

# Hands off Bury's Bins!

how we stopped privatisation



Bury Joint Trade Union Committee



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## Further Reading

"People in every council department should ask 'What am I doing to support the people in Public Services?' Or rather, 'What should I do to support myself?' For if Public Services go down the road, others will be next."

Ian Stephenson  
Branch Secretary, NALGO

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January 1984

From cover: Picket Outside Bury Town Hall on the Day of Action. Bottom: Evening News







## Key dates

<b>November 1980</b>	First trials of wheeled bins
<b>August 1981</b>	Public Services Committee of the council decides to investigate privatisation.
<b>19.11.81</b>	Bury NALGO AGM opposes privatisation
<b>2.12.81</b>	Mass meeting, Radcliffe Civic Centre: Arthur Smith tells what happened in Southend
<b>11.12.81</b>	Joint Trade Union Committee (JTUC) officially formed. Unions decide to meet Council about privatisation only on multi-union basis.
<b>22.12.81</b>	NALGO's policy for non-cooperation implemented.
<b>6.1.82</b>	Lobby of Council
<b>March 1982</b>	Council advertises for contractors for inclusion on a select list for tendering.
<b>16.3.82</b>	NALGO ballot supports one day strike.
<b>22-23.3.82</b>	Unions and Council agree. Blacking lifted provided council goes no further than drawing up select list. Agreed to discuss savings.
<b>28.4.82</b>	Agreement ratified by full council.
<b>May 1982</b>	Local elections: Tories retain control.
<b>13.10.82</b>	Tory council leader, Little, announces proceeding with tenders. (Union invited to tender)
<b>21.10.82</b>	Fernhill Depot: Mass meeting.
<b>8.12.82</b>	Unions get Whitley Provincial Council to declare that Bury are breaking local agreement.
<b>22.12.82</b>	Unions threaten to withdraw winter emergency services.
<b>20.1.83</b>	Working Party Meeting on possible savings.
<b>21.2.83</b>	Public Services Committee agrees to seek tenders by 11.3.83 and ignores working party proposals (seven-man crews or wheeled bins).
<b>24.2.83</b>	NALGO branch executive calls one day strike. Public Services Dept meeting—all but two agree to strike.
<b>25.2.83</b>	NALGO National Executive Chairperson authorises one day strike (no national strike pay).
<b>1.3.83</b>	NALGO special general meeting endorses strike. Meeting of binners—vote for one-day strike.
<b>2.3.83</b>	Successful one day strike. Lobby of council.
<b>15.3.83</b>	First meeting of Joint Shop Stewards Committee (JSSC).
<b>March/April 1983</b>	Leafletting and petitioning throughout Bury.
<b>5.4.83</b>	Public meeting
<b>12.4.83</b>	Public Services Committee rejects privatisation. Wheeled bin system—60 job losses over 4-5 years. No compulsory redundancies.
<b>23.4.83</b>	Demonstration.
<b>9.5.83</b>	Local elections—Tories maintain control.

## Introduction

THIS PAMPHLET is the story of how the council unions in Bury campaigned against privatisation of the dustbin service. It charts their struggle, through high points and setbacks, to their ultimate success.

The emphasis of this pamphlet is on the organisation of the campaign; what happened and why. It is written in the hope that others engaged in similar struggles will be able to gain from the lessons of Bury.

A number of issues are taken up in the pamphlet:

1. Solidarity between the different unions involved.
2. The roles of shop stewards and union officials, both locally and nationally.
3. How active trade unionists can develop good communication with their members in order to mobilise them into action.
4. The importance of public campaigning and support.
5. Developing links with the local Labour Party, Trades Council and other trade unions.
6. The dangers of putting in a tender and/or accepting cuts to stop privatisation.
7. Learning from the experience of other campaigns—and how the Bury campaign may help others to organise even more successfully.

### Why Privatised?

Before looking at what happened in Bury, it's important to consider briefly just why privatisation has become a major issue now. The stated reasons in favour of it are that services run by private contractors are cheaper and more efficient. But the real reasons are quite different.

The companies who are after the contracts for public services are desperately searching for new areas where they can make profits. Just like any other business, private cleaning or catering contractors have been hit by the recession. They need new, secure business. And the public sector—from hospital laundry to housing management—offers rich pickings.

Another major consideration is the Tories' attack on trade unions. Tebbit's legislation is one part of this; the running down of Wages Councils—who provided only minimal protection for the lowest paid anyway—is

another. And the variety of schemes for unemployed people push down wages and remove hard fought trade union rights, like protection from unfair dismissal and maternity leave. Privatisation of public services, or even the threat of privatisation, is yet another way of hammering the unions.

Private contractors who've taken over services (like refuse collection or parks maintenance) are notorious for the appalling conditions for their workforce. Wages have been cut, holiday and sick pay are minimal or non-existent, people are fired with no notice, and those who've been active in trade unions are not taken on in the first place. The threat of unemployment has forced people to accept these conditions. The threat of privatisation is forcing public sector workers to give up some of their better conditions too—they're having to accept job losses and more intensive work to be "competitive" with the cut-throat cowboys of the private sector.

### Resistance to Privatisation

It would, however, be wrong to paint too gloomy a picture. The Tories are not inevitably going to succeed in imposing privatisation. The public sector is not necessarily going to be sold off lock, stock and barrel to the lowest bidder. It can be resisted.

