

PRISONERS LIST

(Updated 13/9/91)

TRAFALGAR SQUARE PRISONERS

Paul Jacob RA0711 EPD Oct '91 EDR May '93
HMP Coldingley, Bisley, Woking, Surrey, GU24 9EX
Arrested 31st March in Trafalgar Square. Paul received 4 years for Section 2 and handling stolen goods.

Paul is a traveller and his home and all his worldly goods were in two vans which were towed away by the police and destroyed. There is a bust-fund set up by a supporter to collect money for Paul to get a new van/home when he gets out. If you can spare any cash, organise benefits etc, write to: Box S, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford. Cheques/Postal Orders payable to "D.SPENCER".

Brian Tavares MV3239 EPD Nov '91 EDR Nov '92
HMP Camp Hill, Clissold Rd, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5PB.

Arrested 31 March, charged Section 2 POA for throwing a missile at a police line after he had been batoned to the ground by them without any provocation. Brian was sentenced to 3 years in November 1990.

Timothy Donaghy MW0105 EPD Feb '92 EDR Feb '93
HMP Downview, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5PD
Tim was one of the first three people to be tried on Riot charges (Section 1 POA, max sentence: 10 years) from the 31st. He was accused of shoving a scaffolding pole through the window of one of the riot vans charging into people at speed in the Strand. Together with Darren Healy and Nicky Wadleigh, he was found not guilty of the riot charge, however he was sentenced to 3 years on a Section 2 POA charge at the end of the trial on 29 January.

Darren Healey RA2183 EPD Nov '91 EDR Sept '92
HMP Wandsworth, Heathfield Rd, Wandsworth, London, SW18 3HS.

Darren stood trial together with Tim and Nicky in the Old Bailey. In common with the other two he was acquitted of Riot, however he was found guilty of two counts of Section 2 POA and received 2 years and 6 months to run concurrently, i.e. 2&1/2 years.

Neil Bremner MWO216 EPD Dec '91 EDR Oct '92
HMP Coldingley, Bisley, Woking, Surrey, GU24 9EX
Neil got 30 months for sec.2. Sentenced on February 5th.

Richard Andrews MW0962 EPD 17 Sept '91
HMP FORD, nr Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0BX
Richard was sentenced on March 19 to 18 months for 'violent disorder'.

Matt Lee MW1054 EPD Jan '92 EDR Nov '92
HMP Featherstone, New Road, Featherstone, Wolverhampton, WV10 7PU
Matt got 30 months for 'violent disorder' (Section 2 POA). The Birmingham Poll tax Prisoners Support Group is providing practical and political support for Matt (address on page three).

Steven Lynn MW1028 EDR 27 Sept '91
HMP Ford, Ford, Nr. Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0BX.
Steve got sentenced to 12 months for three counts of 'violent disorder' (Section 2 POA)

Steve Curtis MW1182 EDR 2 OCT '91
HMP Northeye, Barnhorn Rd, Bexhill-on-Sea, E.Sussex, TN39 4QN.
Steve was arrested during one of the notorious 'Operation Carnaby' raids in Hackney. Steve got 12 months, on April 3rd, for Section 2 POA.

Simon Russell ND1666 EPD May '92 EDR 6 June '93
HMP The Mount, Molyneux Ave, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 0NZ
Simon was sentenced to 18 months for Section 2 POA (31st March) and 30 months on two counts relating to ALF activities. Simon is also a standing committee member of the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA).

Robert Wray MW1242 EPD NOV '91 EDR JUL '92
HMP Feltham, Bedfont Rd, Feltham, Middx, TW39 4QN.
Rob was sent down for 21mths after spending a month on judges remand. He was convicted on Sec. 2 and 3 and criminal damage.

Keith Wray MW1241 EPD SEPT '91 EDR MAR '92
HMP Feltham, Bedfont Rd, Feltham, Middx, TW39 4QN.

Keith and Rob are brothers. Keith also spent a month on judges remand and was then sentenced to 15mths for Sec.2 and 3. Both were sentenced on May 3rd 91.

Michael Dalley PF3098 EPD Nov '91 EDR 4 May '92
HMP Wandsworth, Heathfield Rd, Wandsworth, London SW18 3HS
Michael was sent down on 4th May 1991 for 18 months.

Mark Hutchings MW2737 EPD 24/4/92. EDR 22/1/93.
(Please send all mail via the TSDC-PSG until further notice...)
Mark was sent down on 22 July 1991 for Two years 3 months. He was convicted on Section 2 POA, Crim. Damage, & Theft. Also on unrelated Charge of Possession.

(CONTINUED ON INSIDE BACK PAGE)

POLL TAX PRISONERS NEWS

September 1991 (Free/donation)

Prisoners Support Group- Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign



SCARRED WORLD

"For these deeds" he said,
"You must pay",
My sentence four weeks
away,
How much?
How long?
What will I get?
But I don't regret,
My Violent Disorder and
Affray,
I broke Public Order so
they say,
Some social reports that
look in my past,
This scar isn't my first,
And in this scarred world,
It won't be my last.

Keith Wray
(poll tax prisoner)

contents: prisoners' letters, news, updated prisoners list,
October 19th demo, Police Monitoring Group, and more.

SUPPORT THE POLL TAX PRISONERS

The poll tax has mobilised the ordinary people of this country and brought them onto the streets in protest as no other issue since the war. The State and its servants the police have responded in the only way they know how; direct attacks on people demonstrating their anger and opposition to this insane tax. We estimate at least 1500 people have been arrested on various Poll Tax demo's and actions. As a result hundreds of people have faced charges, trials and imprisonment, especially now non-payment jailings are intensifying. Others have already been convicted or sent to prison by vindictive magistrates and judges; still more have faced long periods on remand, while waiting for trial.

The Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign was founded to help people fight the charges against them from the mass demonstration on the 31st of March. TSDC continued its defence work after the arrests in Brixton on October 20th 1990. Alongside other PSG's/Defence campaigns, we have encouraged people to actively defend their protests and their communities from police harassment and attacks. The Prisoners Support Group is a section of the TSDC set up specifically to work for the welfare of those imprisoned for demonstrating against the poll tax, and to do solidarity work for jailed non-payers. We regularly produces up to date lists of prisoners and where they are being held, for those prisoners who wish to be publicised.

PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Prison rules are restrictive so there are strict limits on how prisoners can be practically supported. There are three main areas of support:

i) **Letters:** Letters are a way of showing prisoners that people on the outside are thinking of them; letters help break down isolation from the outside world, and so they are very important to prisoners. Letters must have a name and address written on them, otherwise the prisoner may not receive it. Also, letters must not contain anything that could get the prisoner or yourself into trouble with the law (use your common sense). Both remand and convicted prisoners are restricted as to how many letters they can send out a week. So don't necessarily expect a reply as prisoners have to write to their families, loved ones and close friends. If you're not a great letter writer, or you feel awkward writing to a prisoner you don't know personally, remember that the fact that you bothered to write will be appreciated by the prisoner. You could always send a card, which can be used to brighten up a prison wall. Some prisons allow stamps and envelopes to be sent in.

ii) **Visits:** There is a big difference between remand and convicted prisoners about visits. Convicted prisoners are generally only allowed one visit every four weeks. Usually convicted prisoners will want to spend their rare visits with family and close friends. Remanded prisoners, however, can usually have about six visits a week. So for remanded prisoners it is possible for many supporters to visit them. However the visits do have to be co-ordinated because only one visit is allowed per day, if you want to visit remanded prisoners please contact the Prisoners Group at the TSDC office. If you are on Income Support, or a low income (eg. Pensions, Family Credit, DSS Certificate), you can get assistance for visits. But, like most 'benefits', there are loads of restrictions. Eg. Only immediate relatives can claim. (Note: Lesbian or Gay partners are excluded). Also the prisoner must be serving a 3 month+ sentence or have been on remand for 4 weeks+. Get info form 2022A & fill out form 2022 (from local DSS) or call 021-4559855, or write to The Assisted Prison Visits Unit, 11th floor, Calthorpe House, Hagley Rd, Birmingham, B16 8QR. Otherwise, call the PSG for help with visits.

iii) **Material support:** In some prisons, prisoners are allowed to spend a limited amount (£10) of money from "private funds"

(money sent in) in the prison canteen each month (in others the rules are different). Never send cash; as this may go missing. Postal orders are acceptable, which should be made payable to the prisoner. The Prisoners Group makes sure that this money is sent in to each prisoner every month so there is little use sending money direct to prisoners as they will not be able to spend it while they are in prison. The Prisoners Group also pays for prisoners to have a daily paper of their choice sent in. Books can be sent in by post (the group also arranges this, but you can send in books yourself). Pre-recorded tapes can also be sent in. Sometimes they have to come sealed direct from a record shop with an accompanying letter on the shops note-paper. Check with the prison your sending stuff to. Finally the Prisoners Group arranges for special "one-off" items such as radios and walkmans to be sent in. Short wave radios are not allowed; also, there should be no mains adapter on the machine. Alkaline (ie Duracell) batteries are not allowed. Be warned there are a great many obscure restrictions on what can or cannot be sent into prisons so its best to discuss this with the prisoners group before sending stuff in.

PRISON PICKETS: A note to Defence campaigns & people doing pickets to support prisoners. Please remember to ask Prisoners whether they want a picket: you can do this by writing, or getting in touch with the people regularly visiting. Some prisoners have said they don't want pickets, and we must respect prisoners wishes.

APPEAL

If you know of anybody who is facing charges or is imprisoned for demonstrating against the poll tax who is not on our list please let us know by writing to the address below or phoning us. The Prisoners Group meets weekly at the TSDC office. If you want to get involved please get in touch. Finally all the support we give prisoners costs money, so if you can afford to send any money, no matter how little, it will help no end.

If you wish to provide any form of support for any of the Poll Tax Prisoners, please contact the Prisoners Support Group at the telephone no. below to ensure the info is still accurate.

POLL TAX PRISONERS SUPPORT GROUP
c/o BRIXTON LAW CENTRE, 506 BRIXTON RD,
LONDON SW9. Tel: 071 738 7586.

SOLIDARITY NEWS

Hundreds of people took part in a Day of Action on Saturday September 7th, when anti-poll tax campaigners all around England organised 5 prison pickets and demonstrations against Poll Tax jailings and to support all poll tax prisoners currently inside for defending our demonstrations, and refusing to pay the tax.

At **Ford** prison on September 1st, 10 people from the Sussex Poll Tax Resisters picketed Ford open prison for 3 hours in solidarity with Richard Andrews and Steve Lynn. After exchanging greetings with some prisoners near the gate, they managed to float their banner (attached to some helium balloons!) over a cricket match inside the prison. They spoke to the governor, described as a "nice liberal type"(!).

In **Gateshead**, 200 people marched through the streets in support of Becci Palmer, jailed for 90 days for non-payment in Low Newton remand centre. Then 25 people held a "Bike Ride for Freedom" to Low Newton remand centre, where they held a picket and gave out leaflets. Later the "Freedom Riders" cycled over to pay a short visit to the leader of Gateshead council at home.

Eric Segal was jailed by Folkestone magistrates for 30 days on the 12th of August. Kent Anti-Poll Tax Federation decided to picket **Canterbury** prison where Eric was being held. Beforehand, however, they demonstrated outside a shop owned by the Council leader. Three people were arrested by the police for obstruction! Ten people went off to the police station, while about 15 people went to picket Canterbury prison. Eric has now been released.

At **Wandsworth** prison, there was a small picket organised by the TSDC Prisoners Group, in support of Trafalgar Square prisoners, Micheal Dalley & Darren Healey. The picket was fairly quiet, compared to the usual rowdy crew, with about 15 people turning up- are they all on holiday, or what?! (on August 7th, 50 people held a lively picket of Wandsworth).

In **Bristol**, there was a noisy march of 250 people with the "Ambling Band" (who amble about with their music!!), from the centre of Bristol to Horfield prison, where non-payer Tony Whitfield is banged up for Two months.

In August, when the first committal hearings started in Bristol, Polltaxers heckled the magistrates and the recovery officer, with court papers torn up and thrown about. The magistrates had to be "escorted" from the court. Police reinforcements arrived, but the doors were blocked, allowing all but two people escaped. The two

were sent down for two weeks apiece for "contempt" of court - they're not the only ones!!!

