

EDITORIAL

LOUISE AND RAPHAEL

I have no wish to comment on the innocence or not of Louise Woodward. A young girl in a strange land, who has won the hearts of our tabloid editors.

On the Saturday after the verdict I had called in at my local Chinese for a take-away. As I waited, I picked up a copy of The Sun. On the front page the headline was 'Free Her', inside page after page was given over to protest this 'injustice'.

The same kind of coverage permeated through the other popular tabloids. I felt angry. These are the very same papers who crucified the Birmingham 6, who have continued to demonise Winston Silcott, and whose coverage of the M25 Three has been non-existent.

Even the most recent victory - the Bridgewater 4, saw these worthless hacks fall over themselves to criticise them. One paper went so far as to say that "even if they are innocent of the murder of Carl Bridgewater, they

(Contd. Col. 2)

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For our own peace of mind and sanity, contact our Finance Department, Hello Ian!!, and offer a regular subscription/donation to Notts TU News. Phone Ian on 0115 9582369, or send money to Notts CATUC, c/o 118 Workshop, 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Brown envelopes are not compulsory.

SPECIAL OFFER

Send New Years greetings to fellow trade unionists in Issue 15 of Notts TU News. For details of the rates contact Ian 0115 9582369.

We guarantee to publish Issue 15 somewhere between the New Year and Easter. Can't say fairer than that.

REMEMBER, NOTTS TU NEWS NEEDS YOUR MONEY. IF YOUR DON'T SEND US ANY, WE WILL LAUNCH A FIGHTING FUND, WITH TARGETS AND EVERYTHING, HELP!!

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HUNT
DICKINS

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If your union is a member of the Union Law Scheme, you are entitled to a free first meeting to discuss any problem, except work related matters.

Contact Terry Oldham on (0115) 936 9369

FREETH CARTWRIGHT HUNT DICKINS
WILLOUGHBY HOUSE, 20 LOW PAVEMENT, NOTTINGHAM NG1 7EA. TEL. 0115 936 9369

would have been imprisoned for some other crime". So that's alright then.

Well no it isn't. At the best estimate over 800 people languish in our jails as the result of wrongful convictions. Yet our campaigning, caring media continue to ignore these struggles for justice, and in many cases the only coverage they receive is totally negative.

Free Louise Woodward? How about free the M25 Three, John Kinsella, and all of the others who have been wrongly convicted.

NO JUSTICE - NO PEACE.

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We offer **FREE** testing for Hearing, Vibration White Finger, Lung Function and can offer advice on compensation claims and Health and Safety information.

Call us at 2 Beech Avenue Mansfield (01623) 424720 and ask for Tony



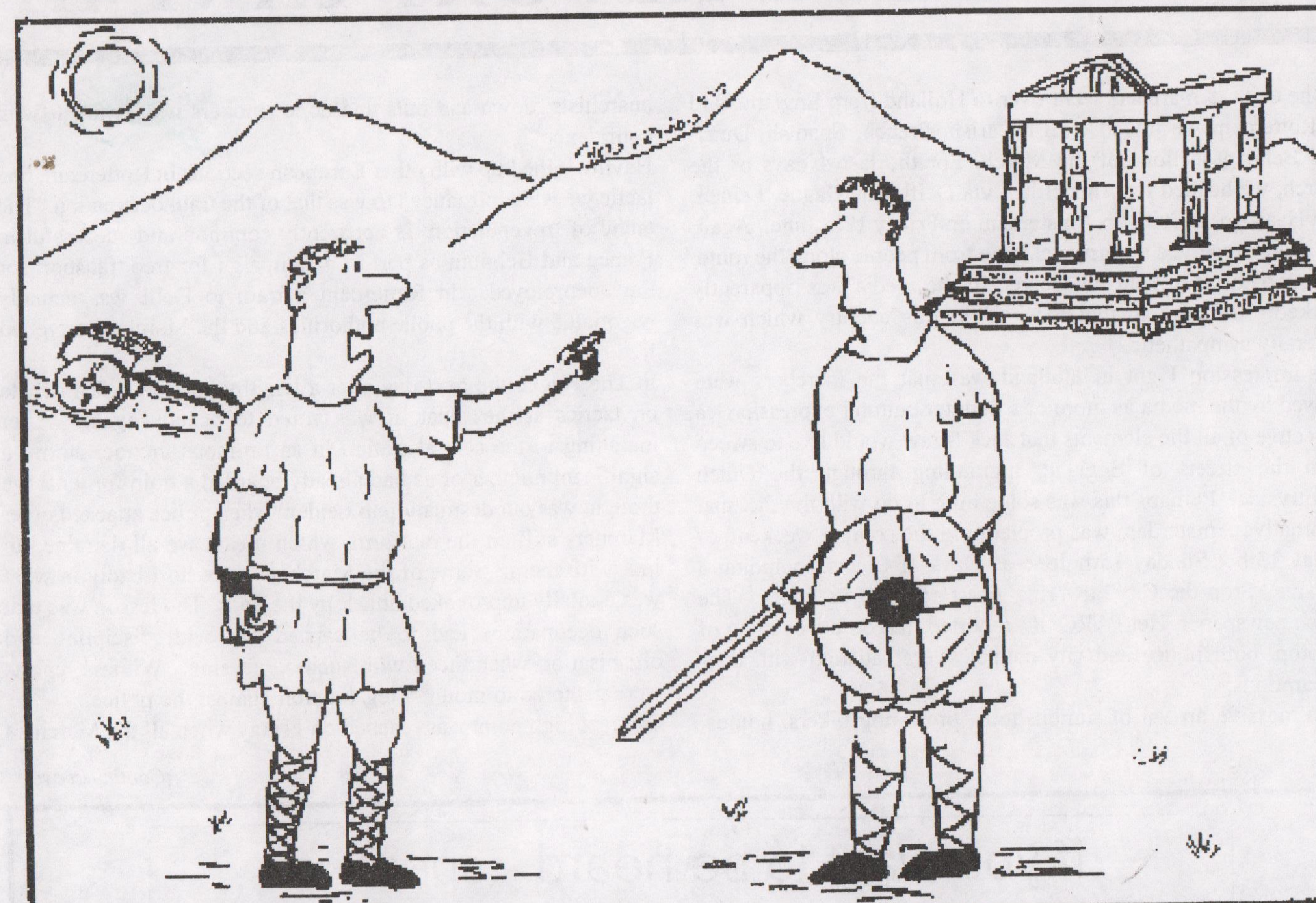
"Aiming
to keep
you safe"