All over the country trade unionists, and people who use the services, are fighting against these moves. True, in some places, like Wirral, resistance quickly collapsed. But in other areas, like Wandsworth, even though some services have been handed over to private contractors, the resistance has not crumbled but instead has continued to hound the contractors. And in yet other towns, like Bury, the resistance has been successful in stopping privatisation—though, it must be admitted, not without some concessions.

In the future we need to be even better organised and build up even deeper solidarity between all those concerned—trade unions, users, the local labour movement—so that privatisation is removed not just from individual local councils or health authorities but off the political agenda altogether.



# NHS taken to cleaners

by Phil Cohen

Telecom  
sell-off  
date  
is set

Contractors were more closely involved in the drafting of the Government's fourth attempt to cajole into using them than were those of the health service. February.

**Stripping the NHS to give private medicine its kicks**

**Cleaners to foot bill for council**

Third  
World  
aid to go  
private

honed off state

**Privatisation costs 700 cleaning jobs**

**'gnawing away at schools'**

**Six week deadline for hiving-off plans**

**Cowboys given go-ahead for NHS rip-off**

By DAVID WHITFIELD  
PRIVATISATION of state education is eroding the basic principles of schooling for the vast majority of children "like a death-watch beetle gnawing away at the foundation of the state system."

An investigation published yesterday by a leading education for comprehensive education shows that £200-£300 million a year is being creamed off the maintained education sector in the private sector—and this to the private estimate.

The report, prepared by Prof. Richard Pring of Exeter University for the RICE (Right to Comprehensive Education) concludes that the whole concept of free education for all based on need rather than private means, now seriously under threat, "what is at stake," said

subsidise the state purchasing services be provided free system; And the major being improve agng imany f children to

Introduc day Prof. children that pri ive and one chang the may

By DAVE LLOYD  
of will soon be moving in on the National Health Service care and trade union organisations. The go-ahead for widespread privatisation of cleaning, laundry and other services

patient that comes first, but the greed of his supporters in the Tory party. Another Labour MP NUPE - sponsored series of examples authorities

BUPA Private Patients Plan

Humana

EXCLUSIVE

AMI

CHURCHILL CLINIC

THORNTON HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Mr Fowler: good news for some

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## Threatening Privatisation

### Bury Metro

Bury is situated a few miles north of Manchester. While it is a Tory controlled borough, they only have a narrow majority on the Council. Their strongholds are the semi-rural areas of Ramsbottom and Tottington and the prosperous dormitory suburb of Prestwich. The Labour-held wards are mostly in the 'inner city' parts of Bury, Radcliffe and Whitefield: old industrial towns where much of the local industry has closed down. Some of the surviving factories have a strong tradition of trade union organisation.

for their private sector allies, and to join the ranks of the acclaimed few in the Tory Party—as successful private profiteers.

### Feasibility Study

On 5 August 1981 the Public Services Committee of the Council authorised the director to investigate possible savings through privatisation, especially of refuse collection. He brought in Waste Management Ltd, of Warrington, to do a feasibility study, free of charge. (Their

### Jumping on the bin wagon

In 1981 Bury was one of many Tory-controlled councils which began looking at privatisation, in the wake of a massive advertising campaign mounted by Exclusive Cleaning. This firm had got the privatisation ball rolling by taking over Southend's dustbin and street cleansing service in April 1981. It had been a crushing defeat for the local trade unions: the whole workforce was made compulsorily redundant; re-employment was highly selective—excluding anybody with a trade union record; manning levels and conditions were cut.

Exclusive Cleaning, however, in their nationwide advertising campaign claimed that "Everyone is happier in Southend since the council fired the dustmen". Certainly the Tories were happy, and not just in Southend. It was a major boost to their efforts to cut public spending, smash the unions, and help their friends and allies.

Urged on by Lord Bellwin, junior Environment Minister, the leader of the Tories in Bury visited Southend in July to see what tips he could pick up. There is evidence that Lord Bellwin remained in touch with local Tory leaders throughout the dispute—seeing Bury as one of several simultaneous test-cases where Tory councils were to force through privatisation against union opposition.

Of course, the Bury Tories said they wanted to privatise because it would save the ratepayers money. But they weren't really bothered about that. What they wanted was to fulfil their commitment to Tory policy, to provide work

**EXCLUSIVE**  
CLEANING & MAINTENANCE (NORTHERN) LTD



EXCLUSIVE HOUSE LIVERPOOL ROAD MANCHESTER M3 4JN  
Tel 061-834 2501 (5 Lines) TELEX 669137

4 August 1983

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Cocktail Party at Herriots Leisure Centre, Sunlight House, Quay Street, Manchester 3 on Monday 12th September 1983. The evening will commence at 6.00 pm with a buffet being served at approximately 6.30 pm. Full Bar facilities will be available.

This evening will be an opportunity for us to introduce our Company and all of our Group activities and for you to meet Members of our Senior Management Team within the Northern Company, along with Senior Personnel from our Group Headquarters. There will be detailed information about our Painting and Decorating Services. In addition, we will have the availability of a video film of the Southend Refuse collection that our Group was fortunate enough to obtain, this making us the leaders in the privatisation of refuse collection.

Amongst our Senior Personnel there will be Mr R Agar, Chairman of the Exclusive Cleaning Group, Mr A Bedser, who is, as you probably know, the ex-England and Surrey Cricketer and former Chairman of the England Test Selectors, and Mr M Edwards, Chairman of Manchester United Football Club.

