

THE GUARDIAN SUSTAINER

SEPTEMBER
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monthly
publication for
members of the
Guardian
Sustainer
program

FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR:

Activity underway to improve finances

By JACK A. SMITH

There hasn't been so much activity around the Guardian in years.

All the longer-range plans we developed months ago in response to the blow of losing Guardian Tours and some political initiatives planned some time ago have reached the stage of execution and our office is beginning to resemble a mini mad house.

•Guardian Clubs was launched publicly in the Sept. 7 Guardian. The paper is being mailed as I write this so we don't know what the reader response will be, though we anticipate far more applications for Club membership than we can accept at this point.

Although principally a political move, the Club system will also help us to stabilize finances and increase circulation.

Over the summer we sought out people to take leadership of Clubs in several cities and have done some organizational work. As soon as responses come in from the readers we'll start the process of selecting members in the five designated cities and for the other five cities—not determined yet—which will have Clubs within the next year.

Executive editor Irwin Silber will be going on the road in a few weeks to visit Club cities and help them get organized, meeting with Guardian Bureau people, Sustainers and some applicants for membership.

We'd like to remind Sustainers that they will generally receive priority for Club membership—so if you want to join let us know immediately because the selection process is beginning soon and we're keeping the Clubs small at first.

•We've begun a new campaign to expand the Sustainer system with an advertisement in the same Sept. 7 issue of the paper. Our goal is to increase by 150 new members in the period ahead. The Sustainer system remains our most important means of raising money to make up the difference between income and costs. The figure of 150 new members represents the rock bottom of what we need to remain financially solvent so we've got to hit the mark. Needless to say we need every existing Sustainer to remain in the system for the coming year. If you know any Guardian readers who are not

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Burchett to tour U.S. next month

Plans for the first U.S. speaking tour of Guardian correspondent Wilfred Burchett are nearing completion.

The tour, scheduled for Oct. 21—Nov. 30, is being organized by the Guardian in conjunction with the beginning of its 30th continuous year of publication.

Few, if any, people in the world today can speak on international affairs with the authority and firsthand knowledge of Wilfred Burchett. An Australian, Burchett began his career during the 1930s covering the China-Japanese war. He was the first Western journalist in Hiroshima after the A-bomb attack; he was stationed in North Korea during much of the Korean war; he met Ho Chi Minh during the battle of Dien Bien Phu; was stationed subsequently in the USSR, Cambodia, Algeria and in many other countries until the early 1960s, when he was the first journalist to report from the liberated zones of South Vietnam.

Burchett is the biographer of Cambodia's Norodom Sihanouk and Ho Chi Minh and his conversations with Chou En-lai have provided insights into the former Chinese leader. In more recent years, Burchett has reported from China, reunified Vietnam, Portugal, the Middle East, Mozambique, Angola, Japan, Cuba, North Korea and Laos. Due to his recent in-depth reporting from southern Africa, he is specially prepared to discuss that region.

In addition to large public talks, we are planning smaller, less formal meetings, media interviews and fund-raising activities. We also hope to give as many Guardian readers and Sustainers as possible a chance to personally meet Burchett and are arranging gatherings for this purpose.

The speaking arrangements revolve around major public engagements in five cities: New York, Oct. 21 and Nov. 25-27; Chicago, Oct. 28; San Francisco, Nov. 4;



Wilfred Burchett in liberated zone of Vietnam during war.

Los Angeles, Nov. 11, and Boston, Nov. 18. He will be speaking in a number of other cities between these dates. There is still some room for additional speaking engagements; if you are interested in having Burchett speak in your area, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

Many Sustainers have been particularly helpful in arranging speaking engagements at colleges and universities, which are able to offer Burchett substantial honorariums he certainly deserves. If you can help in this area, please let us hear from you. We have ample material we can send which outlines Burchett's background and credentials.

Burchett is quite probably the most traveled, best known and widely published foreign correspondent in the English language active today. The Guardian is proud to sponsor his tour, as we are proud to have him as a staff correspondent. We hope you are able to attend one of his talks—and know you won't be disappointed.

Financial activity underway

(Continued from page 1)

Sustainers, we'd appreciate it if you'd work on them to join up.