NOTTS TU NEWS

ISSUE 14

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NOV/DEC 1997

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"The trouble with you Spartacus, is that you've never been able to accept Management's right to manage"

CONTENTS

Page 2-3. Euromarch '97 Report
Page 4 TUC '97 Report
Page 5 People Before Profit Conference
Page 6 Kristallnacht & Bloody Sunday
Page 7 Health & Safety Page

Page 8 CATUC News
Page 9 Conferences
Page 10 Liverpool Dockers Ballot
Page 11 Domestic Violence Forum
Page 12 Editorial: Louise & Raphael

CAMPAIGNING & DISPUTES

MARCHING ON AMSTERDAM EUROMARCH REPORT PART III

In the end, 38 marchers went over to Holland from England, and in Rotterdam we joined with the Irish, French, Spanish, Dutch and Belgian sections of the March. For the last 4 days of the March, we headed for Amsterdam via Delft, The Hague, Leiden, and Haarlem, arriving in Amsterdam on Friday 13th June. Again the March received a warm welcome from people along the route, although the treatment it received in the media was apparently markedly different to that received in this country which was generally sympathetic.

The impression I got in Holland was that the marchers were viewed by the media as more of a counter cultural expression - a collective of all the elements that Jack Straw would like to sweep from the streets of England, marauding through the Dutch countryside. Perhaps this was something to do with the fact that Alternative Amsterdam was proclaiming the coming weekend of Friday 13th - Sunday 15th June as Days of Chaos, including a massive "Stop the City" to bring Amsterdam to its knees. The Dutch newspaper, Het PAROOL, reported that on the evening of Eurotop, both police and city council were satisfied with their preparations:

"The massive arrival of rumbustious, protesting bikers, homos,

anarchists, down and outs and dope smokers was awaited 'with confidence'".

Having joined up with other European sections in Rotterdam, one tactic we were introduced to was that of the train occupation. The tactic of 'revendiction' is apparently common and successful in France and Belgium as part of a campaign for free transport for the unemployed. In Rotterdam a train to Delft was actually negotiated with the public authorities and the Marchers travelled free.

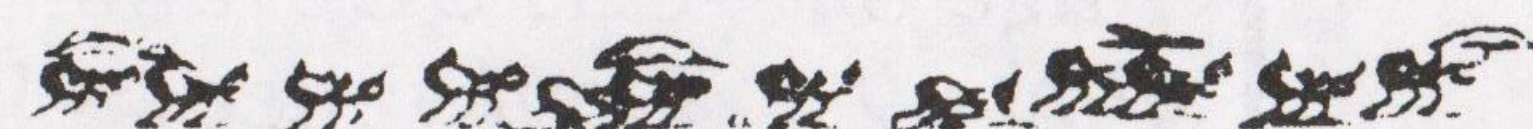
In The Hague the next day after a lengthy post-breakfast debate on tactics at the squat, it was voted to occupy again. After marching to the central station in an ominous thunder storm, a significant number of us had already boarded a train for what we thought was our destination in Leiden, when police attacked other Marchers still on the platform, which meant we all detrained to link with them. Some of the Marchers were hurt badly in what was a totally unprovoked attack by the cops. The lesson was that such occupations had to be carried out with discipline and organisation when faced with such aggression. Witness reports were gathered to mount a legal action against the police.

The real high point was reached on Friday when all the Marchers

(Continued over)

If you want to be heard - speak in

UNISON



Regional Secretary
Nick Wright

Regional Convenor
Vicky Easton

UNISON East Midlands Region

15 Castle Gate, Nottingham NG1 6BY. Tel. 0115 956 7200

CAMPAIGNING & DISPUTES

MARCHING ON AMSTERDAM

(Continued from Page 2)

converged on Dam Square from all over Europe - the culmination of the past month for the majority of them. For the British Marchers, it was fairly incredible that we'd made it at all in view of all the logistical - and political - obstacles; but it was a brilliant experience to be part of such an internationalist experience.

