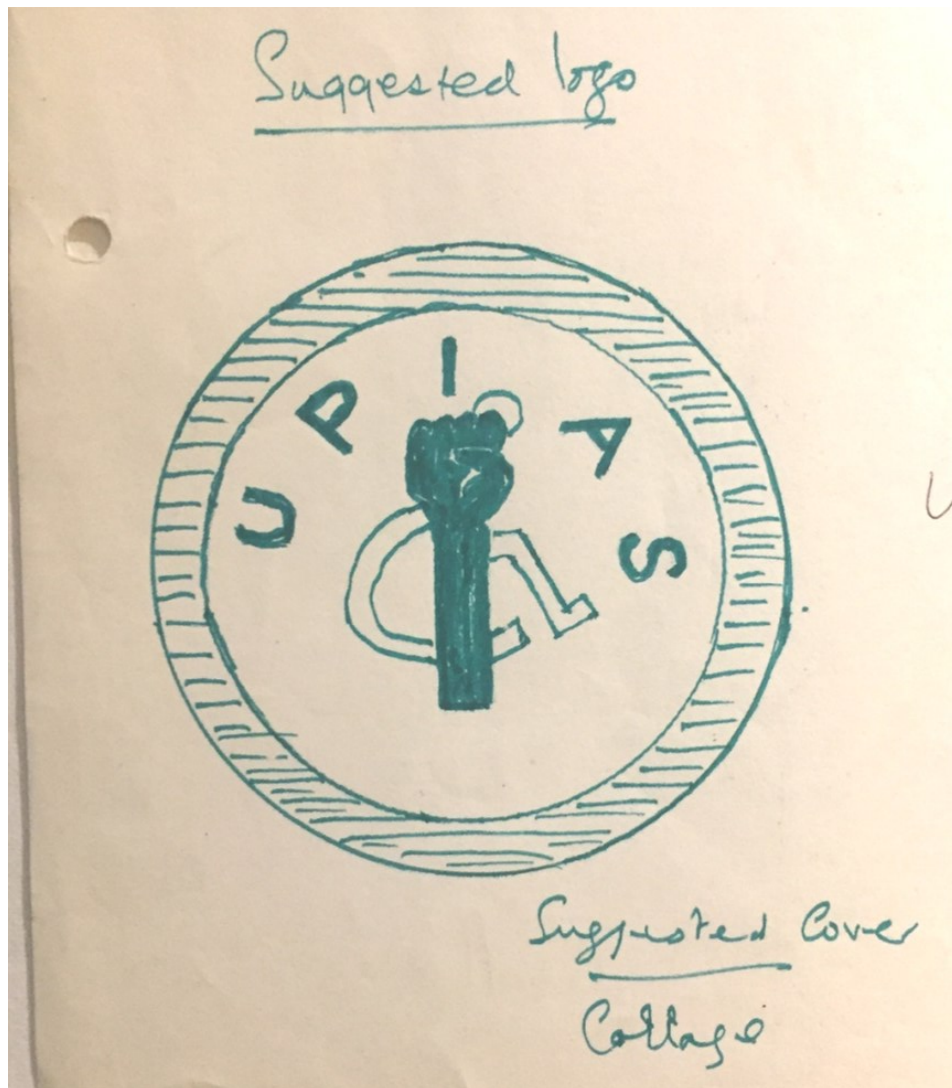


UPIAS

**The Union of Physically Impaired
Against Segregation (1972-1990)**

A public record from private files



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TBR Imprint

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~~ For our fallen comrades ~~

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Acknowledgements

During 2018 it became increasingly important to secure the future preservation of many of the UPIAS papers and files that had been created nearly 50 years ago.

I was honoured to be asked to help in this process of adding a new collection to the GMCDP archive. In sorting and cataloguing these papers I felt it was important to ethically share as much as possible of the knowledge and learning gained without breaching any lifetime personal confidences. In doing this I am totally indebted to a small group of people who were deeply involved in UPIAS over its lifetime and who have kindly commented on drafts and cleared this text for publication. Thank you.

The positive role of staff at Archives-Plus in Manchester City Council's Central Library continues to be essential to the success of this collection. I have to say that I have found Archives-Plus's practices to be those of the best ethically-governed archive in Britain in my experience.

I would also recommend to researchers everywhere the benefits of sorting and cataloguing a collection yourself. It is far more than 'just admin' as any archivist or special collections librarian will confirm. I have found that these processes, done with advice, care and thought, are great preliminary stages which enable more insightful research. Whether that holds here, of course, is for others to judge.

Finally, should anyone else wish to add their UPIAS papers or other artefacts to this collection held within the GMCDP archive, these additions would be very welcome and will be equally protected.

TB

UPIAS - a public record

Introduction

Many disabled people with an interest in history will know three things about UPIAS:

1. It was initiated when Paul Hunt had a letter published in The Guardian newspaper in 1972 calling for a new organisation controlled by disabled people.
2. It published a booklet called, **Fundamental Principles**, which set out a debate in a meeting between UPIAS and the Disability Alliance in 1975. It was in this booklet that the **social definition** of disability was formally explained. The social definition of disability was a radically new foundation for disabled people's understanding of discrimination and how to fight it.
3. The phrase the **social model** which is used today came a few years later from Professor Mike Oliver, in 1983.

Some disabled people may also be aware that UPIAS existed into the late 1980s, and continued to have some key debates on how best to oppose discrimination, and that its internal discussions were kept confidential. Most of its workings and papers were marked as confidential to be read by union members only. This was a key issue at a time when staff and family members would routinely open and read members' post.

Presenting a 'united front' to the oppressors was key to the success of UPIAS. This was done to respect the need for solidarity and for members to clarify their ideas in confidence before engaging in debates and arguments with people and organisations outside of UPIAS.

Some disabled people who were involved in UPIAS at the time may well still remember some of the very powerful and heated discussions within the group. Some members involved in UPIAS have recently said of this time:

"These were both personally challenging and a shocking change from the kind of social interactions people were used to. In the early days the struggle to change the status quo was hard

because they had to break through a prevailing ideology formed from a toxic mix of discriminatory and oppressive policies disguised by the 'benevolent' face of charity. In the process, members found they had to challenge many of their own learnt assumptions about society and about disability.

"Later there were times when members formed different strategic camps in their battles with the local authorities and these too sometimes led to heated disagreements."

So I approach this task with a great deal of trepidation and huge respect. No history is dispassionate nor without an agenda; at best we can try to be open and self-aware of the assumptions and motives we bring to the task. Therefore I believe it isn't helpful to talk about **the** history of UPIAS, but rather of **a** history, and trying to be inclusive to other experiences and perceptions while not losing the baby with the bath water.

The Manchester archive (documents, artefacts, and online)

In recent years it has been my privilege to help preserve the political writings of a number of key thinkers and activists within the disabled people's movement who, too often, die too young. So over time I have had custody of UPIAS papers from various people's families, always respecting the life-long promise of confidentiality that was given to its members. These people include Kevin Hyett, Ian Stanton, Lorraine Gradwell (my late wife), as well as Dick Leaman and Paul Hunt via Judy Hunt, and Ken Lumb indirectly with his wife Anne Plumb leading.

This report focuses on the cataloguing of the UPIAS papers before they are added to the collection of historic papers held by the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (GMCDP).

The GMCDP Collection is housed safely within Archives-Plus, which is run by Manchester City Council and based within the Central Library at St Peter's Square in Manchester, with links to the UK National Archive.

Archives-Plus includes the statutory County Records Office and has a strong emphasis on social history with sections on radical thinkers and communities. Materials can be either loaned or donated, and either way they are subject to careful storage and supervised access within a secure room.

The Archives-Plus files include many historic medical records from former hospitals so staff have systems for confidential access, including refusing inappropriate access requests.



This photograph shows a line of 14 lever arch files of UPIAS documents from 1972 to the 1990s.



This photograph shows four large boxes containing the files of UPIAS's documents ready to be delivered to the archive.

The current proposal for the UPIAS papers are that:

1. They will be **closed files** until at least 2030, which means no general public access, with a review nearer the time to decide whether to extend the closed period (for example each UK Census is closed for 100 years).
2. They will be overseen by the policies of the GMCDP Executive (committee) and managed by a set of agreed criteria. Paul Hunt's article called, **Settling Accounts with the Parasite People** contains a useful checklist for this.
3. They can only be accessed by genuine activists and researchers with a compelling reason and who get a signed prior approval from GMCDP to show to Archives-Plus staff, having satisfactorily explained their ethics and accountability so that GMCDP can seek remedies if there is any attempt to misuse the records. The default will be to **decline nearly every request** for access until the closed period has ended. GMCDP may consult others as they see fit. (These are the process details at the time of writing.)

Membership

Over its lifetime UPIAS had around 141 members, probably being at its highest level in the early 1970s with around 50 members then.

These raw figures do not necessarily represent the level of activity at any particular time. This is because, as someone close to UPIAS said recently, "UPIAS represented a political vanguard that worked alongside non-members in various forums, and UPIAS was often accepted as adding clarity of thinking and valuable leadership to others' campaigns."

There was no central membership register, and various Membership Secretaries kept various ad-hoc systems. Constructing a definitive all-years membership list has been attempted for these notes, based on the UPIAS surviving documents including a few occasional lists included with the Circulars and names given in correspondence. This recent list includes, where known, gender, region, and timeframe. The margin of error is probably around plus or minus five members (+/- 5).

This all-years membership data can be summarised as follows:

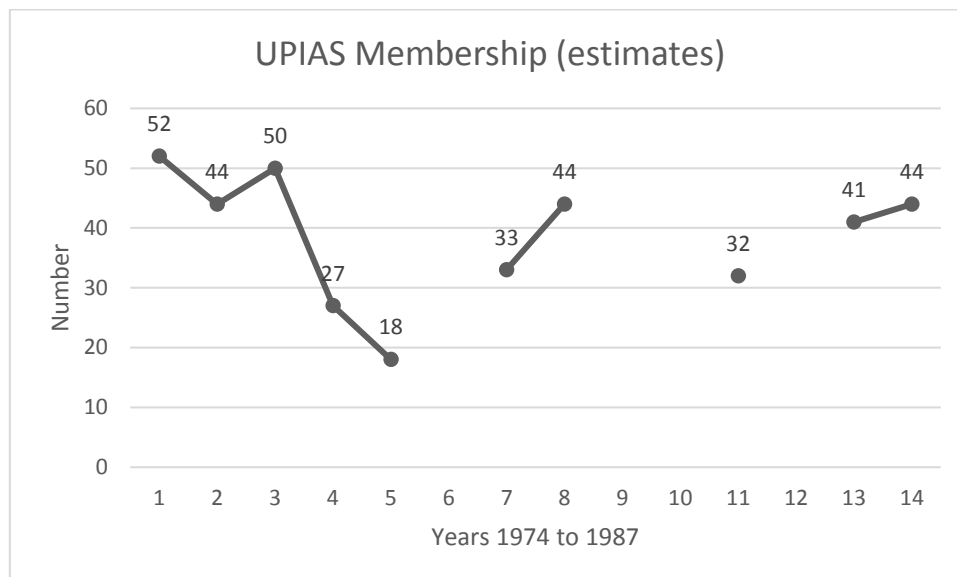
Female	53	38%	40%
Male	78	55%	60%
No data	10	7%	-
Total	141	-	-

Analysis by gender

London & South East	70	50%
North & Midlands	48	34%
Scotland	4	3%
“Wales & the West”	14	10%
Overseas	3	2%
No data	2	1%
Total	141	-

Analysis by region

There is an assumption sometimes made that Paul Hunt’s letter in The Guardian on 20 September 1972 established the membership base. Certainly a few recruits were found that way, perhaps the most notable being Vic Finkelstein who wrote to Paul Hunt on 30 September 1972 asking to join. But the bulk of responses to the newspaper letter that he received were from charities and non-disabled people asking for more details. In fact, Paul Hunt said he had to also “circularise” the same letter to the “various journals” (Circular 2, page 1) of many different disability organisations, including the Magic Carpet newsletter of the Disabled Drivers Association.



Analysis of subscriptions by years from 1974 to 1987

Each person who responded was sent a standard letter by Paul Hunt with a list of seven questions, and this standard letter later became known as Circular 1. Circular 2, undated but probably sometime in 1973, summarised the replies Paul Hunt received to these questions from various people, and this method of using a postal **circular** to the members became the standard communications process for UPIAS for all its existence. The format of the circulars was somewhat similar to an internal newsletter but circulars had unedited contributions from many members, usually as one or two paragraphs each, almost like the discussion threads in current social media.

On the few occasions that a membership list was included with a circular, only the address was given. Telephone numbers were not included except once or twice later in the 1980s.

One of the membership list printouts appears to have been held on a computer using a database, with 39 records. However, all the surviving UPIAS records are on paper, with no digital legacy. It is known from receipts that various UPIAS committee members had three identical Amstrad word processing computers in the 1980s but also these have left no digital legacy.

Up to December 1974 the interim membership secretary was Dick Leaman, and the annual subscription for 1975 was £1 or less if someone

couldn't afford it. Nominations were also sought for elections for the Executive Committee for 1975, including for this role.

It was important that UPIAS members agreed to be active in the organisation. One person sent their subscription plus a donation but said they could not participate at the moment, and their subscription was rejected and their money returned.

From the outset UPIAS was interested in learning about integrated living and disabled people in other countries, and the **Fokus** project in Sweden originally was seen as an example of best practice. For example, on 23 December 1973 Paul Hunt was in a continuing correspondence with the **Anti-Handicap** project in Sweden, and the membership list included addresses in Germany, New Zealand, and USA.

Constitution and legal status

UPIAS was deliberately not a charity, nor did it try to become a limited company. This is a strong decision, which gives the group a great deal of privacy but leaves the committee members in particular exposed to all its debts and liabilities. Given the forthright interchanges between members which were faithfully reproduced in the circulars, any legal action for libel or damages would have fallen hard on the committee members without the protections that come from being a company or a charity. However, as point 28 of UPIAS' policy statement makes clear, it was important that UPIAS could be politically independent and can protect its integrity in campaigning for political change.

From the beginning, Paul Hunt is asking the new members about possible aims and policies, and he sets out the options and the debates in Circulars 2 to 7.

One hot topic early on was whether to allow non-disabled people to be full members (the answer was no), and what rights to allow associate members. The decision was that associate members could participate in meetings but not in policy discussions, nor vote, nor hold office. In 1976 this changed so that associate members could participate in all UPIAS activities and discussions, but still not vote nor hold office.

An early policy interest was on segregated education, and UPIAS members were leading this debate according to the records, including an undated submission of written evidence from UPIAS to the “Action Research Working Party on Integration of the Disabled (Education Sub-Committee) [no location given].