I do hope that you can take this opportunity to allow us to entertain you at Herriots Leisure Centre, and would ask you to reply verbally or in writing to Mrs Fairley at our Northern Office, so that we can finalise the numbers for the buffet.

I personally look forward to meeting you on the evening of the 12th September and if I can be of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

R AGAR  
Managing Director

Registered Office: Brengreen House 61 Cheapside, London EC2V 6AX  
Registered No. 1122294 V.A.T. No. 244 8225 62  
A MEMBER OF THE BRENGREEN GROUP



'perks' were to come later.) They not only looked at refuse collection but also at street cleansing, vehicle maintenance, public convenience cleaning, and emergency services (winter gritting, etc). Their study, completed by the end of September, claimed—with relatively little supporting evidence—that the Council could save £387,000, or 17 per cent, from the present refuse collection bill of £2.3m.

Not surprisingly, the savings were to be at the expense of the workforce. A prerequisite for the proposals to be effective was that the existing workforce should be made compulsorily redundant. Only then would the successful private contractor be able to abolish 'Task and Finish' and 'other restrictive practices', in order to reduce manpower and increase productivity levels.

"The view is held that present Trade Union Agreements and National Schemes and Conditions of Service and Pay would prevent effective measures to reduce costs... by a contractor."

Waste Management were then invited to prepare a detailed technical specification and cost schedule for tenders—at a cost of £15,000.

## Unions get together

It was in the autumn that all the unions in Bury started to act together against the threat of privatisation. Although the manual unions did used to meet, until then they had had little formal contact with the white collar workers, through NALGO. And indeed, even this coming together started almost by accident, when the NALGO Branch

Secretary was invited to sit in on a meeting of the manual unions when they were discussing privatisation.

The manual unions initially had reservations about working with NALGO, still identifying white collar workers with management. But as the campaign went on, mutual trust and liking developed.

The Tories tried to split NALGO away from the manual workers by claiming that the NALGO members in Public Services had nothing to fear from privatisation. Indeed, had NALGO simply sought to protect its members in Public Services it could probably have done a deal with the Tories which would have minimised the number of jobs lost on the staff side. But the NALGO branch officials saw privatisation of the dust bins as the thin end of the wedge. They felt there were very few public services which were not vulnerable to privatisation.

## You name it, we'll do it

By now other private contractors were trying to muscle in. Pritchard Industrial Services Ltd, a huge multi-national company, launched a national onslaught on local councillors in October 1981. They offered to tender not only for refuse collection and street cleansing, but for a range of other services. The letter, which all Bury councillors received, was in a way useful for the unions: it helped to substantiate a key argument of their anti-privatisation campaign, that it was not just the dustbin workers who were under threat but all council workers.

**Pritchard Industrial Services Ltd**  
P.O. Box 116 34-44 Clifton Street  
London EC2P 2DJ  
Telephone 01-247 6544  
Telex 8954862  
A Pritchard Services Group Company

19th October 1981

Dear Councillor,

**PUBLIC SERVICES AT LOWER COST**

The current pressures to achieve economies in Local Government have resulted in cuts in services or reductions in standards. This need not happen. We, as a company, are able to offer substantial savings in the provision of services whilst actually improving standards at the same time.

Services for which we would like the opportunity to tender include:

- Refuse Collecting
- Street Cleaning
- Public Convenience Maintenance & Clean
- Parks, Gardens and Open Space Maintenance
- Catering, including school meals and
- 'Meals-on-Wheels'
- External Cleaning of buildings
- Security, Janitorial and Porter Services
- Pest Control
- Street Lighting Cleaning and Maintenance
- Laundry and Linen Rental - Workwear
- Office Cleaning
- Window Cleaning
- Surveys by T.V.

As an International Group employing 55,000 people, we have had years of experience in each of these areas and have satisfied customers in the public and private sectors. Our current revenue level of £170 million establishes us as Britain's leading contract cleaning company.

In Saudi Arabia we have recently won the largest cleaning contract ever awarded, valued at £215m, to carry out refuse collection, street cleaning and other services in Jeddah. We have successfully operated a similar contract worth £145m in Riyadh for the last three years.

We staff and clean over 240 hospitals from Canada to Kuwait and service more than 35 in the U.K. and we feed thousands of people every day from McMurdo Sound in Antarctica to the James Bay scheme on the edge of the Arctic Circle.

In other countries public officials and elected representatives have found that by employing contractors like ourselves, they have been able to achieve greater control in providing cost effective services to the highest quality. They have also achieved considerable reductions in cost.

We believe we can offer that opportunity to local authorities in Britain. Why not invite us to look at some of your services. We would be delighted to carry out feasibility studies and advise you of the kind of economies we can achieve. This, of course, would involve you in no fees or commitments. Perhaps you might discuss our proposal in Council, or

Yours sincerely,  
  
Jan Leer  
Managing Director

# Trade Unions

The manual unions have about 2,000 members, of whom 140 worked in the bins service.

The white collar union NALGO has about 1,300 members, of whom 28 are in the Public Services Department and were directly affected by the proposal to privatise the bins.

