

Chile Week - A brief report on CSC activities

September 3 - 11th

Our activities during this week can be divided into three sections:-

1. The Royal Festival Hall concert and the London Festival that followed;
2. The Inti Illimani concert tour outside London;
3. The National Demonstration.

September 3rd. All-day exhibition in Royal Festival Hall, mounted by Latin American campaigns, human rights groups and exile organisations. Photos, posters, paintings, slides, patchworks, crafts, stalls etc. Hundreds of people attend; lively atmosphere.

Afternoon Concert in Purcell Room. Three hundred people hear Daniel Viglietti, Frankie Armstrong, Roy Bailey and Leon Rosselson, and the Co-operation Singers.

Evening Concert in Royal Festival Hall. Over 2,500 people pack out the RFH to hear Inti Illimani, Daniel Viglietti, John Williams, plus Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Joe Melia and Sue Fleetwood, in an amazing concert. Neil Kinnock MP gave collection speech. Collection raised about £900; in addition, vast quantities of records, cassettes and other materials sold on CSC stalls. Over 1,300 programmes sold at 50p.

September 4th Bristol 1,700 people at Inti Illimani/Frankie Armstrong concert in Colston Hall. Ron Nethercott of Regional T&GWU gave speech, and the T&G gave a great deal of support in publicity and logistics.

London 'VIVA' organised by CCHR, easily sold out the 600 seat Bloomsbury Theatre. There was an enthusiastic response to Holly Near, Nola Rae and the Cuban and English dancers.

September 6th Edinburgh 750 seat hall sold out two weeks before for 10.30pm performance by Inti Illimani. Speech by Ron Brown MP.

London -Seminar on military co-operation between Latin American dictators and USA, South Africa and Israel attracts 50 people in County Hall.

September 7th Leeds City Hall packed out by over 2,000 people to hear Holly Near and Inti Illimani. Speech given by Derek Fatchett MP.

London Human Rights seminar organised by CCHR and El Salvador Committee for Human Rights attracts 150 people.

September 8th Cambridge 750 people pack the Guildhall to hear Inti Illimani and Holly Near in a charged atmosphere - coinciding with the Day of Protest in Chile, and the last concert of the tour. Councillor Janet Jones, chair of local CSC, spoke.

September 9th London, Manning Hall full with over 600 people for Caribbean Evening organised by Chile Cultural Centre. Steel bands, poetry, New Model

September 10th London, Imperial College. All-day festival called 'Latin American culture resists', with films including premier of Bolivian film; videos, exhibitions, seminars, Chilean groups and singers, and an evening concert with El Salvador group Yolocamba Ita. is full.

PLUS September 3-9th : 'Cinema of Combat' at National Film Theatre; a week of films about and from the progressive Latin American film schools; includes full showing of 'The Battle of Chile'. Most events sold out.

PLUS : Launch of Joan Jara's new book, 'VICTOR - An Unfinished Song', at RFH concert, with book signings there and at all Inti Illimani concerts. (In addition, the Latin American Bureau published a new book 'The Pinochet Decade' on September 1st)

SEPTEMBER 11th - NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Despite the cold, wet weather, a crowd of perhaps 7,000 gathered from all parts of the country for a lively, colourful demonstration from Clerkenwell Green to Trafalgar Square. Speeches from Judith Hart MP, Mireya Baltra from Chile, Salvador Moncada of El Salvador, collection speech by Jeremy Corbyn, MP, Gordon McLennan and Ken Livingstone. Music by Yolocamba Ita. New hanging banner by John Dugger hanging on plinth, and new marching banner leading the column. Good coverage on BBC TV news, BBC radio, LBC. Press reports in Guardian, Times, Morning Star. Collection of probably £800 (not yet completely counted). PTO

Speaking Tour Beginning the week before and continuing through until 12th, CSC organised a visit by former Popular Unity Minister of Labour Mireya Baltra (the only woman minister). She had interviews with Tribune, the Morning Star, the Financial Times and New Worker, and there was an article about her in the Guardian. She spoke at 'VIVA', to a large public meeting in Sheffield, and at the CSC fringe meeting at the TUC (see below). She met with Chileans in London, took part in seminars in 10th September Festival, and of course made the keynote speech at the demonstration.

TUC Fringe Meeting The most successful of the international fringe meetings was CSC's. Fifty people heard Mireya Baltra talk on the situation of the Labour Movement in Chile; Salvador Moncada on the state of the struggle in El Salvador; Jeremy Corbyn MP on Nicaragua; and Brian Nicholson on the solidarity movement in Britain. The meeting was chaired Alex Kitson. The collection raised over £30.

We estimate that the total audience at all the cultural events of the week amounted to over 11,000 people in addition to the turn-out on the demonstration. The final financial result is not yet known but there is no doubt that we will have made thousands of pounds on the week, and that most of the other participating groups will also have made profits.