On 11 August 1974 Vic Finkelstein produced a 22-page document called **Are We Oppressed? Collected contributions from early UPIAS circulars.**

This document summarised the debates within the circulars to date, and prepared the ground for the UPIAS policy conference later that year. Because it was based on the circulars, this document was also confidential. However, and in agreement with some surviving members of UPIAS, a redacted version was published on 3 December 2018 for anyone to read and study.

The UPIAS Policy Conference was held in London on 18 - 20 October 1974, with three working sessions on the Saturday and a further session on the Sunday morning, taking ten hours in all and resulting in a six page report of its discussions and decisions.

The conference proceedings were audio recorded on magnetic tape cassettes. These cassettes were loaned by post to members who could not attend, especially if they were visually impaired. Unfortunately according to Judy Hunt these tapes were later lost, having been stolen in a burglary of a member's home.

On the agenda it had been hoped to include time for discussions on subject areas of interest, such as special education, finance, newsletter, women, but time had run out on the policy and constitution items. The venue was the Spastics Society Assessment Centre in central London off Tottenham Court Road, and through a personal contact working there UPIAS managed to get a cheap weekend hire.

The total charge per person (for a room for two nights and all their meals) was £4.70p. Members who were unable to attend were able to vote afterwards by post on the various motions, and after a closing date of 3 December 1974 (eight members responded by post, including some who had to leave the conference early) the policy and constitutional decisions were announced formally.

Following this conference, in February 1975 UPIAS published three documents: the Aims, the Policy Statement, and the Constitution. The Interim Committee was disbanded and the first elected Executive Committee started. Area Secretaries were announced for three regions: Scotland, North and Midlands, and London and South East. The post for Wales and the West was vacant, although there were some members living in and around Wales.

Paul Hunt was the General Secretary, Dick Leaman was the Assistant General Secretary, Tonette (Toni) Edwards was the Treasurer, and Dennis Jarrett was the Membership Secretary. A pro-forma letter by Paul Hunt to enquirers in 1975 states: "We want to stress that the Union does not claim to represent or speak for other disabled people. On the contrary, we recognise that conflicting views exist amongst disabled people, and we wish to promote discussion aimed at making clear what these differences are."

In 1975 a leaflet was printed giving more information to members on the Circulars, including a section on why and how they are confidential documents.

By June 1975 the Executive Committee are involved in a series of "frank and critical" letters with Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris, Chairman of the [Leonard] Cheshire Foundation Homes for the Sick. For example, UPIAS regrets "that you do not follow through your acknowledgement of the possibilities inherent in technological advance by placing your weight behind the demand for rapid development of alternatives to residential care. For example ... the Fokus schemes [which] ... started in Sweden ten years ago, and has since spread to Denmark, Holland and West Germany."

Using the circulars there is a discussion within the Executive Committee on various draft replies to Foxley-Norris.

Perhaps the most direct comment is from Toni Edwards, in 1975:

"I think we have got to be tough with these people and should have no feelings of guilt about it. They do not seem to have any conscience when they batter us, so I'm all for giving it to them strong and hard!"

On 22 November 1975 four chosen delegates from UPIAS met with the same number of delegates from The Disability Alliance to debate UPIAS's Fundamental Principles of Disability, along with around six observers from each organisation. This discussion was recorded (the tape cassettes no longer seem available) and summarised into a printed booklet that UPIAS had professionally typeset and published in November 1976.

Academics and other writers in the field of disability studies seem to pin most or all of their references to UPIAS's policies on this booklet. This is where the social definition of disability is explained and where it is shown how it fundamentally differs from the medical interpretation of disability.

Although to be accurate, the social definition of disability was already evident in the first policy document issued on **3 December 1974**, following the October Conference and postal votes described here.

The October Conference 1974 had run out of time to include study groups on selected topics, but from surviving records at least one took place later: namely the Disability Study Group which first met in August 1976. Although they hoped to meet regularly there are no further records of such meetings.

By late 1977 UPIAS is exchanging a series of letters with BASW, the British Association of Social Workers. Clearly here UPIAS uses copies of the 1976 booklet on the Fundamental Principles of Disability to support the arguments in the letters. This is all wrapped up in the key policy difference between campaigning for rights, against segregation, and for autonomy and self-determination (UPIAS) and campaigning for better welfare benefits (Disability Alliance).

One letter from a BASW official adds the "personal comments" that "the majority of severely handicapped people are over seventy-five. Their disabilities are usually caused by a multitude of conditions and are a prelude to death. Many of this group are not, and never will be able to, fight the battles on their own behalf and a comprehensive incomes approach would be of great value to them and their families."

By June 1978 and into January 1979 Paul Hunt was writing about UPIAS's declining membership and a "general inability to enthuse other disabled people with Union ideas".

Circulars

In all, UPIAS issued an estimated 80 circulars between 1972 and 1990. The exact number may change slightly if any further missing copies are added to the archive, which is possible because the numbering systems used were not always accurate. Please see Appendix F for a list of the circulars as known to be in the archive in 2018.



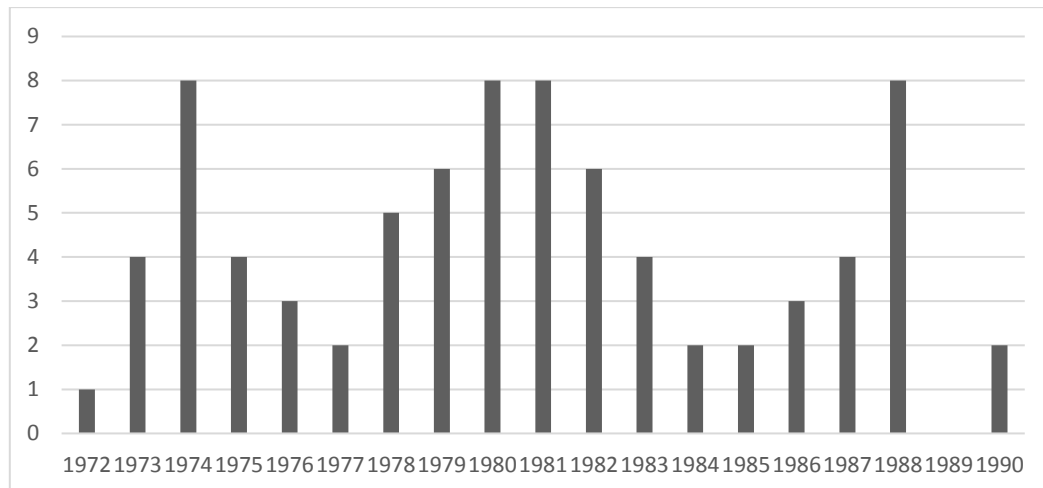
In 1986 UPIAS' London branch purchased a new duplicator, a Gestetner 4130 (similar to the one shown in the photograph above) and a Gestetner 1592 stencil scanner, both for £1,200 with a grant from the Greater London Council.

Decline

By 1978 UPIAS was in difficulties as an organisation. The membership had been declining and fewer people were active. The Circulars were less frequent, going from around eight editions in 1974 down in the following years to four in 1975, three in 1976, and only two editions in all of 1977.

But some members had very different analyses for the causes for the difficulties. Some were saying that UPIAS had become muddled in its thinking, and needed to discuss policy in more detail regarding the underlying mechanics of social theory and political organisation, for the members to become “clearer” in their thinking.

However, some others were saying that UPIAS had become too theoretical and sometimes antagonistic within its discussions, and certainly this reason was given by some former members who had resigned (some later resumed their membership).



This graph shows the number of UPIAS Circulars (“editions”) issued each year.

Some of the early members were very committed to the prospects of getting themselves and other disabled people out of institutions and into flats and houses in ordinary communities – being against oppression and segregation – but there was aggravation with all the resistance they encountered. There was also frustration when it became clear that this strand of practical activity wasn’t happening, or at least not as much as had been hoped.

In summary, by 1978 the organisation was declining in numbers and influence and had become split between what might be called (in political terms) the Theoreticians and the Empiricists, between those who said that more and deeper **thinking** was needed, and those who said that more and stronger **doing** was needed.

As Ken Davis said at the time, “after a fresh and vigorous start things have gone wrong”, and few disagreed with him at least on that.

But the differences between the Theoreticians and the Empiricists were also evident in their suggestions for a solution to UPIAS difficulties. For

Vic Finkelstein the need was to keep going with UPIAS, to think more, argue more, to find a better way to attract a mass membership to the cause. On the other hand, Paul Hunt proposed that UPIAS should be “dissolved” and in its place there should be a new national campaigning publication run by disabled people. In the middle was Ken Davis, suggesting that UPIAS should be put “on ice” until the way forward is clearer, and also supporting the idea of a new publication. Each had their supporters.

From mid-1978 the debate staggered forward with hard-hitting articles and counter-articles in the circulars by a few vocal members, the rest of the membership falling back and some leaving. It was eventually agreed to hold a General Meeting on 21 July 1979 at the Cressy Fields Resource Centre in Derbyshire. The central item to be discussed and voted on was whether UPIAS should start an “open newsletter”, an idea which Paul Hunt and Ken Davis supported and Vic Finkelstein opposed. However, UPIAS members were devastated a few days before this meeting with the sad news of the sudden death of Paul Hunt, on 12 July 1979 aged 42 years.

In the discussions that followed within UPIAS about how best to remember Paul Hunt, one phrase that occurred time and again was that he was “a dynamo”. We can sense some of this here: that in only 25 months and with just a typewriter, some envelopes and a telephone he had created a national organisation with a broad membership, a constitution, and had framed its radical policies and principles. It wasn’t quite from a standing start because he brought with him good friends from the Le Court institution where some of the residents (“inmates”) had built a radical reputation in the 1960s, but it was nevertheless a testament to his total commitment as well as ground-breaking thinking on oppression.

A national organisation

With his insight and input into the **social definition**, alongside Vic Finkelstein, Paul Hunt had left UPIAS with a very powerful political legacy.

By 1981 UPIAS's fortunes and influence were on the up again. The radical ideas that Paul Hunt and UPIAS had started promoting in the 1970s - of disabled people being in control to change society rather than themselves, and no longer being passive and grateful recipients of charity - were now becoming mainstream thinking.

1981 was the United Nation's International Year of Disabled People (IYDP). It triggered a strong reaction against the patronising interpretation by the charities of how the year should be used. This provided the impetus for disabled people to take control of the changes they wished to see and offered UPIAS members new opportunities to take their ideas forward into a variety of forums and to help build a grass roots movement that would make the most of IYDP. Vic Finkelstein in particular was keen for UPIAS to build "a mass movement."

So when UPIAS proposed that as many organisations as possible that are controlled by disabled people should come together and set up a national umbrella organisation, this proposal met with widespread support. On 13 June 1981 in London a meeting was organised between UPIAS and eight other national organisations controlled by disabled people, plus a further five organisations being willing to be involved. Its initial name was the National Council of Organisations of Disabled People, soon becoming the **British Council of Organisations of Disabled People**, BCODP. A steering committee was established with its first meeting held three weeks later, and a draft constitution was adopted. The 13 June 1981 meeting was reported as urgent business in UPIAS's Circular number 45-A in June 1981 (please see Appendix E).

It is also possible to see UPIAS' influence in the 1980s at the local and regional levels as well. Thus we see UPIAS members working with others in new initiatives to set up Centres for Integrated Living (CILs) and Coalitions of Disabled People (CDPs), where Derbyshire was widely recognised as having a leading CIL and Greater Manchester a leading CDP, both having their origins connected to UPIAS.

Greenham Common 1983

In December 1983 some women members from UPIAS joined the protests at Greenham Common airbase, a national women-led protest against the siting of American nuclear Cruise missiles on lorries within Britain.



UPIAS women demonstrated at Greenham Common in December 1983
- this photograph shows the perimeter fence decorated with the word UPIAS and a symbol of a wheelchair combined with the circle and downward cross symbol for female.

Radical journal wanted

It is also important to note that the idea from UPIAS for a national radical journal was made a reality from the 1980s onwards by the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People with its respected **Coalition** magazine. This has gained an international reputation for its hard-hitting articles on the social model of disability and on disabled people's campaigns for rights. With Ken Lumb becoming probably the most enduring GMCDP Coalition magazine editor after Ian Stanton, the fact that it became a radical journal for the movement with a national profile was no coincidence.

Significantly, by the late 1980s some of the political difficulties within BCODP were being discussed in the Coalition magazine, rather than the UPIAS circulars, including one or more articles by Vic Finkelstein. This is a sign of how the Coalition magazine now played a central role in progressive debates.

Endings

The mid-1980s saw UPIAS it drifting in the doldrums again. Only two Circulars were issued in 1984 and two more in 1985. For some people at least, UPIAS had become reduced to being just a pre-meeting before BCODP meetings where UPIAS members could try to agree a 'line' or slate to follow in the main meeting to maximise their chances of winning arguments and votes. At one point there was a to-and-fro in the Circulars about whether certain UPIAS members should sit next to each other at BCODP meetings, claiming they had excluded other UPIAS members there by doing this.

There were, of course, other points also being discussed. Not least was what was referred to at one point as 'the Manchester three'. This was three UPIAS members [names redacted] who wrote a paper disagreeing with the theoretical basis of many of UPIAS' discussions. Instead they pushed for a more inclusive approach, for using plain language, and for woman-friendly methods of organising, based strongly on a **community development** ethos that the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (GMCDP) in particular had been using to strong effect.

By the mid-1980s there were also attempts to organise local UPIAS groups, starting with Greater Manchester and with London and the South East. Four people, two full and two associate members, met informally as a local group in Rochdale in the early 1980s.

However, because the UPIAS members in the local groups were also active in other local structures, the disputes from one tended to leak over into the other. For example, sometimes there were differences of opinion within the Disabled Person's Steering Group (DPSG) of the Equal Opportunities Committee of Manchester City Council, and these differences were carried across into UPIAS. Local UPIAS groups could also include meetings where one member was trying to manage or employ another member, or one member had beaten another member at

a local vote, and UPIAS had become at times a 'second chamber' as a place to repeat these disputes.

There was a revamp of the Circular, where "Circular 60" issued in September 1985 was followed after a gap of nine months by "New Circular 1" in June 1986.

But this revamp did not give UPIAS the hoped-for boost and by 1988 there were serious proposals to disband UPIAS. Unlike the similar discussions a decade earlier, this time there was no appetite to keep it running, and after apparently no Circulars at all for 24 months (September 1988 to September 1990) a postal vote was taken and no-one who was left voted against disbanding UPIAS. This decision was confirmed in the last Circular in November 1990. After settling the accounts there was a £50 surplus which was given to BCODP.