The March itself on the following Saturday of over 50,000 people around Amsterdam, which was essentially calling on the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference of the European Union for a People's Europe, was an outstanding success - "Europe's 'lesser class' spelling out what it wants", was the way the Guardian put it. A wide range of speakers addressed the crowds at the Rally in Dam Square, including the Liverpool dockers and the Hillingdon Hospital strikers, to a rousing reception; and the "Theatre Croque Mitane" - I think - provided a bizarre backdrop as they flung their own currency notes to the Marchers. The Rally was eventually boosted even further by the arrival of thousands of Italian Marchers who had been held in their train by the Dutch police.

It was ironic that in contrast to the Euromarch, it was the arrival in Amsterdam of the Eurotop itself - the "euro-circus" on the 16th and 17th June, that was the cause of much disruption throughout the city. Thousands of police were drafted in and several areas across the city had restricted access. Before entering those areas it was necessary to show identification; and streets were cleared of homeless people, illegal foreigners and other undesirable elements.

THE POLITICAL AFTERMATH

In the immediate aftermath of the March, Nottingham TUC wrote to John Monks asking him to clarify his position on the March as, while it was in Nottingham, its spokespeople found little difference with him in the course of a radio interview. This was subsequently not broadcast as it contained no controversy between them. John replied to say that the march was not "proscribed", nor had he ever rubbished it. Yet there is no doubt that the attitude of the TUC prior to the March affected the level of practical and political support it was able to win before it set off, and meant that it went ahead with totally limited resources. A Euro March Report Back and Way Forward Meeting was held in London in September to identify how the campaign could be carried on post-Amsterdam; and how to mobilise internationally to exert pressure on subsequent European-wide negotiations between the governments. There was total agreement that future campaigning should be around the objectives of the March itself of active opposition to Unemployment, Job Insecurity and Social Exclusion; and movement, and other organisations in this country into an internationalist framework. There was less agreement on the organisation required in this country to achieve those aims. However, after a meeting in Luxembourg at the beginning of October, a European Network is to be set up, the core demands of which will be:-

the fight for massive reduction in working hours combined with the creation of new jobs; the right to an income permitting each and everyone a decent standard of living; the redistribution of

wealth, within the framework of a social, democratic Europe, without borders and united. It aims to connect throughout Europe, all unemployment associations committed to the fight against unemployment and all forms of exclusion; and all trade union organisations supporting these demands, and wanting to co-operate on a joint platform.

It is not intended to replace existing networks, but is a means for circulating information about ongoing struggles and developments. In this country, it is envisaged that organisations affiliating to the European Network could co-ordinate in organising for the future international mobilisations.

The next focus for such action would be the Luxembourg Social Summit - the so-called Jobs Summit - which is being held on 21st November, in line with the decision taken at the Amsterdam "Eurotop". A mass European wide mobilisation would not be possible at this stage but it is planned to call a demonstration which would at least draw in forces from a 50 mile radius from Luxembourg. The European TUC is also planning to lobby this summit.

Other mobilisations it was agreed to support were a Lobby of Parliament, whenever the ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty was to be debated; and a demonstration outside the G7 summit to be held in Birmingham in January, 1998. Furthermore, with the British take-over of the presidency of the EU after Holland in January, 1998, an intergovernmental Conference will be held in Cardiff in June next year, the last before the planned introduction of the single currency. It was agreed that we should start making plans to be there.

The challenge to the neo-liberal and technocratic management of the European integration project has started at an internationalist level - and has to go on. In conclusion I would just like to pay tribute to Andy Robertson's role in the Jarrow leg march and the work involved in with him to ensure Nottingham played an active role; and also to thank Mark Shotton for the work he put in organising the fund-raising benefit while the March was in Nottingham.

Ian Juniper



"Pharaoh says he wants the written contracts finished by tonight"

CAMPAIGNING & DISPUTES

TUC - 1997

The following extract is from an e-mail report we received of this years congress.

TONY DUBBINS, general secretary of the print union and chairing this year's TUC conference in Brighton, last Monday called on Tony Blair's government to repeat some of the Tories' anti-union laws.

"Where employees take secondary action during a lawful dispute, workers must have the right to take solidarity action", he said, "without fear of intimidation, legal action against the union, or sequestration of union assets -- particularly where employers take secondary action by transferring work to other plans or other employees".

And he also called for new rights to protect workers from dismissal if they take part in a legal strike, with automatic reinstatement or compensation in cases where they are unlawfully dismissed.

He reminded the government that the unions had provided the majority of funds for Labour's election campaign and "rightly and proudly take a good deal of credit for that victory".

The conference backed calls for all workers to be given full employment rights and many union leaders spoke against Tony Blair's adherence to Tory employment policies.

John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB general union moved the motion calling for "all rights at work to apply to all employees regardless of hours worked, length of service or the form of contract".

He said "When I hear the Labour government using Tory phrases, I shiver a little".

Political parties are urging people to accept a new way of working "where employability replaces security and every individual buys their own training and invents their own career structure.

follower

"But what happens if you become a regular follower of fashion, agilely hopping from job to job? The state punishes you.