## Manual Workers

The 140 directly involved in the bins dispute belonged to three unions: TGWU, GMBATU and AUEW. The largest union is the TGWU, which is particularly strong among binners at the Radcliffe (Lord Street) Depot. Next largest is GMBATU, which mainly represents binners at the Bury (Fern Hill) Depot. About 20 AUEW members work in the maintenance workshops at both depots. There are also one or two NUPE members at the depots.

In the local authority as a whole NUPE is the largest union. Its membership is concentrated in Parks, School Meals, Cleaners, Home Helps and Residential Establishments. Because it organises in a lot of small workplaces NUPE has a large number of shop stewards—about 50. However, it has virtually no membership in the Building Maintenance Department (organised by UCATT and EETPU) or Highways (UCATT, TGWU and GMBATU).

There is a full time convenor of shop stewards elected by shop stewards from all the manual unions. The present convenor is a NUPE member. Election is formally annual, but the last contested election was five years ago.

The manual union stewards themselves negotiate directly with management at a departmental level, through Departmental Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs). Full-time officials are called in if there are problems the stewards cannot handle, and for authority-wide negotiations.

## Shop Steward Meetings

In the past there have been meetings of all the manual shop stewards in the authority. These meetings were held during the day to inform stewards of certain discussions which the convenor, deputy convenor and the full-time officials had had with the councillors through the JCC structure, for example, drawing up new grievance or disciplinary procedures. The last such meeting was 2½ to 3 years ago.

"Up till now there have been things affecting different sections of people, but privatisation is the first issue for some time which involves the whole workforce." (NUPE Convenor).

NUPE (like NALGO) has a workplace branch which meets regularly—with widely fluctuating attendance—plus regular meetings of NUPE stewards. But although NUPE is the largest union in the Council, it is

concentrated in certain departments, so these meetings only partly fill the gap left by the absence of a Joint Shop Stewards Committee representing all trade unions and departments, and holding regular meetings.

## White Collar Workers

Here there is just one union, NALGO, which has all its members in a single branch. There is an elected branch executive committee, which represents all council departments, and carries out the branch's work with only occasional intervention by the local full-time official.

NALGO locally has changed greatly in recent years: "The Bury Branch was initially very much run by a clique of centre-to-right people who had been around for a long time. The branch was in many ways moribund. Consultation of the members was non-existent. From 1976 the balance on the executive committee began to change more to the centre-to-left." (NALGO member).

A shop steward system was established. The original idea was that each department would have a shop steward committee consisting of both branch executive reps and other members, and that it would meet with departmental management in a departmental JCC (mirroring the set-up at the level of the whole Council).

In fact, the shop steward system has taken root in Libraries, Education, Planning and Architecture, and Administration, but not in Engineers or Social Services. And only some departments have their own JCCs.

## Shop Stewards and Officials

Although all the unions have some sort of shop steward system, there is a clear difference between the manual unions and NALGO in the responsibility that stewards carry. At the formal negotiating forum for management and unions, the Joint Consultative Committee, the manual unions' representation consists predominantly of full-time officials, plus the full-time convenor and the deputy convenor. Shop stewards do occasionally attend but usually only if their department is under discussion. In contrast, NALGO's representatives are branch lay members with only one full-time official attending.

Where steward organisation is poor, members may by-pass their stewards and go straight to the full-time officials. This is particularly the case in GMBATU because the official is based in Bury, and members tend to go directly to his office with their problems. It is less easy for members of TGWU or NUPE to do this, since their officials are based in Bolton and Ashton-under-Lyne respectively. The TGWU official is responsible for public employees in Bolton as well as Bury, and the NUPE official covers Wigan and Bury, so neither of them can devote all their time to problems in Bury.