Was UPIAS Marxist?

This question is a hardy perennial of disabled activists of a certain age to chew over at a conference evening in the bar. The short answer is, no.

But the longer answer is that UPIAS was very political and radical, so some Marxism was definitely in the mix. In an obituary to Dick Leaman a lifelong friend of his, Brenda (Bree) Robbins, "described his politics as being somewhere between Buddha and Lenin."

Similarly there is Paul Hunt in his later writings within UPIAS (January 1978) saying, "As communists we must above all bring to the front, as the leading question in disability, the property (class) question, no matter what the degree of development of the movement to date".

And there were very practical early activists such as Tonette (Toni) Edwards who were not happy with any of the theorising but who were very clear and strong on what was oppressive and what needed to be done (see page 14 here).

As had been said approvingly later of Ian Stanton (cited in: To Ian With Love, Our Tributes, GMCDP, 1998, p5), such people as Toni Edwards were categorised by Antonio Gramsci as "organic intellectuals" – people who came from ordinary communities and, despite a lack of grand theory or extended education, they were highly effective in leading

radical organisations and in fighting injustice, and who nevertheless remained connected to their communities.

And we know that Vic Finkelstein had radical views which he determinedly put into practice from early on, such as sheltering Bram Fischer in 1960s apartheid South Africa. Fischer was Nelson Mandela's lawyer and was the General Secretary of the South African Communist Party. For this Finkelstein was arrested, convicted, imprisoned and reportedly tortured.

UPIAS's Political Legacies

There is something of a truth in the view that there is a political ancestry or family tree that can be drawn from:

- UPIAS -> BCODP -> DAN -> DPAC
(the disabled people's Direct Action Network, and Disabled People Against the Cuts).

Which although as a family tree it is very neat, actually in practice we can also see a continuing legacy of:

- in the 1980s UPIAS -> BCODP,
- in the 1980s UPIAS -> DPI adopts the social model,
- in the 1980s UPIAS -> CILs,
- in the 1980s UPIAS -> CDPs,
- in the 1990s UPIAS -> new laws to ban at least some discrimination against disabled people,
- in the 2000s UPIAS -> survival of the social model promoting better life chances within society for disabled people.

Appendix A – Paul Hunt's letter in The Guardian

Sir,—Ann Shearer's account of the CMH conference of and not on the so-called mentally handicapped, challenges our patronising assumptions about such people. It also has important implications for anyone who genuinely wants to help other disadvantaged groups. For instance, practically every sentence in her article could apply, with equal force to the severely physically handicapped, many of whom also find themselves in isolated and unsuitable institutions, where their views are ignored and they are subject to authoritarian and often cruel regimes.

I am proposing the formation of a consumer group to put forward nationally the views of actual and potential residents of these successors to the workhouse. We hope in particular to formulate and publicise plans for alternative kinds of care. I should be glad to hear from anyone who is interested to join or support this project.—Yours faithfully,

Paul Hunt.

20 September 1972

Appendix B – UPIAS Circular 1, 1972

[address redacted]

Dear

Many thanks for your response to the suggestion of a group to improve the situation of the physically handicapped. Our apologies for this duplicated reply, but it saves a lot of time and effort.

A letter to The Guardian in September brought about 25 offers of support, mostly from professionals or volunteers working in the disability field. We are now trying to interest as many as possible of the physically disabled themselves, through the various specialised magazines which circulate.

At this early stage of the group, what seems to be needed is to pool our ideas. We hope you will comment freely on the preliminary list of aims and policies set out overleaf. Please suggest any alterations, amendments or additions. We should also like your answers to the following questions:

- 1 What issues should the group take up as a matter of urgency?
- 2 What aspects of our situation should the newsletter and special reports concentrate on?

In the near future we intend for example to make detailed comparisons between Het Dorp, the Dutch village for the handicapped, and the Fokus housing and care scheme in Sweden. We shall also evaluate current and planned provision in this country.

- 3 Should the group draw up a list of basic human and total rights to be safeguarded for all the severely impaired, whether or not we live in institutions? This charter could cover such issues as the right to decide when to get up and to go to bed; when to go out and return; the right to choose our own GP; the right to accept or reject medical advice; the right to personal friendships, or marriage, without interference; the right to share in all decisions in our living and work places on an equal basis.

- 4 Would you ever be able to get to a meeting in London (or elsewhere)?

5 How much should we fix the subscription at? Many of us are hard up, but if we are to keep in touch regularly by post we shall need some money. Would you pay 25p for the first year?

6 Can you contribute by recruiting members, writing reports, typing, duplicating, collecting information, or doing anything else?

7 Do you think the group should in effect be run by post (and tape recorder?) so as to include all members in major decisions? This has the disadvantage of ruling out 'live' debate before decision. Is there a workable combination of decisions by post and by meetings that could be worked out? Should we try to form local groups? In any case, do you agree that the usual committee-clique system should be avoided? Perhaps there should simply be a secretary, treasurer and small committee elected to service the group, but no chairman or other figurehead?

We hope to hear from you soon with your views on the group and how it should develop. It is vital that we should work together if the right changes are to be brought about. Only we who are physically impaired really know about our own situation. But as isolated individuals we can do little to influence the course of events. It is only when we join together and pool our efforts that we can achieve a better life.

Yours sincerely

(page 2)

To bring about improvement in the situation of people who have physical impairment, with emphasis on the most severely affected who are, have been, or might be placed in residential institutions.

We seek implementation of the right of all the physically impaired to such financial, medical, technical and educational assistance from the state as will enable us to undertake productive work, to achieve mobility, to attain independence in daily living activities, and to live where and how we choose with full control over our own lives.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership should be open to people who are significantly physically impaired and who support the aims and policies of the group. The

support and help of others who agree with the aims and policies would be welcome.

POLICIES

In order to maintain an independent and critical approach to all developments in the field of physical impairment, the following policies seem necessary:

- 1 Democratic control would rest with all the members.
- 2 Running expenses, which would be small, would be met by members' subscriptions.
- 3 No members would receive payment for services to the group.
- 4 The group would not be registered as a charity, and would not publicly raise or solicit funds.
- 5 The group would make no use of patronage either from individuals or from organisations.
- 6 The group would not involve itself in representation on any other bodies, although it might from time to time make its views known to enquiries or to organisations.
- 7 Through circulation of a regular newsletter, and publication of occasional pamphlets, the group would keep members informed about relevant issues. Development both in Britain and abroad would be critically evaluated by and for members.
- 8 The principal means for achieving change would be the growth of a critical approach to educational, employment, institutional and other provision for the handicapped, and the members' own organised actions to bring effective pressure to bear. But the group would also attempt to influence other organisations directly, seeking publicity if necessary. Any publicity would, however, be for the group and not for individuals.
- 9 The group would concern itself primarily with the situation of the physically handicapped, but would support and work with all other oppressed groups striving to better their conditions.

Appendix C – UPIAS Circular 2, 1973

UPIAS (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation)

Circular number 2, 1973

[Address redacted]

Dear

It is some time now since I wrote to various journals suggesting the formation of a new group to oppose the segregation of the disabled in residential institutions. Each person who contacted me received a circular setting out in more detail some proposals for aims, membership and policy, together with a list of questions about the group and its possible functions. This present circular reports on the response so far, prints (strictly anonymous) extracts from some of the letters that have come in, and sets out the basis on which I now believe it is right to go ahead.

Part 1.

Life in Residential Institutions

The authors of this first batch of extracts from letters speak eloquently enough for themselves. With one exception, the letters are from physically impaired people who have either experienced life in residential care themselves, or who dread the prospect. They confirm that segregation of the disabled, particularly in long—stay residential institutions, is an issue of crucial importance which needs to be taken up by us as disabled people.

“(After 50 years in workhouses and other institutions) ... I need more privacy and a one-bedded room. Of course, I shouldn’t tell you this really because if they only knew here what I have told you, I have no doubt I should be on the carpet. ... Just imagine, one Concorde could build us disabled the places we need ...”

“The young chronic sick ward here is quite new, on the first floor of the local geriatric hospital. It’s more the old workhouse tarted up. Patients

have to go to bed at 6 p.m. The ward is full of beds. ... It may be better than the former set-up, so were two lavatories instead of none ...”

“(In this home we are) ruled by a committee ... a typical clique of self-appointed small minded bourgeoisie who think they have a divine right to rule our lives ...”

“(After many years in hospital) I know the bareness and frustration of having no privacy or mental stimulation, and at times the absence of human kindness ...”

“(I have never been in an institution but) I did write once to (a magazine) on hearing of two friends who had to enter a home and the treatment they received but I was cried down so ...

“I dread the thought of (entering residential care and) being at the mercy of so-called ‘experts’ ...”

“I stayed in a residential home. It was the most depressing place one can imagine. My whole life in such a place would be intolerable ... Only limited, very limited, assistance was given to the residents enabling them to do things which brought them into contact with society ... Whenever I was out past 9.30 p.m. whoever I was out with had to undress me and put me to bed. The night nurse refused to have anything to do with anyone who came in after she came on duty.

Like most institutions of that kind it was understaffed. The hours the residents kept were ridiculous. People were put to bed at 7 p.m. and hardly anyone was up before 9 a.m. ... To the extent that I managed to break this dead hand of bureaucratic and staff indifference, I was resented not only by the staff but by the other residents. ...”

“No-one with any go or intelligence would be seen dead in a place like this. It can’t be reformed: the pressures of such a place would crush most people.

It should just never exist. On the basis that nobody starts out in an apathetic state I am trying to find out what grinds the residents down ...”

“After undergoing many of the typical forms of oppression of the disabled, I ... saw the need for the disabled to participate in their own rehabilitation ...”

“... I know that doctor and friends all are thinking that I should ‘go somewhere where I can be looked after properly’. Alas! to me that is the ultimate horror. I have no money behind me — hence my choice would be pretty limited. At best a Cheshire Home, at worst, the chronic or geriatric ward of a hospital.

It takes me all the energy I have to perform the basic needs of existence — and, because of my difficulties, a very large slice of each day. I have much pain, and when these things are done, just lie a-bed too exhausted for anything else. But I would rather pay a price this heavy, and retain what still remains to me of freedom — than have more physical comfort, and become just a ‘thing’.

I love quiet and solitude, and even when these become isolation, I still prefer too much aloneness, to its grim alternative of never being alone again...

... I was there for nearly 48 hours before I could get through to the staff that: (1) I had not given up my home and come into hospital for the first time and permanently; (2) I had not come to be assessed and rehabilitated while my final destination was being determined; (3) Though blind and severely disabled I was neither deaf nor daft. Everyone who came near me poked her face right into mine and SHOUTED. If two persons were present — they shouted at me, and spoke in loud whispers to each other, referring to me as ‘SHE’...”

Part 2.

Answers to [the previous] Circular

Questions 1 and 2 asked what matters the group should take up urgently, and what aspects we should concentrate our efforts on.

Most people expressed agreement with the idea of evaluating residential provision in Britain and abroad. I have selected some extracts from letters to give an idea of the other issues raised.

“(I suggest that) a realistic pension ... (might) affect the whole aspect of institutional type accommodation ...”

“... the whole question of accommodation and living independently, separately or in groups ...”

“... improve residential care for the severely disabled (investigating) alternatives like small domiciliary units in urban areas and NOT in rural areas. Look into the educational facilities and employment of the severely disabled, especially the (work of the) DROs ...”

“The education of the handicapped — at school, university, or polytechnic. School is the first and most formative institution. My own opinion is that special schools for the handicapped are wrong Local Authority accommodation planned but not built must be questioned before it is built ...”

“... make full investigation into the lot of the handicapped person being cared for in what is commonly known as Part III [“part three”] Accommodation ... To what extent do the residents have a say in the running of their home or indeed of their own lives? ... Information is needed, particularly about government policy (if there is any) at present ...”

“... immediate re-housing of the disabled where necessary ...”

“Where and how to live other than geriatric hospitals as at present ...”

“Put pressure on the appropriate bodies to persuade the government that they would be making better use of their financial resources by providing the kind of accommodation a lot of handicapped people, in this day and age, would prefer. I think they are doing the wrong thing building units onto hospitals, and sheltered workshops ... to employ both the physically and mentally handicapped ...”

“The vital issue is that of **independence**, from this spring many aspects, such as money, accommodation, work, accessibility, etc ... A ginger group (what we call it is important too) must jump in, like Mary Whitehouse, to press home its point of view, to comment on a news story of lazy or indifferent councils, residents ‘done down’ in some way, new buildings etc. Perhaps members could be given different aspects of news to look for in the papers or TV and then comment ...”

“... I think anything which involves mobility is very urgent, especially for the recently handicapped, who get really frustrated if they cannot get about. Also an urgent thing is financial, anything from welfare allowances to improved pay and conditions in sheltered workshops ...”

“... the most important task (versus urgent) is to encourage physically impaired people to take up their own struggle against their oppression ... It should be made clear (over and over) that no outside person can solve the problems of the disabled, nor can we, even if we are disabled, solve the problems of other disabled people ..o physically impaired people themselves, each participating in the collective struggle, are the only ones that can consistently face, and not become deceived about, the condition of the physically disabled in society ... In the first instance ..o the issue around which we can most effectively struggle is the one of being socially segregated ...”

“I think comparisons between villages for the handicapped and housing schemes are ideal, any place for the handicapped is worth looking into, some of the ideas can take root elsewhere ...”

“Try to improve the residential environment at once ... encourage objective information via television and radio ... Elimination of architectural obstacles and improvement of communication facilities, transport, etc ...”

,... The encouragement of society to make it possible for as many disabled as possible to **live outside an institution** ... I feel that many more people could live outside institutionalism if the authorities were more forthcoming about specialized equipment ... economics I know play a large part in this reluctance ...”

... a most important function is to inform the handicapped of all alternatives ...”

Question 3 - Should we draw up a Charter of Rights?

One writer thought a Charter wouldn't be much good “unless there was some chance of it being implemented”. Another said that: “it might be useful to assume as matter of course that physically disabled people ARE entitled to basic human rights, and then try to assess how these are denied to those in institutions etc...” The main difficulty about this view is that without first defining what rights are being referred to, it is impossible to assess whether they are being denied. In any event,

almost everyone else supported the idea of a Charter of Rights. One person sent a list of suggestions for inclusion.

Questions 4 and 7 - Could people get to London or elsewhere for meetings should a central committee and should we aim to form local groups?

Most people thought they could get to London for an occasional meeting. The general view seemed to be against setting out to form local groups, although these might come about in time. One writer, who seemed to speak from experience, said: "If possible we should avoid local groups - these tend to get bogged down in social chit-chat with a very parochial outlook". The general view also was that the group must inevitably be run largely by post & (tape and telephone) because of the transport difficulties of so many of the disabled. Opinion is perhaps best summed up by the correspondent who wrote: "The handicapped in their present state are very isolated because of their lack of mobility. The only certain way to reach them is by post. Of course a small committee to service the group would be necessary."