Edmonds said that every time anyone moves to a new job, they lose their employment rights for two years. "You lay yourself open to being sacked unfairly with minimum notice and without remedy."

The motion was passed unanimously, in spite of Tony Blair's assertions that there will be: "no return" to the old days. His pleas not to rock the boat are not going to cut much ice when he has such a large majority.

The government is due to publish a White Paper early next year on "fairness at work".

On Tuesday Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of the public sector union Unison launched a private attack on the Private Finance Initiative - a back door method of privatisation where public assets are handed over to the private sector to fund funds for essential building and repairs, and then they are rented back to the public sector.

He warned that this was not a financially efficient way to run our services - schools, hospitals and so on - and lead to higher costs in the long run.

And he warned that the private sector is not necessarily efficient. Already compulsory competitive tendering has forced hospitals to privatise creating jobs cleaning - catering and so on.

The workers in these sectors, already low paid, have seen their pay, pensions, holidays and sick pay cut. And he warned that more workers will suffer when the extra costs of PFI work their way through.

The TUC also pledged to prioritise recruitment, when Tony Burke of the GPMU and head of the TUC New Unionism Task Group gave his report.

"We have got to break into new areas", he said, "and industries where new jobs are going".

He stressed the need to "win over the next generation to union membership, bearing in mind we could have already lost a generation of young people.

hope

"The election of a Labour government will give real hope for the future, but we would not forget that government sympathy is no guarantee of membership growth."

Tony Burke announced that in October the TUC will recruit a group of trainee organisers "most of them young, at least half of them women, and they will reflect the racial diversity of the workforce we aim to attract."

SOLIDARITY IN CALIFORNIA

On September 28th, for the second time within 24 hours, a coalition of unions closed the marine freight terminal in Oakland, California.

The closures were organised by members of the Inland Boatmen's Union, Sailors Union of the Pacific, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, the Operating Engineers, and East Bay Industrial Workers of the World.

The shore based pickets were supported at sea by the presence of a tugboat commandeered by IWW members.

The actions were aimed at the ship, Neptune Jade, which WCS identified as being in support of the Liverpool dockers. All longshoremen respected the picket lines, even though under Californian legislation they have to wait for mediators to officially rate that the pickets represented a threat to their health and safety, before they can refuse to cross (!!)

The port owners are now seeking injunctions against the various unions to stop similar actions. The unions have responded by escalating the action.

The above is one of many reports on international solidarity action with the Liverpool dockers which we have found on the Internet.

CAMPAIGNING & DISPUTES

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT

Over 200 people involved in campaigning to defend jobs and services in the public sector attended the Welfare State's "People Before Profit" conference in London in October.

Tony Benn MP addressing the conference outlined the Governments attempts to role back conditions for the working class: The leaders of all the main bourgeois parties are talking about the need to modernise the welfare state. In reality they mean taking the welfare back to the nineteenth century, back to Victorian times.

All the speakers stressed the need to build a united campaign to defeat the wide ranging attacks on public services.

The workshops reflected the range of the current attacks that are taking place and the campaigns that have been formed to fight them. Jon O'Neill from the Mansfield Centre for the Unemployed gave a detailed account of what the consequences of the Labour Governments Welfare to Work strategy held for the unemployed. He pointed out that such programmes are a way of making everyone's job more insecure

and driving down all wages.

The major decisions made at the conference included:

- ⇒ continuing to develop the newspaper Action
- ⇒ initiating direct action to stop the cuts
- ⇒ preparing for a mass lobby of conference
- ⇒ working closely with the European marches to defend the welfare state across Europe
- ⇒ to work closely with the Free Trade Unions Campaign
- ⇒ to organise a conference on Workfare
- ⇒ to organise a conference on the NHS

Pat Longman

The Welfare State Network produces a regular newspaper Action. If you would like a copy of the paper or would like more information about the campaigns contact Jon O'Neill at the Mansfield Unemployed Workers' Centre.

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HISTORICAL

KRISTALLNACHT BLOODY SUNDAY

In Germany on November 9th 1938, the Nazis started a pogrom against the Jews. After the Nazis came to power in 1933, Jews were subjected to harsh laws against them - being forced to hand over their businesses to "Aryans", only being allowed to shop in Jewish-owned shops, children only allowed to go to Jewish schools etc. This was accompanied by much organised violence against Jews in the streets and elsewhere. But, until November 9th 1938, these attacks had the appearance of being unplanned, and not sanctioned by the leadership of the Nazi party.

On November 6th, a young Jew living in Paris, Herschel Grynszpan, received a postcard from his father Zindel who had been deported, along with 18,000 other German Jews, on October 27th to the Polish frontier (the rest of Herschel's family were still living in Hannover). The postcard described the terrible conditions that the deportees were living under. Herschel Grynszpan was so angered by what he read that he went to the German Embassy in Paris and shot the first German official that he saw, Ernst vom Rath, a diplomatic assistant. Vom Rath died of his injuries on November 8th and the news of his death reached Germany the next day. The Nazis and Hitler denounced the killing as part of a Jewish worldwide conspiracy against Germany. The pogrom started in Berlin on November 9th 1938, organised unofficially by Hitler's SA storm troops. Hitler never officially commented on the pogrom, but he must have given his approval. Goebbels certainly ordered the violence to begin.