In **Clifton**, Nottingham, 150 people marched through the town, to the library where the local Labour councillor holds his "surgery". He wasn't there, but another councillor came out. When pushed on his support against jailings he promptly bogged off! At the **Lincoln** nick, where non-payers, Soroosh Ayendeh and Bob Lee are inside, seventy Nottingham and Lincoln folk went to it. For two hours, they banged drums, blew whistles, shook tambourines with loads of local banners; they tried to get around behind the prison, but the police turned them back. Arms waved through the bars, some cons shining shaving mirrors, and waving flaps (underpants & pillow cases!!). One of the non-payers was, however, put "on the block"(solitary).

Prison Pickets have been happening fast and furious, almost every week. There was a very successful picket of **Pentonville** prison last month, where 70 people pitched up to support Micheal Neal, a Trafalgar Square prisoner; prisoners produced placards and banners.

Local defence campaigns/PSGs: **Avon Defence Campaign**, c/o Avon Federation, 84 Colston St, Bristol (0272 255504). **Birmingham Poll Tax Prisoners Support Group**, c/o 20 Corner House, Wellington Street, Blackpatch, Smethwick B66 2LT (021 565 4217). **Nottingham Defence Fund**, c/o Box NDF, 72 Radford Road, Hyson Green, Nottingham. **Sussex Poll Tax Resisters Support Fund**, c/o 6 Tibury Place, Brighton SX (0273 671213).

Defendants News

25 JUNE Raymond Eyricks got a not guilty on Section 3 POA from the Brixton picket, after 8 months signing on at the police station!!

4 JULY Kevin Scott got 130 hours "Community Service" (Should that be charge?). Kevin and his merry band did a very succesful gig for the prisoners...

5 JULY Richard Westerman got a 4 month suspended from the Brixton picket.

16 JULY Neil Fernandez (On Arson x2, Section 2POA, ABH, etc!) acquitted after PC Carrebrown lies wound up the judge, who stopped the case, referring the copper to the DPP on perjury charges!

17 JULY Michael Conway found not guilty on Section 2, when the Jury accepted that he had acted in Self-defence, and Common defence of the demonstrators at T. Square.

Alistair Mitchell's "Biting" case continues, with a judicial Review & Appeal in progress....

Mark Hutchings

Dear TSDC & Readers,

Thank you for all the support you've given me, it's great to see that there's so much support on mine and others behalfs. And it's a comfort to know the struggle is still on!

I am serving a 2 year, 3 month sentence for my actions on 31st '90. I was charged with 2 charges of Violent Disorder, 2 of Criminal Damage, a Theft and an ABH. I accept that four of these charges I committed, but it was impossible for me to stand back and watch whilst scores of pigs charged into innocent people, wielding batons and being what the press would call, hooligans and thugs, not having a care in the world who they were hitting etc. (that is nothing new though).

I was charged with ABH, the copper said that I came up behind him and smashed him round the back of the head with a piece of wood. What actually happened was I was running down a street when I noticed this copper violently lashing out on this poor blokes head with his baton, the guy was not trying to retaliate, as I would imagine he was on the verge of being unconscious. I felt I had to help him, so I approached the copper and pulled him off the guy, the copper swung round and tried to give me the same treatment, but I was the faster and managed to get away! I took it that this copper was not happy at what happened as he went to great lengths to make up a story to get me charged. My barrister pointed out that he must have spotted me in a photo where I was holding a piece of wood in Trafalgar Square an hour before, and cobbled together the story from that. And we're classed as the Poll Tax thugs? I was also charged with 2 Criminal Damages, both for smashing up two cars. One, I pleaded guilty to as I ripped out the stereo of it, so technically I caused the car damage, but I was said to have smashed the whole car up, and influenced people to smash up another one across the road, in total causing £8000 of damage. I did none of these and can only put it down to either the few witnesses, two of which were the owners of the cars and two others that were their employees, cooked up this story so as they could claim the insurance if I was convicted, or from a nudge from the boys in blue.

I spent 16 months on bail, 16 months of not being able

to look to the future. I must say that once you are sentenced things only get better!

The Poll Tax to me is only a fraction of what shit we have to put up with. There's so much shit that affects as everyday such as pollution in the air, sea, rivers and land. Money is stupidly thrown around everywhere and not put to reversing the shit man has caused to our beautiful world. If we do not do something now then we'll be doomed much sooner than we think! The press and television covers up the truths of the true reality. Did you know there was a radiation leak at Aldermaston a few months ago? You have only to look at Chernobyl to see how bad it is, we are told a few facts 7 years later, when it's too late! Unfortunately, us the people were also victims of a cover up, maybe one day the truth will be known. There are hundreds of things that are fucking this world of ours, so let's start getting active NOW! If for any reason you can't be active, then simply educate people, make them aware and shocked at this shit-hole we live in! This can be done today not tomorrow. So

hopefully once a larger percentage of people are aware and sickened and make it known, then maybe this so called Government of ours will have to act under public pressure. Don't get me wrong, I would love to see these people overthrown, but we need to be realistic for things to be done NOW!

On the 31st it was great to see such solidarity and I was pleased to be a part of it, for me it was the best day of my life. Seeing people saying NO we're not taking this shit! We proved that we can influence things in masses, so lets pull together, make your neighbours aware, so we can make our land, sea, air and health better, if not for your sake, for

future generations!

Solidarity Today
Cheers, Mark.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE OF RUSSIA, AND TO US ALL!



Norman Laws

Here I am still using H.M. notepaper. I collected a bundle on my last day "in clink", thanks to the usual bloody-mindedness of the staff who had withheld the previous weekly pay (£3.60) so I had two lots to dispose of at the last moment, so settled for about £6 of stamps (envelopes & paper thrown in).

I am supposed to be answering your letter of 22/7/91. I'll get round to that - eventually. Good news for Neil and Michael* - & possibly for many more such cases, too.

I've had quite a hectic time lately, with TV and local radio requesting interviews and doing live shows. (Radio N/C had me & prospective conservative candidate answering phone-ins) This was free propaganda for him, I was the stooge to get people interested. I did get my nose in once or twice - I had to call one "Lady" a liar. You should have heard the rumpus which followed. The producer estimated my "odds" at 3-1 against. "Where the hell did you get that lot from?" I asked.