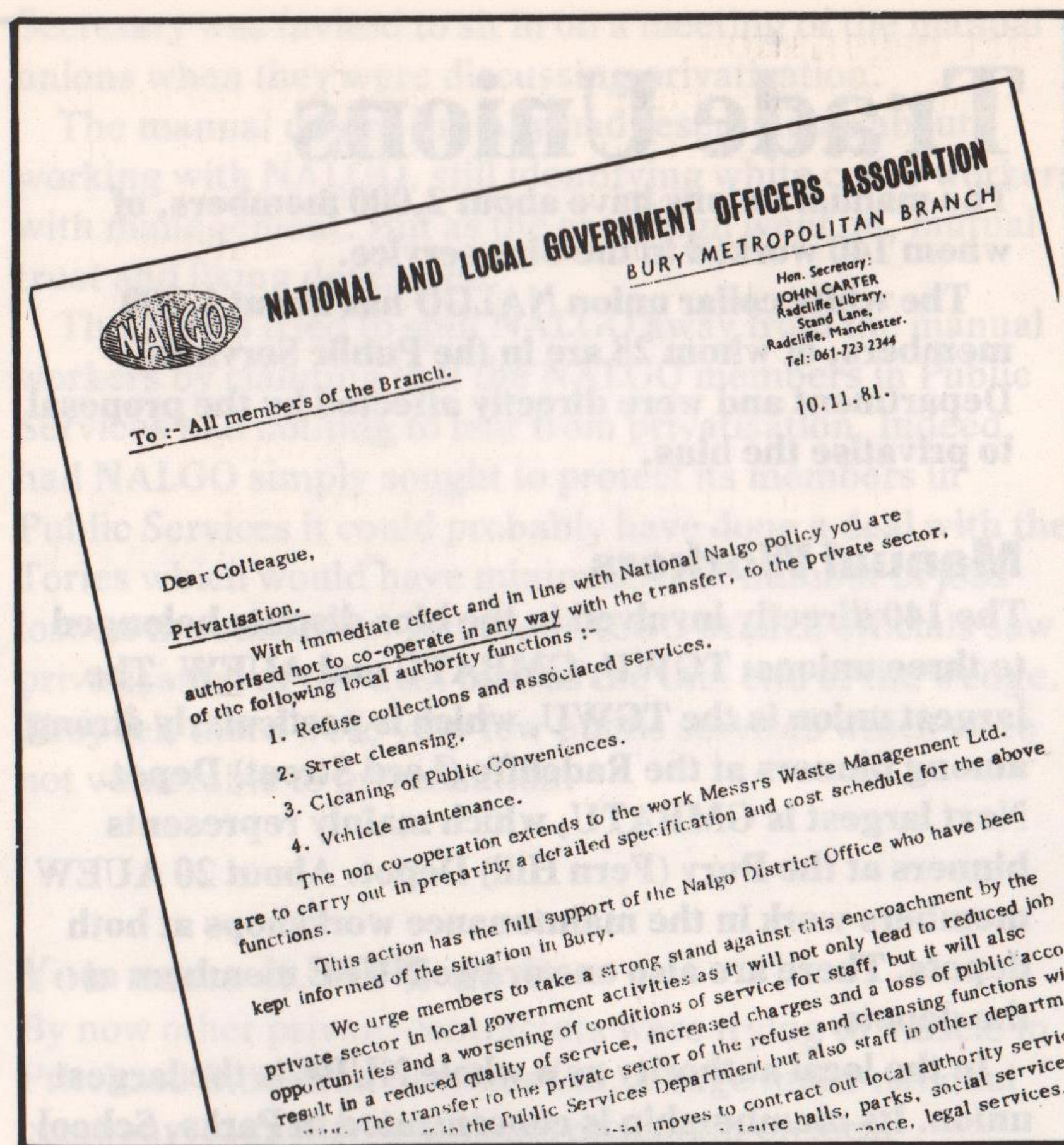


The first industrial action against privatisation was taken by the white collar workers. On 19 November 1981 the NALGO branch AGM decided to oppose privatisation. Early in December all members were balloted on whether they would support a policy of 'non-cooperation' with the authority over privatisation.

## Mass meeting

In order to build the campaign, the unions called a mass meeting of all union members in the early evening at Radcliffe Town Hall, on 2 December 1981.

The meeting began with Arthur Smith, ex-TGWU Convenor at Southend, telling the story of privatisation there: how resistance crumbled because of members' greed for redundancy money and lack of cooperation between unions; how active trade unionists were victimised, conditions worsened, and the workload increased. He warned those present that the Tories were dogmatically in favour of privatisation and would not be appeased by the unions offering savings. The unions' only



hope was a public campaign to convince the ratepayers that they would lose out through privatisation (as many in Southend have now realised).

The local union official who followed Smith expressed concern that some of the binners were asking disturbing questions, like: "How big is the redundancy payment?". There was a need to resist the Tory government. NALGO was offering its solidarity to the manual workers' trade unions. The binners were in a position to mobilise the rate-payers since they visited every house in Bury. At the next Council meeting at the beginning of January 1982, they should have a huge lobby—all 6,000 local authority workers should be there. There was loud applause to his call that: "We shouldn't start to offer cuts to the Council—we should resist every job lost!"