In the Orianenberg quarter of Berlin, the Great Synagogue was set on fire, after being smashed up inside. This was the signal to Nazis across Germany to carry out a wave of organised violence. Jewish shops had their windows smashed across the city, giving rise to the name Kristallnacht, which means the Night of the Broken Glass. Many Jews were physically attacked too. News of the violence spread across Germany, creating more violence. More than 7000 Jewish businesses across the country were attacked. Fires were lit in every Jewish area, and the Nazis burned religious books, and nearly 200 synagogues were destroyed.

The violence lasted 24 hours and 91 Jews were killed. More than 30,000 were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Many of these were killed in the following two months. Afterwards, German Jews were "fined" 1000 million marks for the damage caused. The money was raised by compulsory confiscation of 20% of the property of every German Jew and the insurance money owed to Jews by "Aryan" businesses, by a government decree of 12 November 1938.

The word Kristallnacht was given by the Nazis themselves to the pogrom, because it mocked what had happened. German anti-fascists today prefer to describe the events of this night at Reichspogromnacht, although in most other countries, the term Kristallnacht is still used as it is more well known.

Each year anti-fascists across Europe gather to remember the victims of the Holocaust and to highlight the plight of today's victims of discrimination in an international day of solidarity. This year the theme is the reality of disadvantage, discrimination, detention and deportation for ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum seekers across eastern and western Europe.

In November 1887, the Metropolitan Radical Federation, led by Cunninghame, Graham and Burns, were banned from holding a meeting in Trafalgar Square.

They decided to march on Trafalgar Square on Sunday November 13th. Radicals, socialists and Irish joined the march, which was met by 4000 Police and a large detachment of troops.

For four hours the crowd attempted to enter the Square, the Riot Act was read, and mounted police continually charged the crowd. Hundreds of marchers were injured, three later dying as a result of their wounds.

The following Sunday came another demonstration, and again mounted police continually charged the crowd, on this occasion killing an active socialist Alfred Linnell.

Thousands attended his funeral at Bow cemetery where William Morris spoke "The Death Song" which he had written for the occasion:

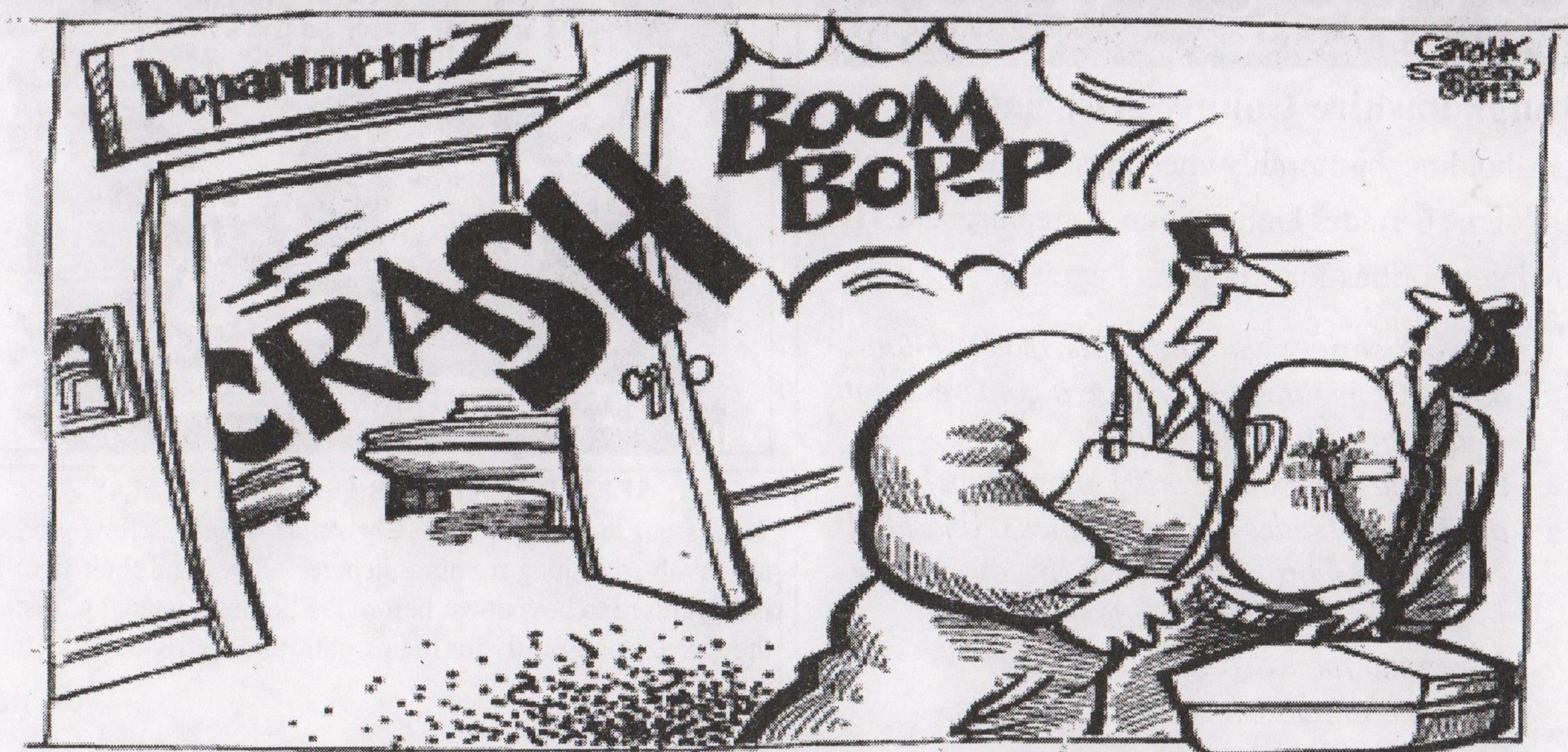
**"They will not learn: they have no ears to harken,
They turn their faces from the eyes of fate,
Their gay-lit halls shut out the skies that darken,
But lo! this dead man knocking at the gate.
Not one, not one, nor thousands must they slay,
But one and all, if they would dusk the day".**