Since then I have had 6 poison-pen letters postmarked Darlington, Durham & (4) Newcastle. No names or addresses. One said "You would send your Militant Thugs to come and beat me up!" More than likely it would be his neighbours who did that.

However, we lose no sleep over that lot, though one made criminal threats. Said it was time "some of us" threw a few fire-bombs through my window & they knew exactly what to do with the MURAL 25ft X 15ft on the wall of Laing Art Gallery, N/C. This design covered the history of this area with some of its heros, started, I believe, by Dave Ayres, Sec. of Weardale TUC.

Well, I had to take this to the local police station & was told not to worry, they would arrest the culprit themselves & charge him/them. Well, well fancy, help from the Boys in Blue!

Our local prisoner, Beccy Palmer, 3 months for Wilful Refusal, has received splendid cover by our local group (Poly students, Militant, SWP, et al). Gateshead Council put on a £30,000 spread for a japanese delegation (Town Twinning). We invaded their banqueting area as they were assembling - all the japanese with their cameras clicking - hope it all got into the japanese newspapers - & sang, blew whistles, waved banners written in japanese - NO POLL TAX, FREE OUR POLITICAL PRISONERS - shouted through loud-hailers at the mayor & council leader while they were all assembled for photographs. This lasted for over 1/2 hour. I tackled the mayor. Told him what sort of W.C. traitor he was, along with all his council, said I'm sure his relatives wouldn't let him lift the sneck on their back-yard door, asked him

if he even remembered what a sneck was from his W.C. upbringing, I told him the only way he would see the inside of a town hall in future would be from the visitors gallery, & that would apply to all councillors who wouldn't stand up against this Thatcher legislation & be counted.

But, you know, you cannot shame them. You can only wipe them off the Labour Party panel. All these thousands of characters must be replaced with fighting working-class Socialist Candidates, more so even than we did in 1945. Then we made the mistake of voting in Old School Tie Intellectual band-wagon jumpers & weak-kneed Social Democrats. This time it has to be well-trying SOCIALISTS & watched over vigilantly, word by word & evicted at the first hesitancy. Like our local MP Don Dixon:-

"MPs must uphold the Law & pay the Poll Tax no matter how unjust they think it is. I would never support anyone breaking the Law".

Some Class Warrior. It isn't his first jump off the rails either. He voted with the anti-abortionists also. To put things in their proper perspective we need only quote Gandhi, 1948:-

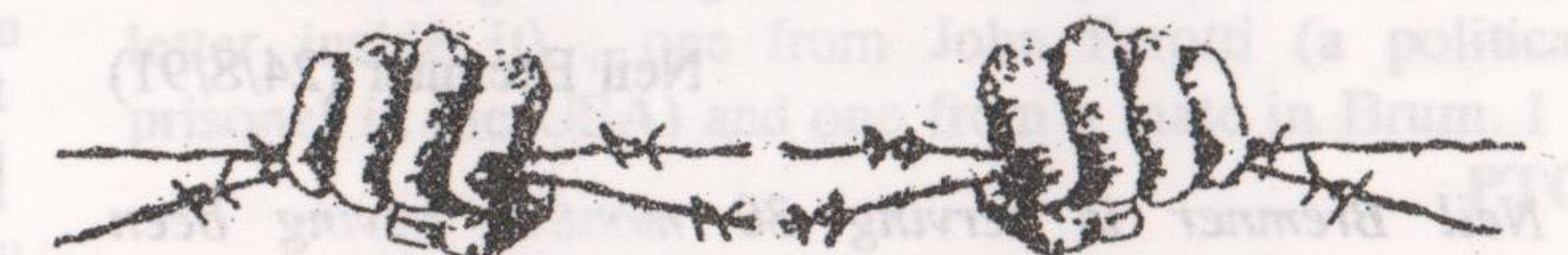
"An unjust law is itself a species of violence. Arrest for its breach is more so."

At the moment, I'm trying to persuade the gang here to support Kay Richardson of WHITBY, Yorks on her 2nd LIABILITY on 23/8/91 - even promising to pay petrol money for students mini-bus. She is all alone... but still determined to go to jail. She must be supported. If I get there, & some from LEEDS are contemplating - they are going to hijack me & carry me off to Leeds for a meeting with their APTU. Then we must all have a victory celebrations when the battles are over - ever? Somewhere central. Cllr Brian Smedley of Bridgewater, Somerset has to be included from South West - among others. Now they are jailing WOMEN - that's DYNAMITE! Councils have signed their death-warrant here. SLOGAN: THEY ARE HOPING TO SCARE OUR WOMENFOLK. SOME HOPE...SOME WOMEN!! Will let you know how things progress.

Cheers,
NORMAN LAWS

*Neil Fernandez and Michael Conway, acquitted of charges from Trafalgar Square in July.

Norman Laws, a 71 year old pensioner, was jailed in South Shields for non-payment. He spent two months in prison.



Neil Bremner

I just wonder if you have compiled any numbers of people who were given custodial sentences, there must be over a hundred, and how and what length of sentence were given to all those in the "If you know 'em, shop 'em" mug-shot line up. I know about only me and Lorraine. It's a shame these so-called newspapers didn't pursue the effort in placing mug-shots of the so-called police-men, in attempt to bring to justice members of TSG, Tactical [Territorial] Support Group. Oh yeah, really tactical, a collection of drunken louts similar to the SA brown shirt louts in Germany before the war, with their heavy boots, heavy truncheons, and of course, their heavy policing tactics.

Horrendous injuries people sustained that day, some poor guy I believe lost his legs or ability to walk after being run over by a police van. There was also the poor young woman trampled by horses, and of course scores of poor sods had their heads split and fractured by police truncheons. Not to mention the scores of arrests - 361 on the day - mostly beaten up in police cells afterwards, and of course most handed heavy sentences for their involvement in the riot that day.



As for the support from different sects of the left for defendants... I don't blame all members involved within the left, just really their careerist minded leadership, who only wished to distance themselves from us, as their prerogative is to maintain party members, enhance further membership, and sustain their well-paid influential positions, whether they be in the Labour Party, (which I would still encourage people to vote for, please don't be over-enthusiastic about rapid "social change via revolution, armed rebellion within the army, whatever..."). Anyway, use your vote, it's your RIGHT. After all, all you revolutionaries out there, the Poll Tax Riots were the closest you ever had to a revolution, and probably will ever get to having one, and just witness the antics, sectarianism, fratricidal arguments, and meagre excuses sections of the left offered afterwards for their lack of support during the riot and their dismissal of people arrested afterwards. Yes, some parties did give legal support, but what bugs me is their condemnation of it all, claiming it didn't change anything.