•The Guardian has also just launched a major circulation campaign. You've seen the "Each One Reach One" ads, which will continue several more weeks.

The more we investigated the problem of building circulation the more it became evident we have to rely almost exclusively on ourselves and our friends to accomplish the task. Most left bookshops which are controlled by one political faction or another have banned the paper because it is just too independent for their liking. Most commercial distributors won't touch the Guardian and we can't afford the extra costs involved in widescale distribution by the few who will. (To get very broad distribution you have to pay the outfit for every unsold paper—which can be a lot in the beginning stages—and we just don't have that kind of money.) And a serious advertising campaign in other papers is out of the question for money reasons as well.

Since we can't engage in the kind of distribution and promotion most papers use, we're appealing to the readers to get us new subs. In addition, we saved several thousand dollars to invest in a widespread mailing to thousands of people who read other progressive papers. The mailing is scheduled to go out this month. Compared to the high-capital direct mail campaigns conducted by some other papers lately, ours is a pittance—but we think the rate of new subscriptions will be relatively high on our mailing because we've got such a good paper.

Between the "Each One Reach One" appeal, the circulation mailing and the potential for gains represented by Guardian Clubs, we are hopeful of achieving substantial circulation growth in the coming year.

•Guardian Typesetting is shifting into gear as well. Next to Sustainers, this small typesetting business is our biggest potential moneymaker. We have just leased a new computer-typesetting system considerably more advanced than our existing machinery, which after five years of constant use is

beginning to break down. This represents another considerable investment for us but we expect the more versatile and dependable system will help us to build the typesetting business. This, too, is just getting underway in September.

•Also in the final preparation stages is Wilfred Burchett's nationwide tour, scheduled for late October to late November. Response on this has been good and the tour should be of great help to the Guardian.

•Around the same time as Burchett's tour, we plan to have several celebrations of the Guardian's 30th anniversary year, which begins in October. The paper was founded that month 29 years ago in 1948. There will be a meeting in New York City and probably in a number of other cities as well. We're also organizing some fund-raising house parties.

•Last but not least, our holiday Marketplace is in final preparation stages as well. We plan to have a 4-page Marketplace ad in the paper in late October. A number of fine holiday gift items will be included and we hope that you will shop with us this year because it represents additional cash for us.

Incidentally, in the midst of all these activities, our small staff is also finding the time to keep publishing and in fact to introduce some improvements over the months.

As you can see, it takes a heck of a lot more than printing ink to put out a paper, at least our kind of paper. The scramble for financial resources absorbs an incredible amount of our time and amounts to one continual headache. But somehow it's worked over the years and through activities like these we've been able to pay the bills.

There's one difference this time around, however. While dealing with the immediate emergencies we're also trying to devise long-term solutions. Many of the operations we're putting into effect are strategic as well as tactical. If the new projects take hold they will not only resolve the problems of the moment but will go a long way toward creating a more stable situation in the future as well. The success of Guardian Clubs, an expanding Sustainer system, advances in circulation, and achievements in Typesetting, the Marketplace and fundraising will not only get us through the next period but should lay the foundation for a more secure and rational set-up in years to come so that less effort will have to go into survival and more into developing the Guardian into a better paper and into the political work that we think the times require.

So, even though it's a mini mad house around here at this point, we're looking toward the future with a certain optimism and confidence that long-range success may be in the cards after all. But we should all keep our fingers crossed.

And don't forget, northeastern readers, we hope to see you at our picnic Sept. 18.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR *Sustainers' view*

By IRWIN SILBER

By now most of you will probably have read the full details of the plan for Guardian Clubs (Sept. 7 issue).

This is a good example of some of the "intangible" contributions that Guardian Sustainers make. Long before we put the idea of Guardian Clubs forward in the pages of the Guardian itself, we discussed it with Sustainers in the pages of this monthly newsletter. For several months running, Jack A. Smith and myself explored with you various ideas about Clubs.

In turn, many of you wrote in, raising important questions and discussing at greater length several of the points we had raised. Some of these comments were printed. Many others for which we did not have room were read carefully.