Question 5 - how much should the subscription be?

There was general agreement to a subscription of 25p for the first year. But there was one (non-disabled) correspondent who thought the subscription should be set at £1 "but any handicapped member should be included for nothing". A few people suggested that everyone might pay 50p or so.

Question 6 - how can you help?

Most prospective members offered help of various kinds, but a few said they could do nothing but subscribe.

Membership, Aims and Policies - written comments

Many of the replies to my request for comment on proposals under these headings were favourable, in whole or in part. However, in the extracts,

summaries, and comments that follow I have concentrated mainly on the criticisms.

Several people queried the proposal that the group should not register as a charity, or raise funds from the public. One said: "I think this is the wrong approach - both points need reviewing if 'the Group' is to flourish". Another person put "?" against both of these proposals. A third writer said: "While I am against fund-raising, especially flag-selling ... there must be other ways of getting money that wouldn't be too objectionable. If we want to do anything worthwhile, we ... will never be able to survive on a 25p subscription from a few people ..."

Two correspondents queried the suggestions that there should be 'no patronage' and no personal publicity for members. One said: "One must personalise, I think, as people respond to a person, as they never do to an idea. Naturally we need the ideas, but the presentation is equally important."

Two writers also queried the idea of working with other oppressed groups. One said: "This could lead to political involvement".

Although several people who wrote in seemed to be primarily in search of information, and offered no help, there was only one really negative response. This person suggested that I try to forget all about disability, and instead get away on a cruise. Referring to the circular, she said: "Our organising secretary here is so kind and helpful I cannot imagine our ever needing that kind of document".

One (non-disabled) correspondent sent several long letters, mainly criticising the idea of the group on the grounds that it was not comprehensive enough - i.e. that it should include all categories, such as the elderly and the mentally impaired, who live in institutions. It was also suggested that my putting forward policies for discussion was undemocratic, and everything should be left to residents of institutions themselves. Another criticism from the same person was that we were getting away from direct focus on institutions. And it was argued that we were falling behind the local authorities which have '... reorganised the entire Social Services to get away from the idea of categories and labels. No longer do social workers have caseloads of 'mentally handicapped or physically handicapped' but mixed caseloads of families.

They are planning for a future of. Community Day Centres and Workshops catering for all categories of people, and eventually family-type residential units. All the heads of establishments, that is, the Wardens of all the residential units, go for regular meetings to discuss their problems. Many people have for a long time recognised that dividing people into categories is not only impracticable but undesirable and they have now attempted to do something about it with a change of attitude ... a great many injustices in residential life ... are brought about by the use of labels ... It is this attitude which is responsible for the injustices. Oliver Twist didn't get that extra bowl of gruel because of the attitude ... Attitudes are the main stumbling block, change that and you change everything ..."

The same correspondent proposes that we should start by concentrating on one London Borough, approach the Director of Social Services and heads of every residential establishment, and call a meeting of all 'categories', with a group therapist in attendance.

We shall have to consider some of these criticisms in detail as our discussions get going. Here I would just make two points. One is that attitudes do not exist in a vacuum; the real question is what causes particular attitudes, and what changes them? The second point is that if Local Authorities are so progressive and enlightened, why is it that they are building fifty or so more residential hostels for the disabled instead of pursuing the kind of alternatives the disabled want?

Paul Hunt, 1973

Appendix D – UPIAS Policy Conference, 1974

“Draft No. 2. July, 1974” [circulated in advance]

Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation

AIMS

1. The Union aims to have all segregated facilities for physically impaired people replaced by arrangements for us to participate fully in society.
2. We seek for all physically impaired people the necessary financial, medical, technical, educational and other necessary help from the State to enable us to gain the maximum possible independence in daily living activities, to achieve mobility, to undertake productive work, and to live where and how we choose with full control over our lives.

POLICY STATEMENT

3. Disability and Segregation.

Britain in the 1970s has the necessary knowledge and the advanced technology to bring physically impaired people into the mainstream of life and enable us to contribute fully to society. But instead of the country's resources being concentrated on basic human problems such as ours, they are frequently wasted on projects like Concorde and Centre Point, and on making sophisticated weapons of destruction. So despite the creation today of such an enormous capacity, which could help overcome disability, the way this capacity is misdirected means that many physically impaired people are still unnecessarily barred from full participation in society. We find ourselves isolated and excluded by such things as flights of steps, inadequate public and personal transport, unsuitable housing, rigid work routines in factories and offices, and a lack of up-to-date aids and equipment.

4. There are a few individual examples of severely impaired people being able to overcome many of these barriers by the use of sufficient resources in the right way. They prove that integration is possible. But as a group we are still often forced to put up with segregated and inferior

facilities. We get sent to special schools, colleges or training centres. We are dumped in segregated factories, centres, Homes, hostels and clubs. When we **do** manage to become mobile, it is often in antiquated tricycles or specially labelled transport. All these segregated forms of help represented progress in years past. But since the means for integration now undoubtedly exists, our confinement to segregated facilities is increasingly oppressive and dehumanising.

5. Recent advances.

The struggles of disabled people and their relatives and friends, together with advances in technology and medical science, have it is true resulted in larger numbers of us participating more fully in ordinary society in recent years. Some of the barriers which segregate us have been partially overcome or dismantled. So a good proportion of people with paraplegia, or those who are blind, for example, have become able to work and to lead relatively active lives which would have been hard to imagine less than 50 years ago. These developments have meant a positive shift in the attitudes of some able-bodied people as they have responded to our presence amongst them.

6. Such advances show that general attitudes can be changed for the better. They also point to our increased participation in society as the principal means for achieving further change. But they cannot blind us to what remains the basic reality of the position of disabled people as a group. This society is based on the necessity for people to compete in the labour market in order to earn a living. To the employer of labour, the physically impaired are not usually as good a buy as the non-impaired. We therefore end up at or near the bottom of this society as an oppressed group.

7. Low bargaining-power.

When we do succeed in getting employment, our comparatively low productivity means that we have low bargaining-power when it comes to negotiating decent treatment and facilities. Physically impaired people are discriminated against in many ways. Our position is similar to that of many people who are middle-aged or elderly, who have had breakdowns, or are 'mentally handicapped', black, ex-prisoners, unskilled workers etc. We are usually among the first to lose our jobs

and be cast on the scrap-heap when it suits the 'needs' of the economy. If we're lucky we may be drawn in again, to do the worst paid work, when business starts to boom once more. If we're unlucky, then we face a lifetime on the degrading, means-tested poverty line. If we're very unlucky we may be consigned to a life-destroying institution.

8. Institutions - the ultimate human scrap-heaps.

The Union of the Physically Impaired believes that the reality of our position as an oppressed group can be seen most clearly in segregated residential institutions, the ultimate human scrap-heaps of this society. Thousands of people, whose only crime is being physically impaired, are sentenced to these prisons for life - which may these days be a long one. For the vast majority there is no alternative, no appeal, no remission of sentence for good behaviour, no escape except the escape from life itself.

9. The cruelty, petty humiliation, and physical and mental deprivation suffered in residential institutions, where isolation and segregation have been carried to extremes, lays bare the essentially oppressive relations of this society with its physically impaired members. As in most similar places, such as special schools, there are some staff and volunteers doing their best to help the residents. But their efforts are systematically overwhelmed by the basic function of segregated institutions, which is to look after batches of disabled people and in the process convince them that they cannot realistically expect to earn a good living and participate fully in society. This function was generally appropriate when special residential institutions first came into being, since in the competitive conditions of the time many physically impaired people could not even survive without their help. But now that it **has** become increasingly possible for severely impaired people not just to survive, but also to work and become fully integrated, the need for segregated institutions no longer exists in the way it did. They have become seriously out of step with the changed social and technological conditions of Britain today.

10. Support for residents' struggles.

The Union of the Physically Impaired regards the neglected issue of institutions as of **crucial importance** in the field of disability. We therefore place great emphasis on supporting the struggles of residents

in existing residential institutions for better conditions, for full control over their personal affairs, and for a democratic say in the management of their Home, Centre or Unit. The Union strongly opposes all attempts by the authorities to impose restrictions on visiting; to fix times for getting into and out of bed; to limit residents' freedom to come in and go out when they wish; to enforce medical and nursing opinions, or to transfer residents to other institutions against their will.

11. The Union sees a need for a Charter which will focus on basic rights often denied when people are dependent on others for personal needs. Disabled people living in institutions will be offered help if they wish to organise locally in defence of their rights. The Union will develop an advice and mutual-help service to assist with negotiations, formation of residents' committees, etc. When asked, we will mobilise support and publicity on a national basis for those involved in particular struggles.

12. Alternatives needed.

The Union is opposed to the building of any further segregated institutions by the State or by voluntary organisations. We believe that providing adequate services to people in their own homes is a much better use of resources. We also call urgently for the provision of non-institutional alternative housing, such as the Fokus scheme in Sweden, which makes genuine progress towards secure, integrated, and active living for disabled people who need extensive personal help. The Union will try to assist anyone who seeks to move out - or stay out - of an institution. But we fully respect the feelings of individuals who regard institutional life as their best solution at the present time

13. Real choice.

The Union's eventual object is to achieve a situation where as physically impaired people we all have the means to **choose** where and how we wish to live. This will involve the phasing out of segregated institutions maintained by the State or charities. While any of these institutions are maintained at huge cost, it is inconceivable that we will all receive in addition the full resources needed to provide us with a genuine opportunity to live as we choose. This point applies not just to residential Homes, hospital units, hostels, villages and settlements, but also to other kinds of segregated facilities. As long as there are vastly

expensive special schools, colleges and day-centres, heavily subsidised workshops and factories, and separate holiday camps and hotels, there can be no question of sufficient alternative provision being made to ensure that we all have real opportunity of equal participation in normal educational, work and leisure activities.

14. Disablement outside institutions.

Our Union maintains that the present existence of segregated institutions and facilities is of direct relevance even for less severely impaired people who may expect to avoid having to use them. Those of us who live outside institutions can fully understand the meaning of disability in this society only when we take account of what happens to the people who come at the bottom of our particular pile. Their existence and their struggles are an essential part of the reality of disability, and to ignore them is like assessing the condition of elderly people in this society without considering the existence of geriatric wards.

15. It is also true that the kind of prejudiced attitudes we all experience - other people being asked if we take sugar in our tea is the usual example - are related to the continued unnecessary existence of sheltered institutions. Those who patronise us are indicating that they think we are not capable of participating fully and making our own decisions. They are harking back to the time when disabled people had to be sheltered much more, and they imply that really we ought to be back in our **rightful place** - that is, a special school, club, hospital unit, Home or workshop. Physically impaired people will never be fully accepted in ordinary society while segregated institutions continue to exist, if only because their unnecessary survival today reinforces out of date attitudes and prejudices.

16. Medical tradition.

Both inside and outside institutions, the traditional way of dealing with disabled people has been for doctors and other professionals to decide what is best for us. It is of course a fact that we sometimes require skilled medical help to treat our physical impairments - operations, drugs and nursing care. We may also need therapists to help restore or maintain physical function, and to advise us on aids to independence and mobility. But the imposition of medical authority, and of a medical

definition of our problems of living in society, have to be resisted strongly. First and foremost we are **people**, not 'patients', 'cases', 'spastics', 'the deaf', 'the blind', 'wheelchairs' or 'the sick'. Our Union rejects entirely any idea of medical or other experts having the right to tell us how we should live, or withhold information from us, or take decisions behind our backs.

17. We reject also the whole idea of 'experts' and professionals holding forth on how we should accept our disabilities, or giving learned lectures about the 'psychology' of disablement. We already know what it feels like to be poor, isolated, segregated, done good to, stared at, and talked down to - far better than any able-bodied expert. We as a Union are not interested in descriptions of how awful it is to be disabled. What we **are** interested in, are ways of **changing our conditions of life**, and thus **overcoming** the disabilities which are imposed on top of our physical impairments by the way this society is organised to exclude us. In our view, it is only the actual impairment which we must accept; the additional and totally unnecessary problems caused by the way we are treated are essentially to be overcome and **not** accepted. We look forward to the day when the army of 'experts' on our social and psychological problems can find more productive work.

18. The right kind of help.

We know that as a small, weak, minority group, disabled people cannot achieve a fully human life by their own efforts alone. We need and welcome the help of sympathetic able-bodied people. But the basic problem we face is our exclusion from full social participation. It follows that this oppressive situation can be put right only by disabled people actually taking a more active part in society. The efforts of professionals and other able-bodied people are therefore really constructive only when they build on and encourage the self-help and activity of disabled people themselves. This is why our energies as a Union will be directed mainly towards discussion and common action with other disabled people. Neither we as a Union, nor able-bodied people, can solve other disabled peoples' problems for them. Those problems will be correctly tackled precisely to the extent that we all as disabled people become involved and active in our own rehabilitation.

19. The need for a Union.

Disabled people everywhere are already struggling against their isolation, segregation and other forms of oppression. Every day each of us has to face our own individual problems. And we are now increasingly getting together in groups to tackle more effectively the problems we find we have in common. This is shown by the vast growth of disability organisations in the last 25 years in Britain. Our Union takes this process of coming together a stage further. We are not restricted to one aspect of physical disability (e.g., mobility or incomes), nor to people with one medical diagnosis, nor to those in one locality. The Union exists simply to offer help to all physically impaired people in the fight to change the conditions of life which oppress us and to realise our full human potential.

20. Action.

Various kinds of action in support of disabled people's struggles will be undertaken by the Union. Apart from publishing pamphlets and an open Newsletter, we will mount action campaigns on various issues. We will build up information and advice services, and organise financial, secretarial and other forms of practical assistance. For example, individuals may ask for help in fighting bureaucratic delays and inefficiency, or a refusal to provide equipment, aids or other kinds of service. Other people may want assistance in tackling organisations about the provision of ramps or lifts in buildings. Residents in institutions may seek help and national publicity if they are victimised by the authorities. People in sheltered workshops or centres may ask our support in -- their struggles to improve their appalling rates of pay. The Union will succeed only when it helps to achieve real benefits and improved conditions for disabled people.

21. Guidelines for action.

But our actions will become more effective if we make sure that we also learn from the practical struggles which take place. So an essential part of the Union's task is to develop increasingly clear guide-lines for further action. We will do this by careful discussion about what we and other disabled people are doing, and about the real nature of the problems we face at a particular time, We need to learn from our failures and

successes, and so develop arguments and a theory which have been proved to work - because they do actually bring about practical gains for disabled people. In this way the value of our practical experience will be multiplied many times over, as the essential lessons learned from it are made available to other disabled people now and in the future.