Neil Bremner (24/8/91)

Neil Bremner is serving 30 months, having been convicted of 'violent disorder' at Trafalgar Square.

Soroosh Ayandeh

To All Non-payers and those who sympathise

Dear Citizens,

on 18th July 1991 at 20 minutes past 9 am I was herded into no. 2 court at Guildhall magistrates in Nottingham, with only 6 people allowed into the public gallery. I conducted my case as I promised and preached. I condemned not only the Poll Tax but also its implementation and the use of laws from the Dark Ages (Bailiff Laws), to cow decent citizens of this country into paying such a hated Tax.

The effect on the stipendary magistrate (Mr. P. Nuthall) was such that he begged me to have "not hours or days, but weeks to reconsider my decision".

I had fought for this campaign selflessly for 18 months and looked forward to the day when I could use the court as the best public platform, not only to denounce the tax but to follow in the footsteps of all those, brave ones who were jailed before me for defending the dispossessed in Trafalgar Square and for non-payment. After all going to jail is part and parcel of any political struggle which is worth fighting for. As much as I condemn jailings, I will proudly serve my three months sentence and use every minute of it to help the non-payers campaign and any other injustice in this world. Below is the most accurate account of my court's conduct.

P. Nuthall: Do you wish to have some one representing you?

Soroosh: No, thank you, I understand enough about the law.

P. Nuthall: Mr. Gradwell - Council's Representative - would you give the Council's evidence against Mr. Ayandeh.

[Gradwell took the oath and showed the Bailiff's evidence of several attempts to restrain goods to no avail!]

P. Nuthall: Do you wish to see the evidence?

Soroosh: No Sir, because first of all the use of the bailiff is based on barbaric laws of Dark Ages and they should not be used in a modern court and secondly the account of the events given was totally untrue.

P. Nuthall: Do you wish to ask Mr. Gradwell any questions?

Soroosh: No Sir, since Mr. Gradwell isn't legally fit enough to represent the Rushcliffe borough council, here.

P. Nuthall: Do you wish to defend yourself?

Soroosh: I am here to defend others who have

suffered as a result of this tax not myself.

P. Nuthall: Would you go to the witness stand please?

Soroosh: I speak from where I am standing as I always speak the truth and also Mr. Gradwell has lied under oath so many times, that I would rather speak from here.

P. Nuthall: But in this country if you wish to make a statement in court of law you must make a declaration.

Soroosh: I know that Sir, and I just said I always speak the truth.

P. Nuthall: But you must make a declaration.

[The female usher rushed and held a card in front of me.]

Soroosh: I declare that I speak the truth....

[P. Nuthall: made a gesture with his right hand to go ahead.]

Soroosh: I have seen the misery and suffering that the Poll Tax has brought to millions of ordinary people, I refuse to pay because firstly this law has no validity since the very government which introduced it has voted against it in Parliament. Thatcher has been sacked - and plus barbaric laws are used to implement this hated tax, against frightened mothers, old pensioners, even those people bedridden with heart conditions. I have seen a pregnant woman who was made physically sick by abuse she received from Council Thugs; called Bailiffs. The new government itself has now denounced the Poll Tax, yet bailiffs are still pushing letters through doors. The Tax is now discredited, yet the Council are still taking people to court for it.

P. Nuthall: Is it the amount you owe which is in dispute?

Soroosh: The amount of the Poll Tax and what I have been asked to pay has never been the question. It is the very principle of it which expects the poor to pay the same as a millionaire. The government knew that 8 to 10 million couldn't even pay it when it was introduced. So people can not pay. If the council can print money, we can't.

P. Nuthall: What is your income and can you explain your means?

Soroosh: It is below my dignity to disclose anything related to my income. It is no business of this court and it is irrelevant since I am not paying.

P. Nuthall: Would you like to reconsider your decision if it is due to financial difficulty. I'll give you not hours or days but weeks to reconsider your decision.

Soroosh: No.

P. Nuthall: Do you realise what consequence you will face for wilful refusal?

Soroosh: Yes Sir, I know the consequences of my action today, I would rather lose my right arm than to pay a penny of the Poll Tax.

P. Nuthall: You are leaving me no leeway.

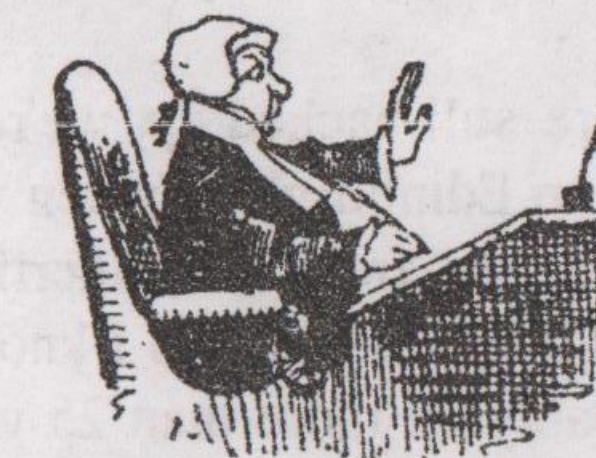
Soroosh: Sir I understand your position, you have to look after your people, I will look after mine.

[There Mr. Nuthall lowered himself to consult the clerk.]

P. Nuthall: I understand the principled stand you

are taking over this issue and I respect you for it. Nevertheless you leave me no other alternative but to sentence you to 3 months imprisonment.

He then dismissed the council's application for cost. I was ushered by a WPC towards the steps - within the court - which leads to the cells below, with my right arm raised and fist clenched to salute my 5 comrades who bravely stood up with their arms raised the same.