When this process had been underway for a while, it was possible to draw some conclusions. Many Sustainers—the overwhelming majority of those who had written in—liked the idea. Some questioned the organizational form, others the name. Many important questions were raised. But it was clear that a consensus in favor of the idea had emerged.

As a result, we put the plan forward in a very general way in the latter section of the Guardian's party-building supplement. At the same time, in the pages of the Sustainer newsletter, we expanded on some of the concrete organizational and programmatic

Guardian launches

Under the slogan "Each one reach one," the Guardian is launching a major circulation drive.

We are approaching it on several different levels—everything from one-to-one contact to mass mailings. The backbone of the campaign, however, will be our many proven supporters—and of course we are relying on you to help us out.

We've got an excellent paper and we know that with the right kind of promotional work, we can easily double our present circulation.

At the most basic level, we hope to involve all Guardian readers, especially Sustainers, in direct subscription sales of the Guardian. If every Sustainer sells just one subscription to a friend, relative, neighbor or coworker, we will have made a good start in achieving our goal. (Why stop at one? Sell as many as you can.) It will be easier for some than others, but the effort will help the Guardian a great deal. So give it a try: "Each one reach one!"

We also hope to develop a system of local circulation agents who will distribute the paper through commercial outlets as well as

PUT US IN JAIL

The Guardian loses money every time it sends a subscription to a prisoner—and we have many inmate-readers. Help us to continue sending our cut-rate subs to prisoners by making a donation to our special inmate subscription fund. Send a note along with your check earmarking your donation for this purpose. Guardian, 33 W. 17 St., New York, N.Y.

DR:

Letters helped shape Clubs plan

Ideas. Over the course of the summer, many others wrote in—both Sustainers and other readers. These letters were an invaluable contribution in helping us to develop both the 10 points of unity for the Clubs and some of the precise organizational concepts.

In addition, we were encouraged to think along these lines in the first place by the enthusiastic response to the Guardian Sustainer program early this year.

So all in all, Guardian Sustainers have played an important part in the development of the general plan for Guardian Clubs. This plan, even though its immediate goals are relatively modest, is one of the most ambitious undertakings in our history. For the very first time, we are trying to build a political-membership organization closely associated with this newspaper.

Obviously a functioning network of Guardian Clubs across the country can make an inestimable contribution to the continued survival and expansion of our paper. They can improve our news-gathering efforts, engage in fundraising and stimulate increases in our circulation.

LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS

But I am also especially interested in the long-range political implications of Guardian Clubs. They may well turn out to be an intermediate form in the party-building process. For one thing, they will help strengthen the national outlook of our

movement by developing coordinated efforts in both theoretical and practical work. Through their activity, many good cadre will get theoretical and organizational experience. And we believe that the general perspective represented by the Guardian's political line can help all Marxist-Leninists unite at a higher level.

Guardian Clubs can't do everything. We don't expect them to. They are not going to be democratic centralist organizations. They will not be able to develop a serious program of work within the trade unions—certainly not at first. But there are a number of areas of real political strength in the Guardian that will be of great help to the Clubs. For one thing, the Guardian's long history of international solidarity—backed up with in-depth, factual and analytical reporting—can help make the Clubs into a force for a genuine international spirit in our movement. For another, many of the Guardian's contributions in the realm of theory can help in overcoming the backwardness of our movement when it comes to theoretical questions.

In any event, these will be exciting days for us. We feel very positive about Guardian Clubs. We know that there are many people who want such an organizational form for themselves.

Needless to say, we hope that as many Guardian Sustainers as possible will want to become active members of Guardian Clubs.

campaign to build circulation

MESSAGE TO EVERY GUARDIAN READER:

EACH ONE REACH ONE

Building the Guardian is up to you!

Getting the Guardian out to those who need it is no easy job. Commercial distributors don't have much interest in a serious left-wing newspaper. Nor do we have a group of wealthy backers to help us bankroll a high-powered promotion campaign. In fact, what you like about the Guardian—our independent stands on the "controversial" questions before our movement—has sometimes cost us the support of important individuals and organizations.

In every crisis ever faced by the Guardian, our most secure base of support has come from you—the readers of the Guardian.