22. Terms of membership.

Full membership of the Union is open to residents of Britain who are significantly physically impaired and who accept the Policies and Constitution, Full members are expected to take some active part in Union affairs, since the Union is firmly based on the conviction that as disabled people we can only make real progress through actively struggling for change. Members will of course have different capacities at different times, and 'active' here means at least some involvement in discussion of policy. Disabled people who feel they cannot at present contribute in this way may keep in touch by subscribing to our open Newsletter.

23. Able-bodied people who agree with the Union Policies and Constitution can become Associate members. Associate members may receive the open Newsletter and other publications, and may take part in meetings, discussions and other events from time to time. But they are not entitled to vote on Union affairs, nor may they hold any Union office. Genuine supporters will recognise the need for us to control our own Union and so develop our powers of decision, organisation and action. They will understand too, that since we experience daily the actual reality of disability, we are less likely than able-bodied people to be deceived about the true nature of our oppression and the radical changes necessary to overcome it.

24. Other oppressed groups.

The particular forms which oppression takes in this society differ somewhat for each distinct oppressed group. Some, such as people who are called 'mentally handicapped', or those labelled 'mentally ill', clearly have a great deal in common with us. Full membership of our Union is however based simply on the fact of physical impairment. This is because we believe the important thing at the moment is to **clarify** the facts of our situation and the problems associated with physical

impairment. But it is fundamental to our approach that we will seek to work with other oppressed groups and support their struggles to achieve a decent life. What **all** oppressed people share is a vital interest in changing society to overcome oppression, and the Union is therefore anxious to join in common action to achieve such change.

25. Democratic control.

Democratic control of the Union rests with all full members, and policy is decided on a majority basis after thorough discussion in a confidential Circular or at General Meetings. Full discussion of policy by members is necessary if we are continually to develop our action and thinking along the right lines. But once decisions have been made, members undertake not to oppose them publicly while they wish to remain in the Union. Both elements in this combination are regarded as essential for genuine progress - thorough **internal** discussion by members, together with a refusal to indulge in **public** criticism of Union policies.

26. Day-to-day decisions on Union affairs are in the hands of an Executive Committee, elected by, and responsible to, all full members. The Executive Committee holds the Union funds. It arranges for the production of the internal Circular, the regular open Newsletter, and of occasional pamphlets and other publications. The Committee also speaks and acts officially for the Union on the basis of agreed policy. The overall task of the Committee within the Union is to facilitate the active participation and development of all members.

27. Special-interest groups.

Special-interest groups within the Union will be formed by members concerned with a particular aspect of disability. Examples may include residents' rights in institutions, incomes, employment, special education, provision of aids and equipment, housing alternatives in Britain and overseas, medical and technical research, rehabilitation. Within the general principles of the Union, these groups will work out actions and ideas based on their special interests and experiences. Reports by them on particular topics will be published in the name of the Union from time to time.

28. Finance.

All registered charities receive valuable tax concessions, but they are not allowed to campaign directly for political change. We regard political involvement as essential if disabled people are ever to make real advances. So in order to protect our independence of action we are not registered with the Charity Commissioners. Nor do we intend to appeal for funds publicly in the name of the Union. We believe the time has come for an organisation in the disability field which does not depend heavily on public fund-raising. We shall be free to speak and act on the basis of Union members' views rather than those of financial supporters and noble patrons. Union expenses will be met by subscriptions, by donations, and by such means as the sale of literature.

29. Other disability organisations.

The Union aims to ensure that all the organisations concerned with disability become fully democratic and responsive to the real needs and wishes of disabled people. We therefore seek a much greater say in all the organisations which affect our lives, both by Union members as individuals and by other disabled people. Any official Union representatives appointed to Committees of other groups will promote Union policies and report back regularly to members. In addition, the Union will keep a watchful, independent eye on the policies and practice of all disability organisations. We will try not to duplicate effort, and will welcome constructive comment and help from other groups. We will ourselves offer support and co-operation whenever possible. But the Union will not hesitate to speak out freely, and act independently, when we believe the interests of disabled people require it. It will be for disabled people as a whole to judge whether or not we are correct.

APPENDIX TO POLICY STATEMENT

FROM [redacted]

Quite a lengthy correspondence has resulted in a number of amendments to the original draft. Not all of my suggested amendments have been embodied in this document. The counter-arguments brought against some of them were revealing and informative. For instance (re

para. 14) I suggested we change the word 'struggles' since I had not myself encountered many strugglers in institutions. Paul rightly pointed out that there are many ways in which disabled people do struggle - not necessarily overtly: even apathy and depression can be negative ways of refusing to co-operate and put up the smiling front most institutions would like to be seen. Other suggested amendments resulted in modifications after some passing to and fro – and some of the point brought out were not pursued even though I was not entirely happy with Paul's suggested reformulations. An example of this is para. 3, where the re-draft, having cleared up one point, then went on to include, specific examples of misdirected resources. My feeling - in this particular instance - is that a more simple, general statement would be better.

Although I am, in the main, in agreement with the document - there are some points which have not been raised (or pursued) mainly because of constraints of time, the dispersed nature of our organisation - or where the issues seem to me too subjective to be worthwhile taking up (eg, whether or not the 'tone' of the document is too negative).

FROM [redacted]

Concerning para. 13 it seems there is a contradiction to say to people that the Union's eventual object is to achieve a situation where as physically impaired people we all have the means to **choose** where and how we wish to live - and then tell them that this will involve the abolition of segregated institutions. This does not allow a choice for the very severely dependent disabled person who needs the security of knowing that there are care staff close at hand at all times.

Re para 18 I think it would be a pity if we half wasted the talent we have in our group by 'directing our energies mainly towards discussion and common action with other disabled people'. In order to be allowed to take a more active part in society many attitudes still need to be changed, so we ought to try and influence as many people as possible.

Constitution

1. Name.

The name of the Union is the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation.

2. Aims and Objects.

The Union aims to have all segregated facilities for physically impaired people replaced by arrangements for us to participate fully in society. The Union seeks for all physically impaired people the necessary financial, medical, technical, educational and other necessary help from the State to enable us to gain the maximum possible independence in daily living activities, to achieve mobility, to undertake productive work, and to live where and how we choose with full control over our lives.

3. Membership.

(a) Full membership is open to residents of Britain who are aged 18 or over, who are significantly physically impaired, and who accept the Policies and Constitution of the Union.

(b) Junior membership of the Union is open to residents of Britain who are aged less than 18, who are significantly physically impaired, and who accept the Policies and Constitution of the Union. (Note. This separate category is included only because there may be legal requirements to limit full membership to people who are over 18).

(c) Overseas membership is open to people normally resident overseas who are significantly physically impaired, and who accept the Policies and Constitution of the Union.

(d) Associate membership is open to people who are not significantly physically impaired, but who accept the Policies and Constitution of the Union.

(e) Junior and Overseas members have all rights in the Union except the right to vote or to hold Union office.

(f) Associate members may take part in meetings, discussions, any other events at the invitation of the Union, and may receive the Newsletter and

other publications. They do not however have the right to vote, to hold Union office, or to take part in policy discussions through the internal Circular or at General Meetings.

(g) The subscription for all types of membership will be determined by the Union from time to time, and membership of each kind will lapse unless the appropriate subscription is paid within three months of January 1st each year.

(h) The Executive Committee (referred to below) has power to refuse applications for all types of membership. They must however in such event inform all full members of the reasons for such a decision at the earliest reasonable opportunity, and their decision may be reversed by a vote of full members. Similarly the Executive Committee has power to expel members who in their view are acting contrary to the Policies and Constitution of the Union, where discussion has failed to resolve the matter. The member concerned is entitled to a written statement of the Committee's reasons for expulsion, and has the right of appeal through the Circular to a vote of full members.

4. Circular and General Meetings.

(a) Because of the dispersed membership, and mobility problems, the principal means of formulating and deciding policy will be a confidential circular which will be sent to all full, junior and overseas members at least 4 times a year. All members except Associate members are entitled to have their views printed in the Circular up to a limit in a particular issue of a number of words to be decided from time to time. Proposals for changes in Union policy, or for major Union decisions, put forward by the Executive Committee or by 6 or more members in the Circular, will be decided by a secret postal ballot, with each full member having one vote. This vote is to be arranged by the Executive Committee as soon as practicable and in any case within no more than three months of a reasonable degree of discussion having been possible through the Circular on the proposal.

(b) All votes in the Union, including those in any Committees, will be by a simple majority of those voting. Such a majority may decide to hold a General Meeting which all full and junior members will be entitled to attend. Notice of resolutions and any other business to be transacted will

be sent to all full, junior and oversee e members at least 1 month beforehand, and arrangements will be made for full members unable to attend to vote by post if they so request. In the event of any dispute about voting, resolutions, elections or other Union business, the Executive Committee will have the right of decision, but if six or more full members wish a vote of all full members must be arranged on the point in question with three months.

5. Executive Committee.

(a) An Executive Committee of the Union will be elected annually, by secret ballot of all the full members if there is more than one candidate for a position. Any full member may volunteer or be nominated by another full member for a position on the Committee. In the event of vacancies occurring between elections, the vacant position may be filled by the Executive Committee co-opting a full member of their choosing. Any member of the Executive Committee may be removed from office at any time by the vote of a majority of all full members voting in a ballot called at the request of at least one fifth of all full members at the time.

(b) The Executive Committee will consist of: a Co-ordinator; a General Secretary; a Treasurer; a Membership Secretary; an Information Secretary (for disabled people); a Publicity Secretary; the Editors of the Internal Circular and the Open Newsletter; and four Regional Secretaries, that is one for Scotland, one for Wales and the West, one for the North and Midlands, and one for London and the South East.

(c) Members of the Executive Committee may speak and act officially in the name of the Union on the basis of the Union Policies and Constitution. Each Executive Committee member is personally responsible to the Union as a whole for the carrying out of the functions of her or his office, but as far as is practicable they will consult each other and act together as a Committee. The Committee as a whole is responsible for controlling Union funds and property, and for ensuring that proper books are kept and full account of Union finance is given at least annually to all members.

(d) The Committee will draw up guide-lines for its own conduct, and the distribution of responsibilities between its members, for the approval of the Union.

(e) The overall purpose of the Committee within the Union is to facilitate the active participation and development of members in fulfilling the aims of the Union. The purpose of the Union is to offer help to members and other disabled people in our struggle to change the conditions which isolate, segregate and oppress us.

Report of UPIAS Conference Held in London, 18th - 20th October 1974

Present: [a redacted list of 18 members].

Members who have indicated they want a postal vote: [a redacted list of 15 members].

It was agreed that [a member] should chair the Policy discussions, and the four members of the Interim Committee should start with brief comments. It was then proposed that [a member's] amendment (on page 4 of the last Circular – i.e. No. 11, not No. 10 as was put on the heading in error) should be considered as, if approved, it would alter the whole basis for the policy discussions. However, [the member] indicated that he only wanted [this] amendment to be used if it should prove impossible to reach agreement on the original draft. So the Conference proceeded to go through Draft No.2 (as circulated) clause by clause, attempting to reach a united view before putting any disputed points to the vote.

The proposed name of the Union was considered first. The objection was raised that the name said we were against segregation, yet we intended practising it ourselves with regard to able-bodied people. Also that the name would tend to put people [off] by being too uncompromising. In answer it was argued that we should start from the fact that disabled people **are** segregated, set apart, by society, through no choice of our own, and we should recognise this fact and resist our opposition to it. Also that, while avoiding unnecessary provocation, it was a good thing to have a name which challenged people, and good to the arguments which may result, as this was one way of helping to change people's attitudes. A proposal to change the word 'segregation' to 'discrimination' did not get much support. It was proposed by [a member] and seconded by [a member] that we should be called The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (Union of the Physically Impaired would be enough for many purposes), and this was agreed with no dissent.(1).

A long discussion then took place on the proposed Aims. The objection was raised that the Union ought not to want **all** segregated facilities replaced because people would always need them, and also because there was a contradiction between this first aim and the later one of seeking, the means of living 'where and how we choose', we ought to stand above all for everyone having the **choice** of integrated or segregated facilities. In reply, the point was made that we could not simply stand for choice, for people being free in some abstract way to choose segregation (like choosing slavery), since it was necessary to do away with segregated facilities before everyone could have a real chance of full integration. Also, we should speak only for ourselves, and not claim to speak for others as many disability organisations do. The justification for the Union was that we thought there was something wrong and wanted to put forward our own view on this, and if we wanted integration we should say so clearly and with a united voice, leaving other people to speak for themselves if they disagreed.

[A member] proposed that the Aims should read: 'The Union believes fundamentally that physically impaired people do not choose to live in segregated facilities, and therefore we seek the necessary financial, medical, technical, and educational facilities so the physically impaired people can make a true choice'. However this was withdrawn when it met with little support, and it was argued that the statement that people do not choose segregation was not necessarily true; the only way of finding out was by opinion surveys, and at this point in time when no real alternatives were available to many people they might well say they wanted segregated facilities.

It was questioned how the Aim of 'living where and how we choose' related to the fact that many other people in our society could not do this, and in answer it was suggested that we ought to fully support other people's efforts to achieve a decent life too - hence the later paragraph on links with other oppressed groups. It was accepted by the meeting that the necessary **arrangements** for integration should be stressed, as there could be no question of doing away with segregated facilities unless the alternatives became available.

There was discussion about whether the word 'state' should be replaced by 'society' or 'State and society', as some argued that reliance on

bureaucracy was implied by the word State. It was said in reply that the idea was that the State should provide our basic needs **as of right** as a basis for integration, to do away with reliance on charity for this purpose. The word 'State' was left as it was after discussion, with the proviso that the matter could be raised later in the Conference again if anyone wanted (in the event it wasn't).