Matt Lee

WE NEED YOU - YOU NEED US- SOLIDARITY AND THE POLL TAX STRUGGLE

"Solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever - the Union makes us strong! "

(American Trade Unionists battle song)

"Solidarity with the Poll Tax Prisoners ", "Don't delay, write today! ". These calls echoing forth from the various Prisoners Support Groups (PSG's) up and down the country must have been heard by a great many people. But have you - as one of the lucky ones on the outside - ever thought about just how important such solidarity is ? Is it easy to imagine what effect your brief letter or card will have ? No. Hardly surprising really, unless you've had the great pleasure of staying in one of Her Majesty's Prisons for any length of time.

But believe me - each and every token of solidarity means a hell of a lot. Without them it would be pointless being here. Sure we'd all still survive. However, it's your solidarity that enables us to do more than "just survive", that enables us to grow stronger and more able to fight back next time.

I get my mail at lunchtime. It's uncensored here and also unlimited, though this is common it isn't universal. Amongst my (usually) daily parcel of mail will be a few cards, a couple of letters (usually one from my wife) and the occasional book or magazine. After forcing the daily dose of garbage disguised as food down my neck, I lay back in my bed, fag in hand, to go through today's mail.

Let's take today, as typical as any other. I get a card from Edinburgh, a long letter from my wife (with another letter inside it) , one from John Perotti (a political prisoner in the USA) and one from a mate in Brum. I

PTO

Matt Lee (cont.)

also got a letter and a pile of documents from a comrade of mine: I obviously don't get exactly the same each day, but "even just" a card means a lot. Solidarity like this - the thin end of the wedge of general solidarity work - plays a vital role in my life and, I'm sure in the lives of the other PT prisoners.

First off it lets us know we're still backed up, we're still supported. Take the card from Edinburgh. Written whilst on a picket to protect a house from the Sheriffs of Lothian Council. They're still fighting and so I know the struggle is continuing. Probably no more than 25 words, but that card will go up on the wall and both decorate my cell and remind me, each time my eye falls on it that there's someone up in Edinburgh that backs us up. That card gives me the little boost for today. Next time a screw says "wasn't you a bit stupid gettin' nicked for that (referring to the Poll Tax) i can tell him and think to myself "well, no; and there's a lot of people who agree with me - see for yourself". We need our numbers, our unity, to keep us strong when facing the enemy - our only strength is in our unity and therefore in our solidarity. With it we are invincible - without it we are no more than a leaf in the breeze.

Secondly, there is the continuing involvement in the struggles details. People write and are prepared to engage in discussion letting me put my opinion on the way things are going. It is often difficult to tell the true nature of the struggle from in here, but also, occasionally, we may be able to give some words of advice that are of use that are of use. It's the opportunity to try, not the necessity of succeeding, that is vital; to keep us part of the living fight, **active** fighters against the Poll Tax, not just passive recipients of solidarity.

Thirdly, there's the family and friends, who all play such a vital role. Day by day they stand by, imprisoned without bars, yet nonetheless imprisoned, in this game of repression the state is playing at. And there's many other benefits of simple solidarity as well.

The most vital thing to remember is that in here we may be unfree but we're also unbroken. We are as much a part of the fight as you. When you go to a demo or a picket you see and talk to others, gain the strength from your numbers. We can't go to such demo's, so we need you to come to us. we can't go to conferences or meetings, so we need you to listen to us. Above all we need you to listen to us. Above all we need you to remember that it is only a wall that separates us. Our fight is still the same and we are still part of the same movement, striving for the same goals. If you let us join in and enable us to join in - if, in other words, we ignore the walls, - then the solidarity really will make us all strong!

One struggle, One fight. **Matt Lee (28/8/91)**

THOUGHT FOR A DAY!

Recently a comrade sent me a quote. I often get such things sent in and they are usually quite inspiring and uplifting. This quote is from a book called "Notebooks of an Agitator" by James P. Cannon, an American revolutionary socialist who was involved in the "International Labor Defense" of America, an organisation of the working class to defend itself from oppression (a little like the TSDC, only more general). Amongst others, the ILD defended Sacco and Vanzetti.

"The path to freedom leads through a prison. The door swings in and out and through that door passes a steady procession of 'those fools too stubborn willed to bend' who will not turn aside from the path because prisons obstruct it here and there... All through history those who have fought against oppression have constantly faced the dungeons of a ruling class. The greater the cause has been, and the deeper it has been rooted in the needs and sufferings of the masses, the more it has been menaced by the tortures of the prison cells. The number of victims taken from among the ranks of those who have fought for a cause, has been the measure of its greatness."

Matt Lee was jailed for 30 months for "violent disorder" at Trafalgar Square.



Beccy Palmer

Thanks again for your letter. I have received over 600. One from Japan, three from Amsterdam, one from Ireland, and one from France, also a letter from a left group in Hungary. It's great getting return letters and being able to have follow on discussions. There is a demo on Newcastle this Saturday calling for my release, it looks to be quite good. I now have seven weeks left of my sentence and I'm surviving. In fact I feel good, because I thought that I would feel really isolated and helpless but I don't.

It's really ironic, in fact even funny to hear Thatcher calling on the people of Russia to take to the streets

during the coup, when it was people taking to the streets here and defying on mass that finally got rid of her. and hopefully will get rid of Major. It looks as though the Tories are going to call an election sooner rather than later so the Labour councils who are laying into people over cuts and the poll tax better get their act together otherwise I fear we will have to put up with another Tory government for another term.

My mam has been disciplined by her bosses. She works for the same authority that I worked for and that have imprisoned me. She was warned that if she went on any more demos or lobbies she could face the sack. They've got a bloody nerve. It looks as though I've lost my job as I have been unable to fulfil my contract. On the dole again. I think I'll just look for a cleaning job as I have had lots of experience here. In fact I'd say I was an expert at scrubbing now.

Feelings here are running a bit high as conditions and petty rules are getting people down. It's the same outside. People's living standards are dropping even more and unemployment is nearly on the big 3 again, something's got to blow.

I know some people involved in the Tottenham 3 campaign, who talked with me about the conditions which led up to the riots, all of the things above including police harassment. It was brilliant (I think) to see the police on the big poll tax demo on March 31st running away for a change, and you're right it does frighten the government to see people taking to the streets, that's why its so hypocritical when they talk about people power in Romania and Russia, etc. but hate it over here. I wonder what the demo on the 19th October will be like, I hope it's big.