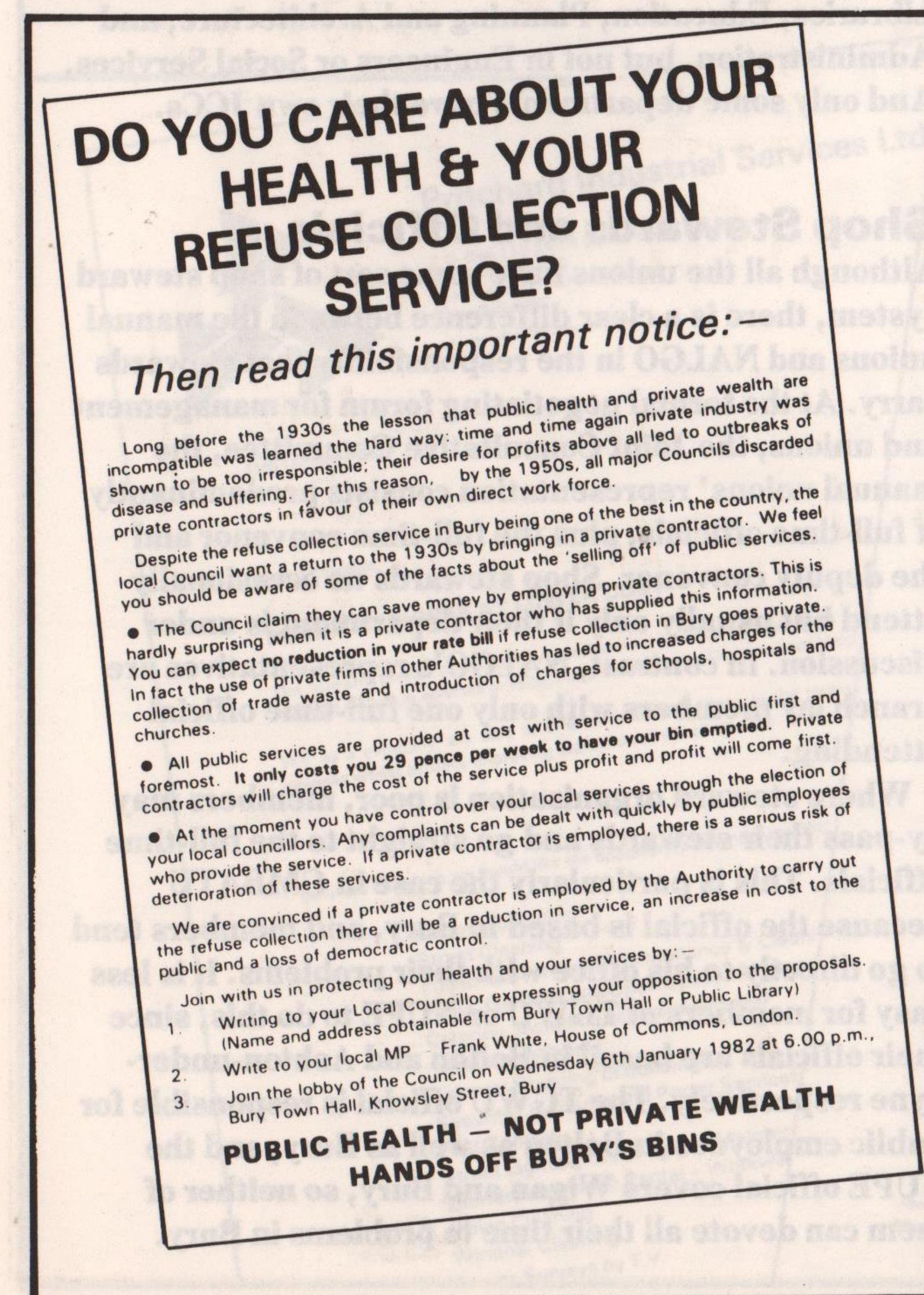
The possibility of putting out an anti-privatisation leaflet to every ratepayer in Bury was discussed. Somebody suggested that this could include a returnable ballot form—for or against privatisation.

A NALGO speaker assured manual workers of his union's opposition to privatisation, giving details of the branch's non-cooperation policy.

The meeting was then thrown open to speakers from the floor. A lively discussion followed, which brought out some of the problems the active trade unionists faced. As one bin worker put it:

"They've been eroding our wages and conditions in Bury. The union has failed to stop them. We're down now!... Even if we fight privatisation we will still be faced with redundancies."

Some manual workers certainly felt that they'd been let down by their union officials in the past. So they needed convincing that the present campaign wasn't just about maintaining union membership rather than really defending the bin workers and the future of public services. And they were also aware that even if privatisation was successfully resisted there would probably still be redundancies, or at least job losses.



Soon after the mass meeting a key meeting of the unions took place. On 11 December the unions decided that they would henceforth refuse to meet the Council about privatisation except on a multi-union basis, and that they would meet together regularly as a Joint Trade Union Committee (JTUC). The growing cooperation was thus formally cemented.

At that same meeting they decided to produce two leaflets. One was directed at the bin workers, particularly those who—it was thought—believed privatisation would mean a lump sum redundancy payment followed by re-employment. It warned that after privatisation only a minority would be re-employed, excluding those with a sick record, a disciplinary record, who were disabled or past middle age, or had been involved at any time with a trade union. Those re-employed would have lower take-home pay, no 'Task and Finish', no superannuation scheme, only 8 weeks sick pay, no trade union, 30 per cent higher workload, and substantially lower holiday entitlement and Bank Holiday 'pick-up' pay. The leaflet concluded:

“You must help us to help you in this fight... Please try to cooperate with your shop stewards.”

The other leaflet was aimed at the general public and councillors. Distribution was quite simple—the bin



workers delivered it to every Bury household—60,000 in all—as they did their rounds.

However, it was only NALGO which produced effective information for all its members in all the council services. The three professionally produced anti-privatisation newsletters which the NALGO branch brought out in November and December 1981 were probably crucial in winning membership support, especially from those who did not come to the Branch AGM or the mass meeting on 2 December.

NALGO had a strong tradition of producing such material for its membership. (The Branch has its own duplicator). This was not true of the manual unions, which helps to explain why it was not until 15 months after the campaign began that the joint unions produced a newsletter.

That there was a need for such a newsletter from a very early stage is evident because one of the manual shop stewards distributed the NALGO bulletins at the depots—leaving them on dustcarts' windscreens—but their credibility must have suffered from their being issued by NALGO rather than the joint unions.



## Delaying tactics

Following the ballot on non-cooperation, NALGO members were instructed from 22 December not to cooperate with privatisation. What this meant in practice was a total blacking of anything to do with tenders and privatisation:

- no letters going out;
- no reports to committee;
- no answers to queries from private contractors;
- no adverts in the press for contractors to tender;
- no payment to Waste Management for drawing up the technical specifications.

This was backed up by the manual unions, who agreed to take immediate strike action if any NALGO member was threatened with disciplinary action.

Non-cooperation slowed down the tendering procedure, but it couldn't hope to stop it completely and eventually the documents did go out, though it was early March by the time the Tories advertised in the press for contractors "for inclusion on a select list to be invited to tender".