Just before lunch, [a member] raised the question of using [their] proposed amendment (see page 4, Circular 11) as the basis for further discussion, but instead the meeting agreed without any objections to accepting the Aims (as amended) in principle, with the option of coming back to them after going through the rest of the policy. The amended version of the Aims, agreed by the Conference, was as follows: 'The Union aims to have all segregated facilities for physically impaired people replaced by arrangements for us to participate fully in society. These arrangements must include the necessary financial, medical, technical, educational and other help required from the State to enable us to gain the maximum possible independence in daily living activities, to achieve mobility, to undertake productive work, and to live where and how we choose with full control over our lives.(2)

After lunch there was a long discussion on Paragraph 3 of the draft Policy. It was unanimously agreed to substitute the word 'today' for 'in the 1970s' as giving more immediacy. (3). But much time was spent on the questions of whether or not to include the suggested examples of 'wasted' resources - Concorde, Centre Point and weapons of destruction. It was strongly objected that such examples would divert attention away from disability, and lead to unnecessary, contentious, political arguments. It was also maintained that Concorde could not yet be said to be wasted since it might still sell, and since there was much useful spin-off of technical advance. And it was argued that Centre Point, as a privately funded project, was a different case from the others mentioned. In reply, it was maintained that it would be a good thing to enter into arguments about the priorities in distribution' of resources in Britain. We should be political, though not Party political, and our existence as a Union was only justified if we thought the present priorities were wrong. We must be able to say what things needed to be changed to enable us to be integrated. It was acknowledged generally

that useful spin-off from projects like Concorde did take place, but it was argued by some that we now needed to urge a new way of allocating resources so that ordinary human problems were put first. The distinction between public and private expenditure was acknowledged, but the action or inaction of the State in allowing such building as Centre Point, when thousands of disabled people, for example, had no inside toilet, was suggested as a reason for including such an example in our list.

The Conference as a whole was fully agreed that our society's order of priorities needed to be changed if disabled people were ever to be integrated, and the main point of difference emerged simply as whether or not to include specific examples in the Policy. The objectors thought it would only lead to spurious arguments, those in favour thought it better to have generally agreed examples rather than leave it to anyone speaking on behalf of the Union to choose their own and maybe find different people saying very different things in the name of us all. A vote was taken on the principle of whether or not to include any examples at all, the result was 10 votes to 8 in favour. (4). There was then further discussion of words. 'Wasted' was replaced by 'mis-spent', to allow for the fact that almost any project could be said not to be entirely wasted; the fact that the list was only of examples was stressed; and 'sophisticated weapons' were placed first. The sentence as amended and voted on was: 'But instead of the country's resources being concentrated on basic human problems like ours, they are frequently misspent, for example on sophisticated weapons of destruction, and on projects like Concorde and Centre Point.' (To replace sentence 2, paragraph 3). In the light of the previous vote, accepting the principle of examples, the Conference voted unanimously to accept the amended sentence. (5). It was also agreed by everyone that, whatever the outcome of the final vote, the Union should produce a supporting document on the misdirection of resources, for voting on through the Internal Circular.

Para. 4. The paragraph was criticised for being too emotional and/or emotive, and the suitability of several words was questioned. On the question of being emotional, it was argued by several members that it was necessary and entirely appropriate to be emotional about the

conditions of institutional life, and we had no need to be ashamed of having strong feelings about situations which were wrong. Being angry about segregation was good, provided only that we did not let this distort the arguments we used and hinder us from dealing with the other side's arguments. The general objection to the paragraph was not pursued but it was agreed to substitute the words 'systematically channelled into' for the words 'dumped in' (line 5), and the word 'If' for the word 'When' (line 6). The word 'help' in line 2 was questioned, and 'care' or 'attention' were suggested as alternatives, but eventually 'care' was confirmed by 11 votes to 0. (6).

Two other objections – to the words 'antiquated' and 'specially labelled' were withdrawn after discussion. And an objection to the first sentence, on the grounds that it was individual character rather than 'the use of sufficient resources in the right way' which produced integration, was not pursued. So the paragraph was accepted as amended. (7).

Para 5. A query as to whether 'a good proportion' in line 5 was appropriate was raised but not pursued after discussion, and the paragraph as it stood was approved. (8).

Para 6. Approved. (9).

Para 7. It was agreed to delete the sentence, 'Physically impaired people are discriminated against in many ways' as it did not add to the argument, and that the word 'could' should be inserted between the words 'we' and 'face' in line 9 to allow for the fact that some unemployed people did not have to rely on means-tested benefits. The statement that disabled people, and black people, are usually among the first to lose their jobs was queried, but thought to be accurate, although the lack of figures on points like this was a weakness which the special-interest groups would be able to remedy. The main objection raised was to the idea of institutions as life-destroying, and in addition the point was argued that they were not necessarily destructive at all. In reply, it was argued that one of the few things the experts had done that was useful was to show the effects of institutional living on people as basically destructive, although the residents and other people associated with them often struggled to produce many good things **despite** the institutional situation. It was argued by many people that soul-destroying

was a better description than life-destroying, because it focused on the fact that residents may pin physically but decline mentally in institutions. The substitution of 'soul' for 'life' in the last line was approved, and the paragraph as amended was agreed. (10). The objection to the description of institutions as destructive was not pursued, but it was noted and the suggestion made that it was something to take up again in the Circulars if desired.

Para 8. The word 'prison' and the associated phrases, were objected to as being too emotional and inaccurate. But many members said they thought them apt, and gave examples of the prison-like rules and condition which existed in the majority of institutions. It was also argued again that it was a good thing to get angry about the situation, and decent able-bodied people would share our anger when they knew what was going on. It was officials and administrators, with an interest in keeping things as they are, who would accuse us of having chips on our shoulders etc. It was true that people in institutions would have to bear the brunt of hostile reactions, but instead of retreating the Union must ensure that support and help were offered. After discussion, the objection to the word 'prisons' was not pursued. It was agreed to insert the word 'still' before 'no alternative' in line 5, and with this amendment the paragraph was approved. (11).

Para 9. It was agreed to reverse a phrase in lines 2 and 9 so that it would read: '... expect to participate fully in society and earn a good living.' With this amendment the paragraph was approved. (12).

Para 10. It was queried whether residents who were sick rather than disabled should have the right to reject medical advice. Most members thought that this was a basic right enjoyed by non-disabled people except when they were too ill to make their own decisions and the same should apply to us. The point was not pursued and the paragraph was approved. (13).

Para 11. The point was made that the paragraph contained some far-reaching promises, which must be kept. It was stressed that help must be forthcoming when residents in institutions met with the backlash which would come from publication of the Union's policies. We could build on past experience of members in knowing how to offer support,

but must to some extent develop new tactics as we enter a new situation. The importance of 'outside' visitors and supporters, who could not be intimidated, was emphasised, as was the need to try to make struggles collective. It was stressed that the Union, while having a need to assess any situation for itself, must be fundamentally on the side of residents in any involvement undertaken. Paragraph approved. (14).

(Note: [a member] had to leave at this point, and [their] votes on subsequent issues may be registered by post)

Para 12. The words 'such as' in Line 5 were replaced by the words 'along the lines of', to take account of some doubts about how well the progressive Fokus principles were being practised in Sweden. It was asked how the Union would be able to 'assist people seeking to move out - or stay out - of an institution', and suggested in reply that we could do little until our resources developed but at least we could help by writing letters for people, pressurising authorities etc. The paragraph agreed as amended. (15).

Para 13. The inclusion of holiday camps and hotels in the list of segregated facilities to be phased out was questioned, and it was suggested that they would fade quietly away as demand for them dropped. However, the principle of wanting all segregated facilities replaced by integrated facilities, including holiday arrangements, had already been accepted by the Conference, and the matter was not pursued. The paragraph was approved. (13)

Para 14. Approved, with the word 'group' replacing the word 'pile' in line 6. (17)

Para 15. Approved. (18)

Para 16. Approved. (19)

Para 17. The first sentence, looking forward to the re-deployment of experts in disability, was questioned as being simply sarcastic. But after hearing example of the work of some experts the sentence was accepted as valid and the paragraph approved as written. (20)

Para 18. It was suggested that directing Union energies mainly towards other disabled people was inward-looking. But this was denied by other members, who argued that the Union should be different from other

organisations which were mainly interested in talking with officials, etc, instead of disabled people themselves who are the very ones who must become active if the problems are to be tackled properly. The paragraph was approved. (21).

Para 19. The paragraph was approved, but it was suggested that it might go first in any other shortened versions of the Policy. (22).

Para 20. It was stressed again that we were making big promises which must be kept. To make it clear that we could not do everything straight away the words 'as resources become available.' were added at the end of the end of the first sentence. The paragraph as amended was approved. (23).

Para 21. Approved. (24).

Para 22. Although the principle of all members being active was not questioned by most, some were concerned that we might be making it impossible for some disabled people to join at all. After a long discussion, it was agreed to add a sentence stressing that help would be given to anyone who had difficulties in taking part. This was agreed as: 'We are sympathetic to the fact that some potential members may have problems of communication, and the Union will give encouragement and help in these circumstances.' This was to be inserted between the last two sentences and the last one would then follow on: 'However, disabled people who feel etc...' With this amendment the paragraph was approved. (25)

Para 23. As the formal amendment (see Circular 11, Amendment A, page 3) by [a member] had some bearing on this paragraph, it was agreed to discuss the principle of the proposed change at this point. If the principle was accepted, then the small change to other paragraphs under this amendment would be taken as agreed since they followed from the principle. It was argued in favour of the amendment that while it had been right to restrict membership to physically impaired people while we worked out our basic policies, now that a strong policy looked like being agreed the position had changed. Able-bodied members should be accepted as associate members with full rights in the Union, except the right to vote or to hold office. Provided these safeguards to prevent domination were kept, and provided also that full members could

select which people they wanted as associate members, then some able-bodied people should be allowed to contribute to policy discussion. People who were on our side could offer much of value in the development of the Union.

A long discussion took place on this question, with many members arguing strongly against able-bodied people's involvement in policy discussions. Most members thought it was a question of tactics, of when was the right moment to open up the Union to genuine supporters. But it was argued that now was not the moment, that we should first gain practical experience and develop a strong sense of identity in the Union before risking; fuller able-bodied participation than was allowed for in the present draft. It was thought able-bodied people might come to dominate the Internal Circular discussions and any meetings, and would tend to push the Union in the direction of compromising; our basic principles - for example if we were offered a large sum of money provided we registered as a charity. The members in favour of the amendment argued in return that some kind of able-bodied people would have positive rather than negative contributions to make, and we should not operate a blanket discrimination at all. Various possible safeguards against undesirable people infiltration, and a variety of possible arrangements for expulsion and control, were suggested, but the Conference remained strongly divided on the proposed amendment. Those opposed argued that with all the risks, and in view of the lack of confidence of many members that they could cope at the moment with able-bodied people's contributions to policy, the proposal should be left aside for the time being. However, the proposer ([a member]) said [they] wished the matter put to [a] vote, though [they] indicated that [they] would be withdrawing the amendment once all the votes were cast, in view of the present division of opinion on such a vital matter for the Union. [They] would be raising the question again later.

So the **principle** of able-bodied associate members having the right to contribute to policy discussion was put to the vote, linked with the following safeguards: (a) associate members to be proposed and seconded by full members who would give their reasons in the Circular: (b) the prospective associate members to write down their reasons for wanting to join, and these also to be circulated to all members; and (c.) if

10% or more of full members objected the proposed associate members not to be admitted. The vote on this principle, linked with the safeguards, was 10 against and 7 in favour. (26).

Para 24. Approved. (27).

Para 25. Approved. (23). It was suggested that if members found they were losing arguments with outsiders, they should write to the Internal Circular to get other members views.

Para 26. Approved. (29).

Para 27. Approved. (30).

Para 28. Approved after brief discussion. (31).

Para 29. Approved after brief discussion. (32).

Note: It was agreed during discussions that a sentence should be added to indicate that we spoke for ourselves and hoped that disabled people who disagreed with us would put forward their views. The following sentence was suggested for inclusion at the end of paragraph 12. 'We understand also that some disabled people will disagree with our views on segregation, and we hope that they will organise to put forward their arguments too'. Approved. (33).

Constitution

Paras 1 and 2 were assumed to be agreed by previous votes.

Para 3. As previously agreed the proposed changed to this and other paragraphs in [a member's] amendment re: associate members were assumed to be decided by the vote on the principle (see paragraph 23 discussion). The words 'called at the request of 10% or more full members' were inserted at the end of line 4, section (h), after the words 'vote of full members'. With this amendment, the paragraph 3 containing eight clauses was approved. (34).

Para 4 (a). [A member's] amendment to make all votes in the Union open instead of secret was accepted by 15 votes to 0 with two abstentions. (35). It was argued in support that as Union members we should come out openly in support of our views, and argue for them, to develop a new approach to conflicts amongst members - partly as a training ground for facing with confidence the far sharper conflicts we

should meet with outside. The possibility of some members being frightened to vote openly, particularly when voting for committee positions, was raised but not pursued after discussion. The words '6 or more' in line 7 were replaced by the words '10% or more full'. The paragraph as amended was approved. (36)

Para 4 (b). It was suggested that a two-thirds majority might be specified for some decisions, but the Conference thought this could be proposed for particular votes if 10% or more members wanted it. The question of someone having a casting vote was also raised but not pursued. The feeling was that a tied vote on a matter of importance should not be pushed through on the extra vote of one member. It was agreed that the words '6 or more' in lines 8 and 9 should be replaced by '10% or more', and with this amendment the clause was approved. (37).

Para 5 (a). The word 'secret' to be replaced by the word 'open'. On line 8 the words 'one-fifth' to be replaced with '10%'. The wisdom of allowing co-option by the Executive Committee until the next election was questioned, but not pursued.

It was pointed out that, unlike many other organisations, we had no co-opted members normally, so there was little risk of abuse. Approved as amended. (38).

Para 5 (b). [A member's] amendment (see Circular 11, page 3,C) was discussed, and modified with [their] agreement to mean the Executive Committee would consist of: A General Secretary; an Assistant General Secretary; Treasurer; Membership Secretary; Information Secretary; Internal Circular Editor; Open Newsletter Editor; and Regional Organisers (as previously suggested). Approved. (39). 0

Para 5, (c), (d), and (e) were approved. (40).

Tote: [A member] had to leave at this point, and will have a postal vote on to following resolutions).

Resolutions

Resolution 1. by [a member]. (see page 3 of Circular 11). The resolution, designed to take the Union to the point of having an elected Executive Committee, was approved, and the Interim Committee was asked to undertake the tasks specified. (41).

Resolution 2. by [a member]. (see page 3 of Circular 11). The words 'except Associate members' were added to line 5, after the words 'Open to all members', to take account of the present feeling against involving associate members in policy discussions. With this change, the Resolution was approved by 15 votes to 0 with one abstention. (42).

The Conference ended at this point, there being no time unfortunately for the scheduled discussions on various topics. A great deal of work was done during the 10 or so hours of discussion, and the general view seemed to be that a lot had been achieved and the foundations laid for a strong, united organisation which could offer constructive help to disabled people as a whole. This report is necessarily brief and incomplete, but we hope gives the main issues and votes. If anyone wants to object to anything in it we hope they'll do so through the Internal Circular. It seemed impracticable to try to get the approval of the Report from everyone who attend before circulating it for postal voting purposes.

