fourth International Red Weekly has begun to stabilise a network of foreign corresp-

ondents. But, with some

exceptions, we have not

managed the same thing in

our own country. As the

launching of the paper ap-

proaches we have been

making efforts to put this

situation to rights. Already

unity.

To do this Socialist Challenge will open its columns

establish the nature of our

differences. We are quite

clear that only a clear discussion of what divides

us can lay the basis for

OUT NOW! A new IMG pamphlet which pinpoints the nature of the crisis, exposes the bankruptcy of the capitalist system which produced it, and puts forward a revolutionary socialist programme for action.

This pamphlet will be the basis for an open debate on the way forward in the first eight issues of Socialist Challenge. Price 25p plus 10p p&p. Five or more copies post free [cash with order]. All orders to Relgocrest, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.