## Advertising for tenders

The initial advert was actually put in by Councillor Little, the Leader of the Tory group on the Council. In doing this he did not comply with Standing Orders: he asked for tenders to be returned to himself and not the Mayor or Chief Executive; he didn't get the money to pay for the advert allocated in the correct way. This blunder was seized upon by the unions. Little was forced to apologise, and the advertisement had to be reinserted.

When the bill came in for the first advert, no-one, of course, would touch it, because all work to do with privatisation was blacked. It was shunted from one department to another, collecting rubber stamps. Even now it is unclear whether it was ever paid, and who by: it is a moot legal point whether the local authority should have had to pay for it, since Standing Orders were broken.

The JTUC responded to the advertising for tenders by issuing a leaflet calling upon all members to be ready to take strike action, while reiterating its willingness to negotiate.

To prepare for possible strike action, in accordance with its rules, the NALGO branch was balloted in mid-March over holding a one-day strike against privatisation. Once again there was a large majority in favour. (The manual unions have no requirement for a ballot before calling strike action—this can be decided at a mass meeting.)

## Towards an agreement

Council and unions met on 22 and 23 March 1982. After 11 hours of discussions the Tories remained intransigent. They were going to proceed with obtaining tenders from private contractors. Once they had these the existing workers would also be permitted to tender. At this point one of the union officials banged his fist on the table and said: "Right! You're going to have rubbish piled up on the street during the election!" (Council elections were due in six weeks time.)

## How Select is Select

In drawing up a select list of contractors from whom tenders would be invited, the Council did ask some of the right questions, but seemed to ignore the answers. How else can one explain the inclusion of a firm such as Irwell Street Metals, a local scrap metal and skip hire company? They were quite open in filling in the form:

Previous experience of refuse collection : None

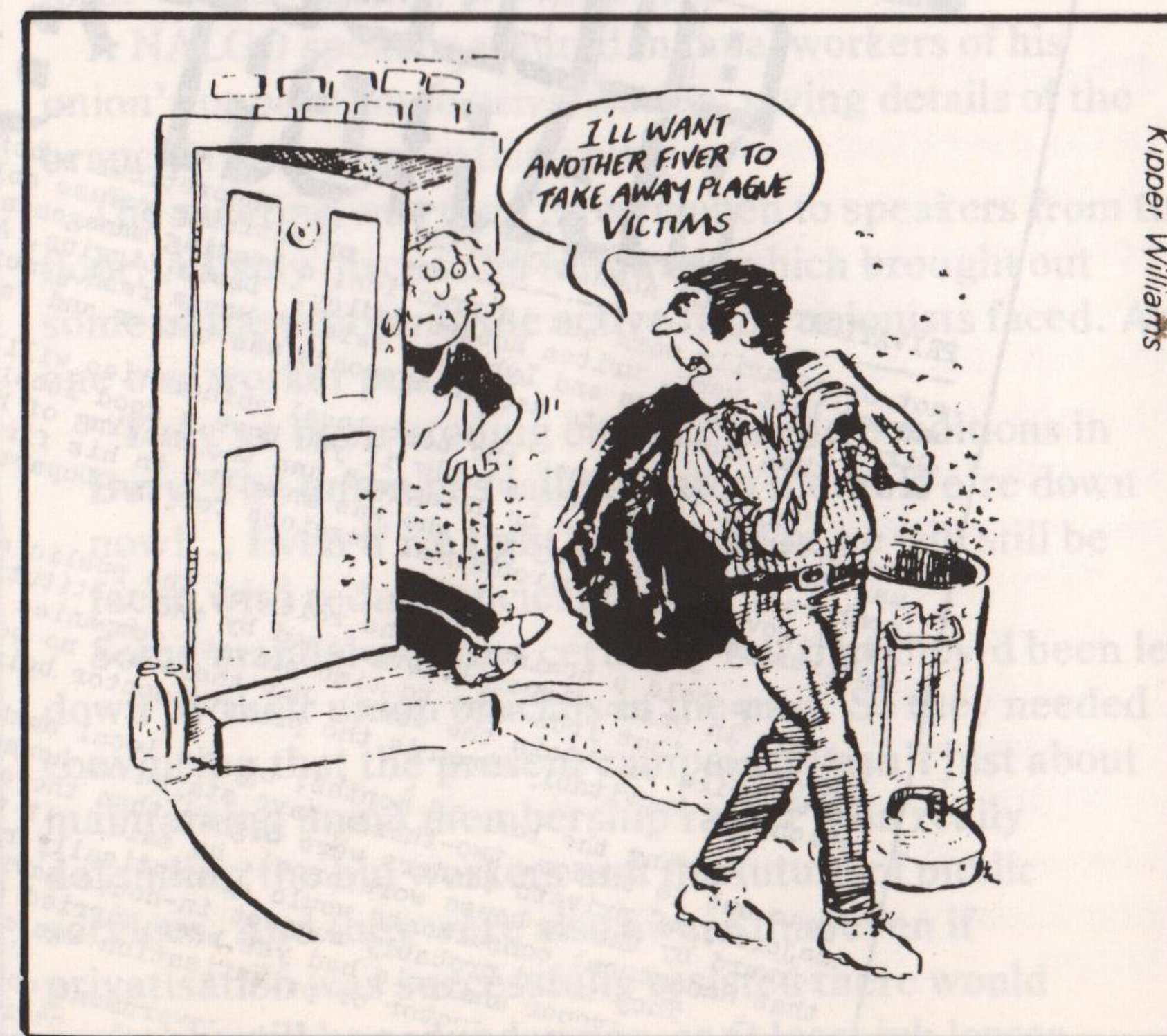
Bankers' or other references : None

Waste Management got on to the select list, too. This is contrary to normal practice whereby the company which draws up the specifications is not allowed to tender for the contract, because it would have an unfair advantage.