PTC

**Derbyshire &
Nottingham District
Committee**

**sends fraternal
greetings to all trade
union colleagues
in the Nottingham area**

HEALTH & SAFETY



*"That department is so dangerous
even the foreman hired a stunt double."*

IOSH SAFETY & HEALTH EXHIBITION

Myself and a colleague attended the IOSH safety exhibition at the beginning of November. Every year the exhibition gets bigger and better.

If you are involved in workplace safety then there is something there for you: from simple but effective ladder stops to the most sophisticated, up to the minute technology in computer safety systems, audiometric equipment and so on. In March 1998 the Safety & Health at Work Exhibition (Europe's largest) will be held at Earls Court, London. I'm definitely going and I suggest that you don't miss it either.

WOMEN AND INDUSTRIAL DISEASE AND INJURY

Part of the work undertaken by the TUSC is to assist groups or individuals wishing to pursue civil claims for damages i.e. industrial deafness. The TUSC has a screening service in which test results will be used in the initial stage of such a claim.

Over the past two years, approximately 600 screening tests have been undertaken. Over half of these have been accepted as potential claims for damages. However, it is worth noting that from this original figure only 5% to 6% are women.

Correct me if I am wrong, but aren't women just as likely to suffer from work related industrial disease or injury? Tens of thousands of women worked in textiles, hosiery and on various production lines or machine operations. No doubt noise levels would have been extremely high or there would have been exposure to hazardous substances. So why is it that very few women pursue claims for compensation? Is it because we are

still stuck in this time warp and believe that women shouldn't complain.

Look, if you've suffered injury or disease as a result of work activity then it is possible that you may be able to get compensation. So complain!

TUSC often has input from trade union safety representatives or representatives of employee safety.

However it is felt that a formal committee of representatives meeting on a regular basis would ensure such input is at full potential.

Representatives working together on specific issues of concern and future campaigns can only serve to strengthen the vital role they already undertake and workplace safety as a whole.

If you wish to serve as a committee member or feel you can offer assistance in any way, then please contact:

**Tony Ridgeway
TUSC
2 Beech Avenue
Mansfield
NG18 1EY
01623 424722
FAX 424723
Evening 453780**

CATUC NEWS

Nottinghamshire County Association

Began holding bi-monthly meetings from September with 4 of the 6 Trades Union Councils represented. The following priorities for work were agreed:

- to work closely with the Notts Trade Union Safety Committee to arrange a conference on Health and Safety in 1998
- to encourage more Trade Union branches to affiliate to Trades Union Councils, and to also encourage more delegates to become active
- to produce a guide to trade unionism
- to expand the existing school work
- continue to publish Notts TU News

Mansfield and District

Have had a busy few months. Apart from organising a picket of the Magnet showroom in Mansfield, and co-ordinating an even stronger Trade Union presence at the Ashfield Show, the main priority has been the planned expansion of Mansfield Unemployed Workers Centre.

Newark and District

Although restricted from a campaigning point of view by low numbers, they have still chalked up some successes.

Nottingham and District

In the summer they had organised a Fergus O'Connor commemoration event which was attended by about 50 people.

They will be arranging regular actions in support of both the Liverpool dockers and Magnet workers. They hope to arrange a debate on the single currency in the near future.

Workshop and District

Had raised the Savannah Rags issue with some notable success. They are planning to rearrange the Muriel Bower lecture for late November.

Trades Union Councils and the County Association provide a forum for trade unionists to work together to achieve common aims. The only limitation is the number of activists who are available. For further details of how you can help, contact the secretaries on p12.



SEND DONATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS

This is our last issue before Christmas. Many fellow workers are involved in long running disputes. They and their families have refused to bow down before the bosses onslaught. Instead they have stood firmly for their rights, and the rights of all trade unionists.