Anyway I'll sign off now, take care, with fondest wishes and solidarity, Beccy P.

extracts from other letters from Beccy:

We get locked up for about 16-17 hours which isn't too bad. We eat, scrub and talk for the rest of the time. Our celis are pretty depressing as we can't do anything with them, we're not allowed to put any pictures up, etc. It costs £600 a week to keep me here but only £7.00 of that goes on food, no wonder its shite. The inmates (most of them) are great, really supportive and through it all we manage to have a good laugh and a good chat about the world in general. I've been here three weeks now and it had gone quite fast. Everyday I miss my kids though. I see them twice a week when they give me lots of hugs and kisses, they're great. Gateshead Magistrates actually called my name out last week for a liability order. Someone shouted: "you've put her in prison you stupid

git." So they moved it to September the 2nd, which is still stupid as I don't get out until 24th October [...]

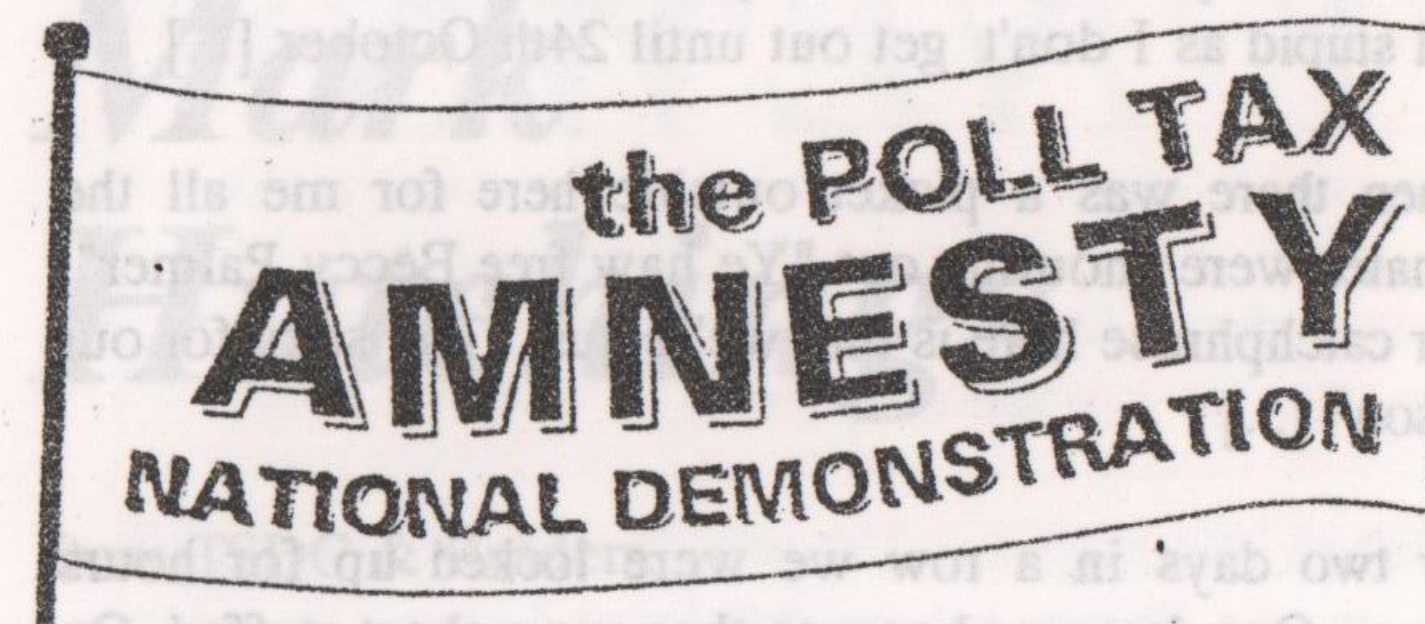
When there was a picket outside here for me all the inmates were shouting out "Ye haw free Beccy Palmer". Our catchphrase here is that we're just "Too sexy for our prison" [...]

For two days in a row we were locked up for hours longer. One day was because they were short staffed. On Sunday we have cell inspection. We have to strip our rooms bare and polish everything that stands still. Once we have done it, we can't use the toilet or sink or sit on the beds. We were then locked up all morning waiting for the big Governor to inspect, to find out that he had been on the premises since 9:00am having a cup of tea in the staff room. Tension as you can imagine was running high. When he finally inspected our cell, my books fell out of our locker. For a start I thought that I'd probably be put on report for that. Then he saw that there was a book on Trotsky there. "Who's reading this" he said in his big billy goat gruff voice. At this point my cell mate nearly wet her nickers. "I am", I said. Then the dozy idiot tried to lecture me on Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. I think he thought that I'd only just taken to reading it since I'd come in. He became really perturbed as I answered and argued each point. There was silence from the wing as the inmates were listening. Finally realizing that I wasn't going to bow down to his obviously superior knowledge he left. My cell mate grinned and threw her fists in the air. Because in here we are treated like kids, constantly being clouted round the head and told not to argue back and to sit down and be quiet (by the screws). I really felt that I had got one up in my own way and it also gave a few other inmates a buzz as well. I didn't get put on report for the untidy cupboard after all [...]

There's been quite a lot of discussion about Sarah Thornton in here. It certainly is true that women get much harsher sentences, and are looked upon more seriously when they break the law. That's true of women's experience in here anyway.

Beccy Palmer is serving 90 days for non-payment of the poll tax.





October 19th 1991

Timetable of events:

Women only picket of Holloway Prison 11.30 am - 12.30 pm
Main march assemble Caledonian Park, Market Rd, London N7, 1 pm.
March leaves at 2 pm, passing Pentonville jail
March to Trafalgar Square for rally at 4 pm

This amnesty demonstration has been called in order to offer solidarity with poll tax prisoners, and to make the following demands:

- * An amnesty for all those people who have been imprisoned as a result of defending anti poll tax demonstrations against police attacks.
- * An amnesty for all non-payers who have been imprisoned.
- * An unconditional debts amnesty for all non-payers, with all debts to be written off.
- * An immediate halt to jailings of poll tax non-payers, and the continuing police harassment of anti-poll tax activists.