When our principled stand around Angola and related questions led to the cancellation of our trips to China—and a considerable loss of much needed income for us—Guardian readers responded in unprecedented fashion. You sent contributions and hundreds of you signed up in the Guardian Sustainer program.

So now we turn to you once again. The overwhelming need of the moment—for the Guardian and for the political line it expresses—

From our Sept. 7 issue.

street sales. This includes convincing local bookstores to carry the paper, distributing posters and other promotional material, as well as directly distributing the paper. The Guardian Clubs will help get this project off the ground, but we also encourage as many of our readers as possible to take part. If you're interested, be sure and send in the enclosed card.

In addition, we want to increase free distribution of the paper at local events—particularly activities supporting African liberation movements. Our coverage of Africa is unsurpassed in this country, but far too many anti-imperialists aren't even aware the paper exists.

The third aspect of our circulation campaign is a mass mailing subscription appeal. The mailing will go to subscribers of various left and progressive publications and we are confident that our efforts will produce substantial results.

Our plans are ambitious, but with the help of our readers and especially you, the Sustainers, we know we'll succeed.

Looking forward to U.S. visit, Burchett writes

By WILFRED BURCHETT
Guardian Staff Correspondent

Paris

The speaking tour the Guardian is arranging for me in late October and November is going to be one of my roughest assignments.

I've spoken in many places before, of course, but never on a sustained, month-long tour.

Since I'm familiar with most of the topics that will come up I won't have to spend too much time on homework—so it might be less arduous than it appears.

It is my expectation that Guardian Sustainers who live within reasonable distance of my speaking engagements will turn out in force. It will be good to see some extra friendly faces.

Over the last month I've been traveling in Europe doing some investigation of Eurocommunism. My series of articles on this should be in print by the time you read this.

It's an extraordinary phenomenon of historic importance and it has to be given serious attention, especially the aspect of each party developing independently on the basis of the concrete conditions they face. Errors will no doubt be made in the process and it will take some time to iron out these problems.

I'll probably be talking about Eurocommunism at some point during my tour as well as a variety of other subjects, undoubtedly southern Africa, Indochina, China and Portugal, among others.

I note the Guardian is launching a number of new campaigns this fall from building the Sustainer system to the Clubs. I hope each of you will get behind these programs and lend whatever support you can.

There's no other paper quite like our Guardian in the U.S. and anything that will help it to survive and grow is a good thing. Being oriented toward foreign news myself, I find the Guardian's international section to be without peer among North American papers and the loss or diminution of that alone would be a significant setback for the cause of social progress. From what I understand, if the various campaigns are successful the Guardian plans to make some qualitative improvements in this area, which will just make a good thing better.

See you next month.

The Guardian Sustainer is published monthly for members of the Sustainer program of the Guardian Independent, radical newsweekly. All correspondence should be addressed to The Guardian Sustainer, 33 West 17th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

Letters from our Sustainers

This spot in The Guardian Sustainers will be reserved for your letters every month. Try to keep them as brief as possible. All letters will be printed with the author's initials but you must send in the communication with your full name.

AFRICA

A.L., New York City: The Guardian's Africa coverage has been unsurpassed—and here's a little extra money this month. I know it can't be cheap to get weekly, on-the-spot news out of Luanda, Angola. But I would sure hate for the U.S. to lose its best source on Africa just because there was a shortage of money.

CLUBS-1

J.H., Nashville, Tenn.: It is logical that Nashville would not be one of the 10 initial Guardian Clubs. However, there must be hundreds, perhaps thousands of people like myself who nevertheless would like to be a closer part of the party-building process.

Has anyone thought of creating an "at-large" Club with which scattered folks like myself might affiliate?

CLUBS-2

M.H., Somerville, Mass.: I hope it is not too late to express an interest in joining the Boston Guardian Club.... I agree with the 10 principles of unity in the July-August Sustainers newsletter, and with the 29 principles of the party-building supplement. It's amazing how clearly and cogently political positions can be stated when they are not required to conform to a political line whose motivations are concealed and perhaps a little cynical....