Send donations to:

Secretary
Liverpool Port Shop Stewards Committee
19 Scorton Street
Liverpool
L6 4AS

cheques made payable to Merseyside Dockers Shop Stewards Appeal Fund

Magnet Strike Committee
109 Jedburgh Drive
Darlington
County Durham
DL3 9UP

cheques made payable to Magnet Families Support Fund

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For more information contact:

MSF East Midlands Region
1 Pelham Court
Pelham Road
NOTTINGHAM
NG5 1AP

Tel: 0115 960 9100

EUROPEAN INFORMATION CENTRE FOR TRADE UNIONS IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

East Midland One Day Conferences On Current European Issues For All Trade Union Officials, Officers and Reps

Conference 1

Monday 8th December 1997

Location: Nottingham European and Trade Union Centre
South Nottingham College

Time 9.30 - 4.30

Topics:

am: European Monetary Union
Principles
Opportunities and Threats for Trade Unions

Guest

Speaker: Mel Read MEP

Lunch Provided

pm: The Social Chapter in the UK
What's it all about?
Opportunities for Trade Unions

Guest

Speaker: Christine Woods
TUC Regional Secretary
Tel 0115 9146432/90

Registration

Dennis Jones
European Information Centre
Hygate Centre
South Nottingham College
Denton Drive
Nottingham NG2 7FS

Tel. 0115 9146432 /90

Conference 2

Monday 15th December 1997

Location: Derby Trade Union Education Centre
Mackworth College

Time: 9.30 - 4.30

Topics:

am: The Working Time Directive
Understanding the Principles
Applications
Problems and Opportunities for Trade Unions

Guest

Speaker: to be arranged

Lunch Provided

pm: Health and Safety at Work
Current EU Initiatives
Presentation and Activities

Guest

Speaker: Jake Jackson
GMB Regional Officer

Registration

David Jeffery
Derby Trade Union
Education Centre
Mackworth College
Prince Charles Ave
Mackworth
Derby DE22 4LR

Tel 01332 519951

To register for both conferences send form to either address. These Conferences are sponsored by the European Commission DGX. **There are no fees.**

LIVERPOOL DOCKERS BALLOT

TGWU General Secretary Bill Morris has imposed a secret ballot on the 329 sacked dockers formerly employed directly by Mersey Docks and Harbour Company. Postal forms were delivered on Saturday morning and the ballot closes on Wednesday (22 October).

The move came in response to a letter from Mersey Docks Chief Executive Trevor Furlong dated 13 October, which declared that the current offer would be withdrawn if not accepted in a postal ballot.

The terms of the package now include the formation of a Labour Supply Unit to employ 28 men, but otherwise the deal is unchanged from December 1996: #28,000 severance and a 3 month temporary reinstatement with the offer of an interview for up to 41 ancillary jobs plus a register for future vacancies. The former Torside dockers whose sacking precipitated the Lockout are not mentioned and will not be balloted.

Morris' move was open to legal challenge on the grounds that he failed to gain, or even seek the approval of the union's General Executive Council in September. In fact, when the Docks and Waterways National Committee met last week, National Officer Graham Stevenson was apparently unaware of the move.

However, in the event the Merseyside Port Shop Stewards have decided not to challenge the ballot procedurally, but to put the issues to a closed mass meeting on Monday and campaign for rejection of the offer.

In a vibrant mass meeting today (Monday) in closed session, dockers debated the current "final offer" and the manner and speed in which a ballot has been imposed. Men rose to tell each other that "a yes vote is a vote to dishonour the past, but a no vote is a vote to reclaim the future". One docker held up his dead father's union cards and told the meeting "I believe in afterlife, and when I meet my dad I'll tell him I never let you down". Other men stressed that they must consider their children's future and the international supporters who have put their jobs on the line for Liverpool when deciding how to vote. A 61 year old docker said "this is the strongest we've ever been throughout the two years of our dispute, and although I would like to retire from the industry and enjoy some of my life, I'll be voting 'no' because you've got to consider the future of the young Torside

workers".

After a full debate, the dockers raised their hands in a near unanimous vote to oppose the offer.

The timing of Furlong's letter and the ensuing secrecy is highly suggestive. The 2nd Anniversary demo on 27 September touched off a wave of industrial action. TGWU members refused to cross the dockers picket line at the Medway Port of Sheerness, 100% owned by Mersey Docks. Longshore workers on the US West Coast refused to cross a picket line to handle cargo carried on the "Neptune Jade", a Hapag-Lloyd service from Thamesport whose Port Authority is Medway Ports. Last week, Japanese dockers in Yokohama and Kobe joined the fray over the "Neptune Jade" while Swedish dockers announced moves to boycott trade with Sheerness. The International Transport Workers Federation Asia-Pacific conference endorsed continuous action against ships and shipping lines dealing with Mersey Docks and Liverpool stewards are due to meet the ITF this week.

Equally telling, a delegation of 4 local MP's met with the dock company for over 3 hours on 10 October. Although their talks have not been made public, they are said to have insisted that an improved offer including Torside and all other sacked men would be required to end the dispute, and called for fresh talks including the Port Shop Stewards.

Number of duplicate ballot papers distributed	11
Number of papers distributed	329
Number of ballot papers returned	316
Number of invalid ballot papers (blank/spoilt/unsigned declaration)	6
Thus, total number of valid ballot papers to be counted	310
Rate of participation	91%

RESULT

The question put to the membership was as follows:

DO YOU ACCEPT THE COMPANY'S OFFER?

Number voting YES 97 (31% of valid vote)

Number voting NO 213 (69% of valid vote)

REPORT

TUC/WAC FORUM ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SATURDAY 11TH OCTOBER 1997, DERBY.