The TSDC was founded on the belief that it is the responsibility of the anti poll tax movement to defend all those arrested, jailed, as a result of protesting against it. With still two more years of the poll tax to come, it is unlikely that we have seen the last of the criminalisation and harassment of anti poll tax protesters. It is therefore important that we stand firm against the tax and support those who are being made scapegoats of by the state. The level of anger towards and non-payment of the poll tax is still riding high. The government is still trying to intimidate us away from non-payment and demonstrating against the poll tax, despite their appeals to other countries to take to the streets in opposition to their dictators.

The women's picket is being held to express solidarity with all women imprisoned for fighting back/defending themselves against the poll tax, police violence and domestic violence. It is widely acknowledged that the crimes women are imprisoned for relate to poverty and debt, the poll tax being the latest attack.

Support for the poll tax prisoners is now an integral part of the anti-poll tax movement. Campaigns are now changing as many APT groups broaden their activities to include resisting cuts in services and responding to evictions. The vital work of community defence work must carry on, there are still appeals coming to the courts relating to the Trafalgar Square and Brixton APT demonstrations, people are still attempting to sue the police for events relating to these demos also. The Colchester 16 trials are due to start in November, two people in London are up on trial in October following an occupation of a bailiffs office, three arrests at a poinding in Edinburgh after 200 police turned up and two arrests of bailiff busters in Nottingham.

SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE! COMMUNITY DEFENCE IS COMMON SENSE!

This demonstration is to launch the campaign for an amnesty for all poll tax prisoners and debtors.

We are calling on all APT groups, networks and federations, as well as sympathetic political groups to do the following:

- * gather support and fundraise for the demo, we need as many people as possible on the demo and we expect it to cost a few thousand pounds to put it on.
- * organise meetings over the next few weeks to publicise the Amnesty campaign and to mobilise support for it.
- * provide stewards and legal volunteers for the demonstration.

We hope that this march will be well supported and spirited. The poll tax will not be really defeated until no one has to pay and no one remains imprisoned because of it!

WANTED: LEGAL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed to help provide a full legal back-up system for the October 19th demo. This involves giving out bust cards, taking down contact number for witnesses, observing police activities, finding out the names of arrested persons and where they are being taken to. There will be a briefing on October 14th. Please contact the TSDC office for details.

APPEAL TO EX-DEFENDANTS

As part of the follow up from the work we have been doing in the courts to expose police when they lie (frequently!), the **Police Monitoring Group** is attempting to get together a list of cops who were either: A) Involved in assaults on demonstrators; or B) Told lies in court (especially if they were caught out!).

This is an appeal to all defendants to help us do this by digging out their court case depositions (statements by cops alleging all sorts - usually given to your solicitor before your trial), and writing down the name, number, station code and any other information you can get which would help us identify them. Then note down details of what dirty deeds they were up to, along with details of who your solicitor was and what the result was in court, and send it to us post haste. Also if you have any photographs of 'em that would be nice too. Don't forget, even if your solicitor kept all the papers and photos, they are legally your property as they were bought with legal aid money awarded to YOU.

If the coppers were caught out in court, or were shown to be out of order, that can be useful to anybody in the future who is faced with an assault or fabricated charge from the same scumbags. Even if particular coppers got away with bullshitting, we can keep a look out for them in future.

DON'T DELAY! - GRASS A COP TODAY!

NATIONAL POLL TAX PRISONERS SUPPORT CONFERENCE

Saturday October 12th, 11am- 5pm. Methodist Hall, corner of Lozella Rd & Soho Road, Birmingham. Buses: 74,78,79 from Corporation Street, near New Street British Rail.

This conference has been organised by Birmingham Poll Tax Prisoners Support Group with two aims in mind- to launch a national anti-poll tax prisoners support network, and to build a campaign for an amnesty for all non-payers and poll tax prisoners.

A planning meeting for the conference was held in Birmingham on Saturday 7th September, attended by delegates from the TSDC/Poll Tax Prisoners Group in London, Birmingham Prisoners Support Group, North West Anti-Poll Tax Forum and others.

A draft agenda was worked out for the conference, starting in the morning by looking at different prison experiences and drawing on them to think through the solidarity work we can do. This will be followed in the afternoon by two discussions, one on the amnesty campaign, one on forming the national anti-poll tax prisoners support network.

All released poll tax prisoners will be invited to speak at the conference and it was agreed to write to prisoners currently inside asking if they wanted to contribute letters/drawings for an exhibition to be set up in the conference hall.

With the number of poll tax non-payers being sent to prison increasing every week, it's vital that we use this conference to plan for instant response to jailings in any part of the country. Anyone interested in making prison solidarity work a priority is asked to attend.

Registration fee for the conference is £5 (delegates), £3 (individuals) and £1 (concessions). More details from Birmingham PSG (address on page 3).

(Prisoners list continued from back page)

IMPRISONED NON-PAYERS

Soroosh Ayandeh JJ0573 EDR 17/10/91
 HMP Lincoln, Greetwell Rd, Lincoln, LN2 4BD
Sent down 18 July for 3 months (Wilful Refusal)
Contact: Nottingham Defence Fund (address page 3)

Rebecca Palmer FR1479 EDR 24/10/91
 HM Remand Centre (Female Wing), Low Newton, Brasside, Durham, DH1 5SD.
Beccy was sent down for 3 months. She comes from Gateshead.

Tony Whitfield WD3333 EDR 14/11/91
 HMP Bristol, Cambridge Rd, Horfield, Bristol BS7 8PS.
Tony was sent down on 14th August, for 2 months; Tony gets a state pension, and has just recovered from a serious illness. Contact: Avon Defendants Campaign.

Robert Lee JJ0960 EDR 18/9/91
 HMP Lincoln, Greetwell Rd, Lincoln, LN2 4BD
Rob was sent down on 29 August for 21 days.

Carol Smith GB1504 EDR 18/9/91
 HMP Risley, Warrington Rd, Risley, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6BP.
Carol is a part-time nurse from Wilmslow, sent down on 4 September, for 14 days.

Recently released prisoners: Martin Benfield, Terry Fields, Brian Kendrick, Bill Jones, Steven Hynes, Shaun Clarkson, Barbara Jones, Brett Bellis, Andrea Bellis, Chris Sprinks, Eric Segal. Lorraine Vivien is out on 20 September; she was sent down for 1 year.

NOTE: EPD means Expected Parole Date. EDR means Earliest Date of Release (Remission Date). Section 2, etc relate to Sections of the Public Order Act...