However, point eight (of the 10) is extremely vague; it is perhaps on the class nature of the Soviet Union that the U.S. left is (ideologically) most evidently divided, and it is essential to the future unity of our movement that a scientific understanding of this question be attained. I admire the Guardian's refusal to apply familiar but inappropriate concepts to the class analysis of the Soviet Union, but the Guardian has made only a superficial analysis of this very sticky question....

Volunteers needed!

Got a new fall schedule? Make the Guardian a part of it. We depend on supporters who volunteer a few hours every week to assist with proofreading and a variety of other tasks. People are friendly, coffee is plentiful and there's free pizza on Tuesday nights. For more information: Donna at 212-691-0404.

CLUBS-3

E.B., Cambridge, Mass.: It is essential that there be people in the Clubs who are actively involved in organizing work that is not solely Club-oriented. To insure that the Clubs take the most revolutionary path, it is crucial that there be a balance between members who have a great deal of time and energy to devote to the Clubs, and members for whom work in the Clubs may be secondary, but whose presence is important to maintain direct ties with various struggles....

One fear I have heard centers around the possible incorrect timing of this step (premature) or "jumping on the party-building bandwagon." On the contrary, I don't think we can afford not to act at this time, to offer a concrete organizational form in which Marxist-Leninists can come together to discuss and strategize for the future. I believe the time is right to pull together the most advanced and experienced Marxist-Leninists in the U.S. and create a forum for sharing skills which will enable the Guardian's political line to exert more clear and correct influence on the left.

I would very much welcome the opportunity to devote the time and energy to furthering the influence of the Guardian's political line through membership in the Boston Club.

CLUBS-4

J.B., St. Paul, Minn.: The crucial test of the Guardian Clubs will be their ability to move firmly into concrete work on local issues and to develop as leaders.

Although the Guardian has given good leadership on international matters, your initiative on party-building cannot be successful until you have proven yourselves successful on crucial national issues as well (a trade union strategy and the building of a multiracial party I would judge to be essential). The most convincing response to those critics who emphasize practice would be successful practice by the Guardian Clubs.

CLUBS-5

M.M., Cambridge, Mass.: I'm interested in joining the Boston Guardian Club and to help in its development. A couple of questions I have about the Clubs are: (1) what will be the organizational apparatus for input into decision-making in the early stages of the Clubs and (2) what will be the Clubs' relationship to mass work. That is, just how will Club members participate, in what kinds of combinations or concentrations, and under what circumstances would we initiate a campaign?

Hope to see you at Guardian Picnic

The Guardian Annual Picnic is fast approaching—Sunday, Sept. 18—and we're looking forward to having our friends join us for a day in the country.

The picnic will be held at nearby Arrow Park in Monroe, N.Y., whose 600 acres provide a perfect place for the picnic's all-important recreational activities—swimming, boating and fishing in a 52-acre lake, hiking in the woods, sports and just plain relaxing. In addition, we're planning a cultural/political program, featuring various workshops, some good political singing, and reports on the Guardian as it enters its 30th year of publication.

In general, the picnic will be an excellent opportunity to get to know the Guardian staff and meet fellow readers and Sustainers.

The simultaneous workshops will be on: the attacks on democratic rights; national liberation struggles and the role of U.S. support movements; the trade union movement; the international communist movement, and party-building and Guardian Clubs.

The cultural program features long-time people's singer Barbara Dane, and "Countrydiction," a "political bluegrass" band from Boston that includes several members of our own Boston Bureau.

If you live in the New York area, we look forward to meeting you. It's a casual and low-key affair, so relax for the day and come on along.

Picnic tickets are \$4 for adults and \$1 for children. Roundtrip bus tickets are available at \$6 a person. The buses are filling up fast, so call quick for a reservation. For more information: 212-691-0404.

GAY OPPRESSION

M.M., Columbus, Ohio: Enclosed is my first Sustainers check. The decision to become a Sustainers was a difficult one, because of your failure to deal with the so-called "gay question." It is not merely a question of "rights" and the Guardian must develop an analysis of the material base of the oppression of homosexuals. One place to start must be a recognition of the differences between lesbians and homosexual men: differences in the form and degree of oppression and in the revolutionary potential of each group. While I am upset with your lack of response to this question so far, the Guardian's record of struggle on other questions is good enough that I am reasonably certain you will take it up soon.