The cassette tapes of the Conference cover the whole of the Policy discussions and part of the Constitution ones. They are very difficult to edit, so for the time being at any rate we suggest leaving them as they are for members to listen to if they wish. Two non-attenders have already asked to have them, but after this they will be available to others. We suggest that non-attenders have priority.

Please note that the contents of this Report, and of course the recordings, are assumed confidential in the same way as the Circulars. [Note: this version has confidential items including names redacted.]

We hope to produce another Circular fairly shortly, and any material for this should be sent to Ken Davis. This could carry any comments on the above report or the Conference itself, and members may like to begin taking up any issues which they feel haven't been fully discussed or resolved.

In any case, when the time allowed for postal voting (10 days) is up, the results will be sent out to us all together with a membership renewal form, a form for nominations to an Executive Committee, and a copy of the finally decided Policy and Constitution. (Please note, however, that

there is nothing to prevent amendment of the documents from time to time via the Circulars, as we develop).

The Interim Committee.

Appendix E – UPIAS Circular 45-A, 1981

THE UNION OF THE PHYSICALLY IMPAIRED AGAINST SEGREGATION

CONFIDENTIAL

June 1981

CIRCULAR 45-A

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URGENT ACTION

ALL MEMBERS SEE OVER

Nominate / Volunteer our Representative

SEE OVER - ACT NOW

CONFIDENTIAL - UPIAS CIRCULAR 45-A

JUNE 1981

Meeting last 13th June [1981]

This informal meeting of representatives of national organisations of disabled people was held as arranged. Vic Finkelstein and Ken Davis attended for the Union, [a member] being ill and unable to go.

Vic has prepared a report on this meeting, which is included in this Circular.

National Council

The meeting was called to discuss the Union's proposals for a National Council of organisations of disabled people, and the proposal was very positively received by the organisations. The idea of a National Council, and a Conference later this year to inaugurate it, was accepted in principle by all those at the meeting.

Steering Committee

It was decided that a formal Steering Committee be established to arrange and prepare for the Conference, and that this Committee should be composed for the present time of one representative from each of the groups who attended the meeting on 13th June.

Part of the work of the Steering Committee will be to draw up definite Constitutional proposals for the National Council, so that these can be fully discussed at the proposed Conference. Ken Davis has been working on this, as it was agreed on 13th June that the UPIAS representative at the first formal Steering Committee meeting would present some prepared ideas on this.

A copy of the draft Constitution follows Vic's report on the meeting.

THE UNION MUST NOW ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE

It was agreed that the first formal meeting of the Steering Committee would take place on 4th July at the Spinal Injuries Association office in London. Like all the other groups, UPIAS must send one representative to this meeting. The purpose of this rushed Circular is therefore to ask **all** members to nominate / volunteer / vote one of us to this task.

Obviously time is now very limited, and it is not possible for us to request nominations / volunteers, check who could or would attend, and re-circulate this information with a call for votes. Nevertheless it is extremely important that all members take some active part in this election. In the situation of our organisation, support is at least as important as formal election.

PLEASE NOW RING OR WRITE TO:

[names and contact details redacted]

Please all make this contact. The meeting is 4th July. Say what you think!

[Public document]

Notes on the Meeting held on Saturday 13th June 1981 at Hampden Community Centre, 150 Ossulston Street, London NW1, To Discuss the Possible Establishment of a National Council of Organisations of Disabled People.

A. IN ATTENDANCE (up to two representatives from each organisation): [numbering added for clarity]

1. ATNC (Alternative Talking Newspapers Collective) - Kirsten Hern
2. ABPSTS (Association of Blind and Partially Sighted Teachers and Students) - Francine White, Christopher Crockett
3. ADP (Association of Disabled Professionals) - Sue Maynard, Alice Maynard
4. DDA (Disabled Drivers Association) - represented by Adrian Stokes of the Disabled Drivers Motor Club
5. DDMC (Disabled Drivers Motor Club) - Adrian Stokes
6. NFB (National Federation of the Blind) - Colin Low, Bill Pool
7. NLBD (National League of the Blind and Disabled) - Mike Barrett, George Slaughter (+ two observers)
8. SIA (Spinal Injuries Association) - Stephen Bradshaw, Francis Hasler
9. UPIAS (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation) - Ken Davis, Vic Finkelstein

B. OBSERVER:

10. People with Disabilities Liberation Network - Allan Sutherland (there had been insufficient time for the organisation to arrange representatives or decide upon attendance)

C. WILLING TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES IF POSSIBLE:

11. Disabled Motorist Federation
12. Disablement Income Group

13. Gemma (a representative telephoned on Sunday 14th June to apologise for being unable to attend due to personal circumstances)
14. Possum Users Association

D. NO RESPONSE TO UPIAS CORRESPONDENCE:

15. Asian Federation of the Blind
16. Deaf Broadcasting Campaign
17. Multiple Sclerosis Action Group
18. National Union of the Deaf

E. ATTENDANCE UNDECIDED:

19. Disablement Information and Advice Line

It was agreed that Vic Finkelstein, UPIAS, would keep notes of the meeting and prepare a report which would be circulated to all the organisations already contacted about the proposed "Council".

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, as a member of the host organisation informally took the chair and invited representatives to introduce themselves. He then explained UPIAS views about the need for a national council. The Council could aim at presenting the collective views of organisations of disabled people and become the authoritative voice both nationally and internationally.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, supported the principle of a "Council". Referring to his recent European visit, he drew attention to the need for organisations of disabled people to coordinate in order, for example, to obtain funding for specific projects. Otherwise, he said, one organisation tends to be "played off" against another by those controlling the funds. He believed that a "Council" could help achieve a united voice and be a place where organisations could learn from each other. He felt that the "Council" could enable disabled people achieve a non-party political input in discussions where decisions are made that affect our lives.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, agreed with this interpretation of the role of a "Council" and added that it could also become the avenue through which the United Kingdom made international links, such as with the Disabled Peoples' International.

KIRSTEN HERN, ATNC, asked if there were any national organisations of the type we were discussing in other countries.

COLIN LOW, NFB, referred to the coalitions in CANADA and the USA and said that it was very timely for this initiative to be launched in the UK and that the NFB welcomed it. He said that a resolution had been passed at a conference of his organisation supporting increased collaboration between disabled and blind people. He said that the need for disabled people to speak for themselves was a principle dear to the heart of the NFB and, he was sure, to other organisations. He felt that we should agree fairly quickly on this and said that he thought it was right to aim at national organisations of sufficient standing when we try to get together. He supported the principle of a "Council" composed of national organisations of disabled people. He saw the "Council as the place for the promotion of vigorous views held by each organisation and that this would entail no loss of sovereignty. He said we should form a loose organisation looking for common particular interests leading to common policies. We should not set out merely to "clout" other organisations or views. He also felt that we should be clear that participating organisations would continue to maintain their separate interests.

VIC FINKELSTEIN, UPIAS, agreeing with the previous speaker said that if we were able to get together in the way COLIN LOW, NFB, had discussed it is possible that new common views might emerge whereas at the present time this was not so - for example, it might be possible for organisations of blind and physically impaired people to get together and work out new solutions to our mobility needs by, say, making common proposals about public transport.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, said a good example of this need to get together was illustrated by the problem of bicycles on pavements - we ought to have a common policy on this.

STEPHEN BRADSHAW, SIA, said that his organisation welcomed the initiative to set up a 'Council. His main uncertainty was whether it would prove possible for us to develop united policies.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, supported what COLIN LOW, NFB, had said. He thought that it would be possible to develop a united voice on the big issues but not on every issue.

ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), said that there were advantages in developing a united voice but that he had some uncertainties. The idea seemed to be correct in principle but how could we ensure that our united voice could be made to appear competent? There was also the question of funding for the united organisation and the problem of how we are to reach common decisions. There were many advantages in the proposal but he wondered about the position of organisations for disabled people as well as organisations of disabled people. He wondered whether we might be creating some difficulty for ourselves if we organised only those of disabled people. He also felt there were many problems disabled people had in common with others, such as the need for adequate Social Security Benefits.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, felt that it was the right time for an organisation of disabled people, such as was being proposed, to be set up. A forum was needed even if there were well established organisations for disabled people.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, said that the coalitions in the USA and CANADA all had the same problems about the sort of membership making up their national organisations. He had seen their constitutions which all admitted as members organisations which have the majority of their members from amongst disabled people.

BILL POOL, NFB, said that the problem of membership was something we would have to settle before we set up a "Coalition". He said that UPIAS had proposed that the national organisation only admit organisations of disabled people and what was ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), view about this?

ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), said that RADAR, RNIB and RNID were nationally recognised by both the government and the public. He felt we should not duplicate their work as this might appear as if we do not like them and are therefore setting up our own organisation.

BILL POOL, NFB, said that because we are representatives of organisations controlled by disabled people there were important

differences between us and the organisations for disabled people. He felt we can have an important role in changing things and building on the work already done.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, said that things are already changing and that is why we are trying to set up our own organisations.

COLIN LOW, NFB, said he thought there would be people who would say that the proposed national organisation will duplicate what is already being done, but we do not think that they have done all that needs to be done. Therefore we are setting up our organisation. They do not always represent our interests because they are controlled by others.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, said that we also need to speak for ourselves.

STEPHEN BRADSHAW, SIA, said that we must find the right way to get our voice listened to.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, said that there was experience amongst the organisations of disabled people which we could draw upon in finding the right way to express our views and that once we have a national organisation it will eventually come to us. He felt, however, that there may be some organisations which were not immediately eligible for membership but that we might want to associate with when we talk together, such as MIND.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, said that the established organisations which were not controlled by disabled people were not under attack. However, our knowledge of the problems we face derives out of our direct experience and this was very important.

ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), said that he agreed with this point and that was why the DDMC was an organisation only of disabled people.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, said that there were lots of new organisations, and that it was not always clear whether these were controlled by disabled people.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, said that the creation of a national organisation might give these new organisations a lead so that they did become organisations of disabled people.

VIC FINKELSTEIN, UPIAS, said that we should not set up a “Council” merely because we wish to be anti- the established organisations for disabled people, but because we wish to find a united voice of disabled people so that we can express our own points of view.

KIRSTEN HERN, ATNC, said that she was concerned that the national organisation did not become bureaucratic.

COLIN LOW, NFB, said that he did not think we were likely to become bureaucratic as many of the organisations had experience in dealing with this problem. He felt there were three approaches to the discussions of the “Council”. There were those issues about which organisations had established policy and could put forward their views without any hesitation. There were those issues upon which organisations had no established policy and which would have to be taken back to the organisations for discussion before they could be pursued in the “Council”. Finally, there were the issues which covered a grey area and could be discussed.

FRANCINE WHITE, ABPSTS, said we ought to be clear about whether we agreed in principle that a “Council” of national organisations of disabled people should be established.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, agreed and said that a steering committee should be established to prepare a constitution for the new organisation and to prepare for a conference where the constitution could be presented and the “Council” set up.

COLIN LOW, NFB, agreed but felt there might be some difficulty in meeting together in the time available before the conference. He felt that we could have policy statements at the conference for discussion.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, said that we should aim at a conference in October so that we could send representatives of the “Council” to the Disabled Peoples’ World Congress in November.

COLIN LOW, NFB, supported MIKE BARRETT’s, NLBD, proposal to set up a steering committee for a conference in the autumn and to have policy statements at the conference.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, felt that the discussions at the conference ought to be about policy questions and not merely on resolutions presented to the conference.

KIRSTEN HERN, ATNC, wondered whether mentally disabled people and their relatives might be able to participate in the “Council” and conference.

BILL POOL, NFB, said that this question raised a matter of principle. He felt it was not a question of how to get representatives of all groups now but rather to get representatives of organisations controlled by disabled people at this time. If there was no organisation now of mentally handicapped people perhaps the existence of the “Council” could lead to the creation of such an organisation.

COLIN LOW, NFB, said that perhaps there had been a tendency for people to dismiss mentally handicapped people too easily. He suggested that the steering committee should enter into discussions with organisations working with mentally handicapped people before deciding our position here.

STEPHEN BRADSHAW, SIA, said that the steering committee should also discuss the possibility of organisations of mentally ill people, alcoholics, or other social problems, participating in the “Council”.

(Break for tea)

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, suggested that we discuss the nature of the steering committee.

ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), said that he thought that the steering committee should not be too large.

BILL POOL, NFB, suggested that the steering committee should have representatives from all the organisations present at this meeting.

COLIN LOW, NFB, suggested that one representative from each organisation would be about the right number.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, agreed but thought that the organisations which had expressed interest in the proposed national organisation ought to be represented on the steering committee as well.

COLIN LOW, NFB, wondered whether organisations like DIG were controlled by disabled people. He thought that the constitution of the organisations would be vital in deciding who could join the “Council”. This would be one way of checking eligibility.

ADRIAN STOKES, DDMC (DDA), wondered whether this would be sufficient as it might preclude some major organisations.

BILL POOL, NFB, thought that the control by disabled people of their organisations should be clear in their constitutions.

SUSAN MAYNARD, APP, thought that organisations which were effectively controlled by disabled people ought to be able to join.

BILL POOL, NFB, said that if such organisations were then proved not to be controlled by disabled people they could always be removed from the “Council”.

STEPHEN BRADSHAW, SIA, agreed that this might be a possible way of deciding which organisations could join and that if the disabled people in that organisation lost their effective control then the organisation would have to leave the “Council”.

CHRISTOPHER CROCKETT, ABPSTS, said that he preferred the constitutions of the organisations of disabled people to reflect their control.

KIRSTEN HERN, ATNC, said her organisation was a collective of disabled and able-bodied people.

BILL POOL, NFB, said that the best way of setting up the steering committee would be to have one representative of all the organisations present at this meeting.

ALLAN SUTHERLAND, People with Disabilities Liberation Network, wondered whether his organisation was invited to join the steering committee as it was a national organisation of disabled people.

VIC FINKELSTEIN, UPIAS, said that he thought that the notes on the meeting that he was being asked to prepare ought to go to all the organisations that had so far been contacted. He felt that the steering committee should comprise one representative of each organisation present at this meeting and that it was then up to the steering committee

to decide its future policy regarding membership of other groups not present at this time.

MIKE BARRETT, NLBD, agreed that it was important to send the notes to all the organisations so far contacted so that they could decide whether they wished to contact the steering committee.

KEN DAVIS, UPIAS, with the agreement of those present summed up the unanimous decisions made so far: (a) that we agreed in principle to the setting up of a national "Council"; (b) that a steering committee be set up to draft a constitution for the "Council", to decide criteria of membership to the steering committee, to arrange a conference in the Autumn and to prepare policy documents for discussion at the conference; (c) that the steering committee would in the first place comprise one member of each organisation present at this meeting and that notes" of this meeting would be sent to all those organisations so far contacted by UPIAS.