The meeting was chaired by Caroline Crolley TGWU, with the following speakers: Angie Parks a Refuge Worker, Christine Blincoe a Psychologist, Ann Mellor from MSF, Stourbridge MP Deborah Shipley, Leics. MEP Sue Waddington, Carol Hardwick of Derbyshire Police and Fiona Lazenby a Solicitor from Flint Bishop and Barnett, Derby.

Domestic violence occurs between various family members, not just husbands and wives/partners. It covers parent and child, child/parent, as well as siblings.

The violence and abuse occurs in many ways, such as beating, hair pulling, kicking, strangling, drowning, cutting, stabbing, bruising. Also rape, monetary deprivation, isolation (freezing out), verbal abuse, enforcing regimes of behaviour on food and dress, humiliation.

One in four women experiences domestic violence, and 100 women die in England and Wales every year. (No figures given for men). Children are damaged also, and are sometimes used to perpetuate additional abuse and violence against the victim.

D/V is about control and undermining self esteem, the victim coming to believe that they are at fault. The perpetrator often creates a "blame" situation to maintain the terror.

Seven years is the average length of time that domestic violence is tolerated, during which time the victim can experience as many as 35 attacks, and often many more.

It is tolerated because the victim:

Feels there is no choice: lacks alternative accommodation: fears the unknown: feels they are to blame: is ashamed: feels a failure as a mother: has lack of finance and ignorance of benefits: fears partner and receives death threats (often carried out): fears family reaction - violence and abuse from own and in-laws: denies situation: still loves the abuser: fears not being believed: is afraid of statutory agencies and ignorant of available help: fears losing children and loss of civil rights if in an arranged marriage - unsettled spouse context.

There are not enough safe houses offering respite and recovery. Some victims need to spend time in a safe environment several times, to gain the courage and to recovery physically, before planning a different life with support.

Tremendous courage is needed by the victim to make the disclosure, so it is important that they are believed and helped.

The Psychologist wished to dispel these myths:

1. "You provoke it - ask for it".
2. The perpetrator or the victim is stuck in a cycle of abuse due to childhood experience.
3. Other excuses are drugs, alcohol or lack of money.

The areas in which help were most needed were in revaluing self, removing blame, channelling anger, challenging the guilt and learning to trust again.

Anne Mellor said MSF took up the issue to raise awareness and establish a working party, which subsequently led to a national statement and conference attended by 100 people from the UK. MSF were also pressurising the 18 MSF MP's to push the zero tolerance issue.

Workplace members need to look for signs of domestic violence;

team working can instigate a bullying structure, whereby a weak, stressed member could suffer again at work if her injuries slowed the pace of her work.

A policy of anti-harassment at work can also re-educate behaviour in the home.

Young men should be taught to be "Gentle" men, and children from damaged backgrounds should be counselled.

Help is available from Women's Aid, a national group. Counselling can be found, but it is always advisable to check the qualifications of any counselling service via B.A.C. GP's can offer advice and help as can Health Visitors or Community Nurses.

There is to be a "Silent Witness" campaign with a march on Westminster on 18th October, depicting images of women who have been murdered.

Debra Shipley said the hidden costs to the NHS, S/Serv. L/A's and legal systems, were enormous. She stressed that there is a need for legal reform, a policy, and national recognition of this issue. MP's believe that the law is failing the victim, and separate statistics on D/V are now being collated for a Home Office report. Debra Shipley had put through an early day motion on rape law reform. Sue Waddington said there was a move to make 1999 the European Year against violence to women, and advised people to write to their MEP and to support a budget for this campaign.

Changes in attitude were now moving towards evicting the perpetrator from the home, and changing the law to protect victims. W.A.V.E. is a voluntary group "Women Against Violence in Europe". An initiative to link in and train Police and Health Professionals in zero tolerance, and to re-educate attitudes in schools. Carol Hardwick outlined a project which is ongoing in Derbyshire. This is a specially trained D/V Unit, formed as a result of the 1992 edict by the Home Office.

Two Officers initially counsel both partners separately, and lead towards rehabilitation. There is a Men's impact programme - a 16 week course to challenge their behaviour. Out of every 8 men who attend the course 3 are likely to re-offend. However the most serious punishment is being boundover or probation.

Since 1st June there has been ongoing training in the Police Force in re-educating attitudes: this is being mirrored in other Forces.

Fiona Lazenby, Solicitor, said that any delay in bringing charges could undermine the victim's case, and that they must report injury to their GP and get photos as soon as possible. Court appearances are often cancelled due to fear. The new harassment law helps enforce assistance in re-housing, which can take place in a different area.

This conference gave out a lot of information on how victims can be helped, and it was pleasing to know that steps are being taken to reform attitudes and create change.

Prior to the conference, I had phoned Nottingham Women's Aid, who were pleased to send a delegate. Afterwards she said it was good to be amongst such a positive crowd of people, who were intent on doing something. Sometimes when an organisation put D/V on an agenda little was done, and sometimes it felt like a token subject, but not in this case. She went away feeling extremely optimistic.

So this is the buzz from connecting with the Women's TUC.

We can work to achieve positive change.

W. Lawrence (GMB)