- * After further discussion it was agreed that the interim name of the "Council" would be: The National Council of Organisations of Disabled People

- * The first meeting of the Steering Committee would be held on Saturday 4th July 1981 at 2:00pm at the London offices of the Spinal Injuries Association.

- * That if there were any enquiries about this meeting of the Steering Committee on the 4th July, these should be directed to STEPHEN BRADSHAW, SIA, In the first place.

BILL POOL, NFB, then raised the question about attendance at the meeting arranged by the People with Disabilities Liberation Network for the 28th June in order to discuss British attendance at the World Congress of the Disabled Peoples' International.

- * After discussion it was agreed that representatives of the organisations invited ought to attend the meeting and suggest that the Steering Committee set up today take over responsibility for arranging British attendance at the World Congress.

Proposed National Council of Organisations of Disabled People

Draft Constitution, in outline, presented as a basis for discussion

1. NAME

The name of the organisation is the National Council of Organisations of Disabled People.

[later known as: **British** Council of Organisations of Disabled People]

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council is to provide a forum for the free exchange of information, ideas and views with the object of raising awareness of particular issues and shared problems, and developing unity of purpose between its independent and autonomous member groups.

3. AIMS

The Council's general aims shall be to promote the active participation of disabled people in securing equal opportunities for our full integration into society. With these aims in view, the Council shall formulate policies and guidelines for its own conduct and shall have power to:-

- a) publish or otherwise produce and disseminate information.
- b) undertake practical projects and ventures.
- c) co-operate with other organisations.
- d) raise funds.
- e) do such other things as may be necessary to further its aims consistent with the Council's policy and guidelines.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Application for membership is open to any organisation which agrees with the Aims of the Council in the following categories:-

- a) Full membership - national organisations whose membership and governing body consist of a majority of disabled people.
- b) Associate membership - organisations whose membership and governing body consist of a majority of disabled people and

whose aims, constitution and activities complement those of the Council.

5. REGISTRATION

The Council shall have power to exercise discretion in allocating membership in accordance with its own guidelines and shall maintain a register showing the allocation of membership under each category.

6. WITHDRAWAL

Any member organisation may have membership withdrawn, and any member organisation may withdraw membership at any time, having regard to guidelines which take account of any outstanding obligations or commitments and which set out appropriate appeal procedures.

7. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual rate of subscription for each category of membership shall be determined by the Council from time to time and membership will lapse unless paid within three months of notice of renewal.

8. NATIONAL COUNCIL

- a) the purpose of the Council is defined at Clause 2 above who shall also have responsibility for the development, direction and management of the organisation.
- b) the Council shall be made up of two disabled representatives from each member organisation.
- c) each matter before the Council may be subject to open discussion consistent with the purpose and general aims of the Council and within any guidelines pertaining to the conduct of debate as the Council may from time to time decide.
- d) each matter requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority of votes cast.
- e) only representatives of active member organisations shall be able to vote, there being one vote for each representative. A representative from a particular active member organisation may vote by proxy on behalf of a co-representative from the same organisation who cannot attend a meeting of the Council.

- f) resolutions adopted by the Council may form the basis for its policies, guidelines and directives for action.
- g) the officers of the Council shall be a Chairperson-, Vice-Chairpersons General Secretary and Treasurer who shall retire annually.
- h) the Council may cause the formation of sub-committees to deal with specific issues and formulate guidelines as to their composition and function.

9. COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a) all meetings of the Council shall be general meetings composed of representatives defined at Clause 8 b).
- b) a general meeting may be called at any time by a simple majority of active member organisations.
- c) there shall be at least four general meetings in any year one of which shall be the AGM otherwise known as the National Assembly.
- d) the officers of the Council shall be elected at the AGM or National Assembly.
- e) delegates to the Regional Assembly of the Disabled Peoples' International shall be elected at the AGM or National Assembly.
- f) a quorum for all meetings of the Council shall be a simple majority of active member organisations.

10. CONFERENCE

The Council shall arrange a Conference once in each year, which may or may not coincide with the National Assembly, and which may be open to non-members under arrangements which the Council shall from time to time decide.

11. AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS

- a) the Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping proper accounts of all transactions and provide reports on the financial position of the organisation as requested by the Council.

- b) the books of account shall be open to inspection under such reasonable conditions as the Council shall from time to time decide.
- c) the accounts shall be audited once in each year by a qualified auditor appointed by the Council, provided that person has no connections with any member organisation.

12. ASSETS

Any income, property or other assets of the organisation shall be used solely to further the Aims of the Council.

13. STAFF

The Council shall have power to employ such staff as may be necessary for the efficient functioning of the organisation provided such individuals are not representatives of any member organisation.

14. DISSOLUTION

If a resolution requiring the dissolution of the organisation is carried, any assets remaining after the discharge of all debts and liabilities shall not be distributed to any remaining members but shall be disposed of to such body or bodies having a constitution and aims similar to that of the National Council.

Appendix F – Schedule of UPIAS Circulars in the Manchester archive

Circular Number	Date	Circular Number	Date
1	1972 (estimated)	21	1977 May
2	1973 (est.)	22	1977 Sept
3	1973 (est.)	23	1978 Jan
4	1973 (est.)	24	1978 Aug
5	1973 (est.)	25	1978 Sept
6	1974 (est.)	26-A	1978 Oct 1st
7	1974 (est.)	26-B	1978 Oct 3rd
8	1974 June (est.)	27	1979 Jan
9	1974 July (est.)	28	1979 Feb
10	1974 Sept	29	1979 June
11	1974 Oct	30-A	1979 June 29th
12	missing	30-B	1979 July 17th
13	1974 Dec	31	1979 Sept
14	1975 Feb	32	1980 Feb
15	1975 April	33	missing
16	1975 July	34	1980 March
17	1975 Oct	35	missing
18	1976 Feb	36	missing
19	missing	37	missing
20	1976 Nov	38	1980 Dec

39	1980 Dec	58	1984 Sept
40	1981 Jan	59	1985 July
41	1981 Jan	60	1985 Sept
42	1981 Feb	“New 01” [61]	1986 June
43	1981 Mar	“New 02” [62]	1986 Nov
44	1981 June	“New 03” [63]	1986 Nov
45-A	1981 June	no number [64]	1987 July
45-B	1981 Aug	no number [65]	1987 Sept
46	1981 Oct	no number [66]	1987 Oct
47	1982 Apr	no number [67]	1987 Dec
48	1982 May	no number [68]	1988 Jan
49	1982 July	no number [69]	1988 Feb
50	1982 Aug	no number [70]	1988 Apr
51	1982 Sept	no number [71]	1988 Apr “Extra”
52	1982 Dec	no number [72]	1988 May
53	1983 Feb	no number [73]	1988 June
54	1983 May	no number [74]	1988 Aug
55	1983 July	no number [75]	1988 Sept
56	1983 Nov	no number [76]	1990 Sept
57	1984 Mar	no number [77]	1990 Nov

Appendix G – Reflections on the experience of archiving a collection

Sometime in 2018 I was in contact with Judy Hunt, myself in Manchester and she in London, and the conversation turned to archives. She had a precious collection of papers from what had been possibly Britain's most radical organisation of disabled people ever. It was called UPIAS, the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation. Her late husband, Paul Hunt, had been a founder member and he had been probably the most well-known member. Judy also had papers from other influential members as well as those of her husband.

We both knew that just because a highly political organisation was now closed, it didn't mean that the politics had also ended. So it was important that the collection of unique papers would be properly looked after and appreciated, and not exploited in a way that would undermine now the hard struggles and campaigns that its members had previously endured and won.

A further issue was that most of the papers were still confidential for two main reasons. Firstly there had been promises made for lifetime personal secrecy in the Union's internal communications to allow for very candid and frank political exchanges in private. Secondly, the united front that the Union's members had maintained in their public messages could be undermined even today by hostile and revisionist political forces if care wasn't taken to protect the internal discussions.

So it was both an immense honour and a great worry when Judy Hunt invited me to take all these papers into safe custody. I returned to Manchester on a train with a very large wheeled suitcase chock full of lever arch files, card folders, carrier bags with loose papers, and such. I don't think the case left my sight for a moment - these papers were the equivalent of gold bars to me.

We had agreed from the outset that the UPIAS archive needed to be 'closed' for some years to come. This is a technical term which describes when papers (and other items if relevant) are safely held in a formal archive but are not to be made available to visitors. For example, your

official 10-year Census return which you write is kept secret in a closed national archive for 100 years before any future visitor can see what you wrote.

By this time we had agreed on the date of 1 January 2030 when the UPIAS collection of papers would change from closed to being open, based on the lifetime promise. We had also agreed on Archives-Plus being the safe home for the papers. This choice was based on the ethics of the archive's governance, the best standards nationally that I had found in years of amateur practice. A bonus with the choice of Archives-Plus was on the linkages that could be made with the GMCDP archive and all the associated collections of personal papers, videos, banners, t-shirts, badges, from radical disabled people and their families that were being donated alongside the GMCDP 'official' papers.

One option with the UPIAS papers would have been to just empty the large case into various cardboard archive boxes and hand them over to be locked away. But I felt that it was important to make a start on "sorting out" the collection of papers.

The process of "sorting out" papers is not simple, as anyone knows who has had to move house or has helped a relative make sense of a loft, a garage, a shed, or a wardrobe of miscellaneous items. In archiving terms this is a key stage, and without doing this it is impossible to catalogue the collection. Gentleness and patience are very important here otherwise contextual information can be easily lost.

Perhaps the biggest challenge in sorting out was the type of paper that had been used, especially in the early years. UPIAS, like disabled people generally, wasn't rich. A member or an acquaintance of theirs worked at the Open University, and they would take home paper that had been used on one side. This paper was in large continuous sheets with perforations, used by computers in a device called a line printer, because it would print a line at a time for speed. There were three main problems here:

1. The paper was not museum quality at all, only being expected to be used for a few weeks before being scrapped, and this was in the 1970s before the benefits for acid-free paper had been appreciated. So, today, these sheets are very fragile and brittle,

often stained brown by daylight, looking and feeling like delicate autumn leaves. To deal with this fragility, I placed these paper sheets inside archive-quality protective clear plastic pockets, such as polypropylene and polyester. (Some plastic pockets are chemically unstable, not of archive quality at all.)

2. Back in the day the A4 size of paper wasn't common in Britain. There were two common sizes in shops then, called foolscap and quarto. These were larger and smaller than A4 respectively. To save money, instead of buying new paper, 'scrap' paper that had been taken home from work. This work paper had been in a continuous sheet, and each sheet had to be cut out by hand. Some of these hand-cut sheets were roughly foolscap in size, but some were fairly larger. These large, fragile sheets needed an odd size of archive-quality large plastic pocket, which took some time to source.

3. Although the UPIAS correspondence and similar writings had been typed on the blank side of these sheets of paper; the original printing on the reverse was personal data from the Open University's computerised pension system which was still legible. These days we would worry about data protection, and that had to be flagged up as an issue.

One solution for all three aspects was to make photocopies of the original sheets on A3 paper. This preserved the typed text as it is seen today, the image transferred to acid-free paper, and these A3 sheets were added to the archive alongside the original sheets. The original sheets were placed in the protective plastic pockets before being laid on the photocopier glass, to minimise any handling damage. Where a scanned copy was needed, these scans were taken from the photocopy, not the original.

I could only do these basic forms of preservation, trying to hold things as they are now. What was beyond me was conservation, where for example the original sheets become chemically stabilised to stop their further deterioration in the years ahead.

So, with these preservation tasks finished for the time being, it was then a matter of putting the papers into some sort of sensible order. I decided that a date-order system would probably be most helpful to future users.

A good half of the UPIAS papers were Circulars, about 80 in all, which were a form of private, internal newsletter. At their most intense these circulars were being compiled and posted out every six weeks. The modern equivalent in style is probably a discussion thread on social media, with lots of short points being made by various members, to and fro.

The other half of the papers were a varied range of minutes, letters, and administration. There were a few disorganised membership lists, appearing roughly every two or three years. I gathered copies of these lists into one file for analysis, which was then done within an Excel spreadsheet that was password-encrypted.

This maybe sounds all very organised and methodical. Actually it was messier than that! I used a large dining table and it took a few weeks, on and off, before a method of organising the papers started to emerge and make sense. Like a detective programme, the papers slowly start to tell a story of who was doing what. For example, you can see when a new secretary or chairperson takes over and the method changes. You can also start to see where the gaps are. For example, the numbering of the 80-odd circulars was a bit hit and miss, plus a new numbering system was started about two-thirds into the collection.

The next stage was to start placing the papers into new lever arch files and cataloguing where they were for future reference. Eventually there will be an online catalogue showing which file and which box contains which document. At the moment the catalogue has entries at the file level such as:

File 6, 1978, correspondence, minutes.

With more time, each item within a file such as a letter or receipt should be individually indexed, maybe even scanned, however practically here with the limited time of volunteers this has not been done yet. A higher priority currently is in saving a new collection from a pile of papers kept in carrier bags in someone's loft or garage, still a reality across the disabled people's movement.

The next stage was to place the files into boxes, usually around three or files in each one, and to label the boxes and note in the catalogue which file was in which box.

A complication was the oversize sheets of paper which stood proud of the top edges of the foolscap-size lever arch files. These were laid flat with an air space around them, though there are probably other options in boxing or protecting them.

Because the boxes were being transported to the archive building it felt necessary to use zip-ties to seal the lids to the sides of each box.

The writing of this booklet was also an iterative process, which I started while I still had the papers available to me. This arrangement allowed me to cross-check facts with the source material, and I found that starting to write about the life-story of UPIAS also helped me in organising the structure of the files. As the writing started to take shape I also shared draft copies with some key people who had been extensively involved with UPIAS to check my items were both correct and appropriate.

Once the facts and dates were established I deposited the boxes at Archives-Plus because it felt unsafe to me to keep the papers at home for any time longer than the minimum necessary. The later stages of writing the booklet were more about adding political implications and analysis, and here the interaction moved from checking back with the papers and towards checking drafts with the key members.

What was particularly rewarding was in generating and sharing new knowledge with key members, such as the gender profile of the membership, which had only been known subjectively in the past.

While doing this task, I recall reading a blog from a feminist academic (debut, in *Language: a feminist guide*, WordPress) who was expressing her frustration with academic writing 'rules', where she shared the feedback she had received from an editor while writing about the women's movement, that "you cannot cite a t-shirt".

Well, I agree with her, it is important, so yes you can, and this is how!



UPIAS women demonstrated at Greenham Common in December 1983
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14 lever arch files of UPIAS documents from 1972 to the 1990s