At this the Tories softened their attitude. It was finally agreed that NALGO would withdraw its sanctions and the Tories would proceed no further with privatisation than drawing up a 'select list' of contractors. The trade unions also undertook "to enter into discussion on any improvements that may well be proposed to services to the ratepayers". The unions felt that there was no way in which they could refuse even to discuss savings. They were also hopeful that Labour could win the forthcoming council elections—the Tories then had 28 seats to Labour's 20.

## The summer lull

The Tories retained control of the Council in the May 1982 elections. This was not surprising. Like most of the towns around Manchester, Bury has seen an influx of suburban development in the last 30 years, and a continuing decline in the old industrial base. The return of the Tory Council has more to do with the political perceptions that seem to go with suburban owner occupation than with any positive vote for the policies the Council was pushing.



Once elected the Tories did nothing to follow up the provision in the March agreement that unions and management would discuss savings. Some on the union side concluded that privatisation had been averted. Others foresaw that the Tories were biding their time, and felt that the unions ought to be mobilising their membership for the struggle that awaited them.

The latter viewpoint was aired at a JTUC meeting a week after the Tories were re-elected. Doubts were expressed as to whether the bin workers had all been convinced of the need to fight privatisation.

"At the public meetings when we met the membership and tried to wind them up for a strike they were ill-prepared. We need to give them regular information, keeping them up-to-date continually. We've never done it before... At the last meeting at the depot one quarter of the people were non-union. It's a disgrace!

Non-unionists will be a poison in our cup. A very vigorous recruiting campaign is needed. If they're non-union any union can recruit them: NUPE, G & M, or T & G!" (AUEW official)

He further proposed that the committee issue a regular newsletter directed at all Bury Council workers. But no action was taken on this suggestion. The major reason for this was the cost involved. Also, the active NALGO members felt they would be expected to write it, because of their experience at producing information for members, and at the time they were unwilling to take on the task because, firstly, they didn't feel they could do it—it would have been a lot of work; and secondly, because they didn't



feel they should do it, alone—it should be a joint union venture.

At this stage some of the steam seems to have gone out of the campaign. Looking back on it, it is perhaps easy to say that the unions should have hammered home their advantage and followed up the Council's pre-election retreat. Certainly, the fact that there was no joint union newsletter nor any mass meetings between March and October made the job of rebuilding the campaign that much harder when the crunch came.



# The Gathering Storm

## Reneging on the agreement

The crunch did come—on 13 October 1982. The unions were called in to a meeting, without any idea what it was going to be about. The leader of the Council read them a prepared statement—that they had decided to go ahead with the tendering process, in order to consider what cost savings could be made by getting a comparison of prices.

On hearing this the unions walked out, because the Council was blatantly breaking the agreement made in March not to go out to tender. There was obviously little point in trying to discuss the issue reasonably with such a dogmatic group of coucillors.

The JTUC met and decided to call mass meetings of the workers affected. The manual workers met at Fern Hill Depot at noon on 21 October.

## No to strike action

The general message of the union officials who spoke at the meeting was that the Council had flung down a gauntlet and the workers had to pick it up. One official spoke to the workforce in particularly aggressive terms about how they should stand up to the Council:

"Are you prepared to come out on strike? Outside the gate? On the cobbles?"

They weren't. A resolution on the principle of privatisation produced an overwhelming vote against (with only four in favour). But a resolution proposing industrial action was lost by 80 votes to 40.

The outcome of this meeting could quite easily have led to the collapse of the campaign. How is it to be explained? Union organisation had become weaker in recent years: "When I became convenor in 1976 the binners were very militant. I was always being called to Fern Hill yard because of disputes involving certain gangs there. But times have changed. Today everybody seems to be lying low—afraid of losing their jobs." (NUPE convenor)

In the late 1970s the binners had a good shop stewards committee. It was not official, but it held regular meetings. Unfortunately, the shop steward system among the binners had all but broken down just prior to privatisation. The steward at Fern Hill Depot had resigned

and no-one came forward to replace him. The highly regarded steward at the Radcliffe Depot became seriously ill, and spent long periods off work.

On top of all this the venue for the meeting was not very suitable. Mass meetings were usually held at the Fern Hill Depot, but, in fact, it was far from ideal. Acoustics were poor: there was often noise from compressors or vehicles; it was also difficult to see the speakers. And holding it at noon, just after finishing work, meant that the binners were eager to get away. (The only alternative time for a depot meeting is 6am, before starting work.) The advantage of holding meetings at the depot is that at least people are there on site.

A steward commented that Radcliffe Town Hall, in the evening, would have been a better place to "give long explanations, sit the men down and discuss... Get the feeling from the shopfloor." But the problem is that

SUPER binman Dennis Bushell is pushing his men to the limit.

For the refuse collector nicknamed 'Action Man' is set to lead Bury's top bin crew against the best the rest of Britain can muster.

And if the town's four-man team triumph they believe their jobs may be saved from the threat of privatisation.

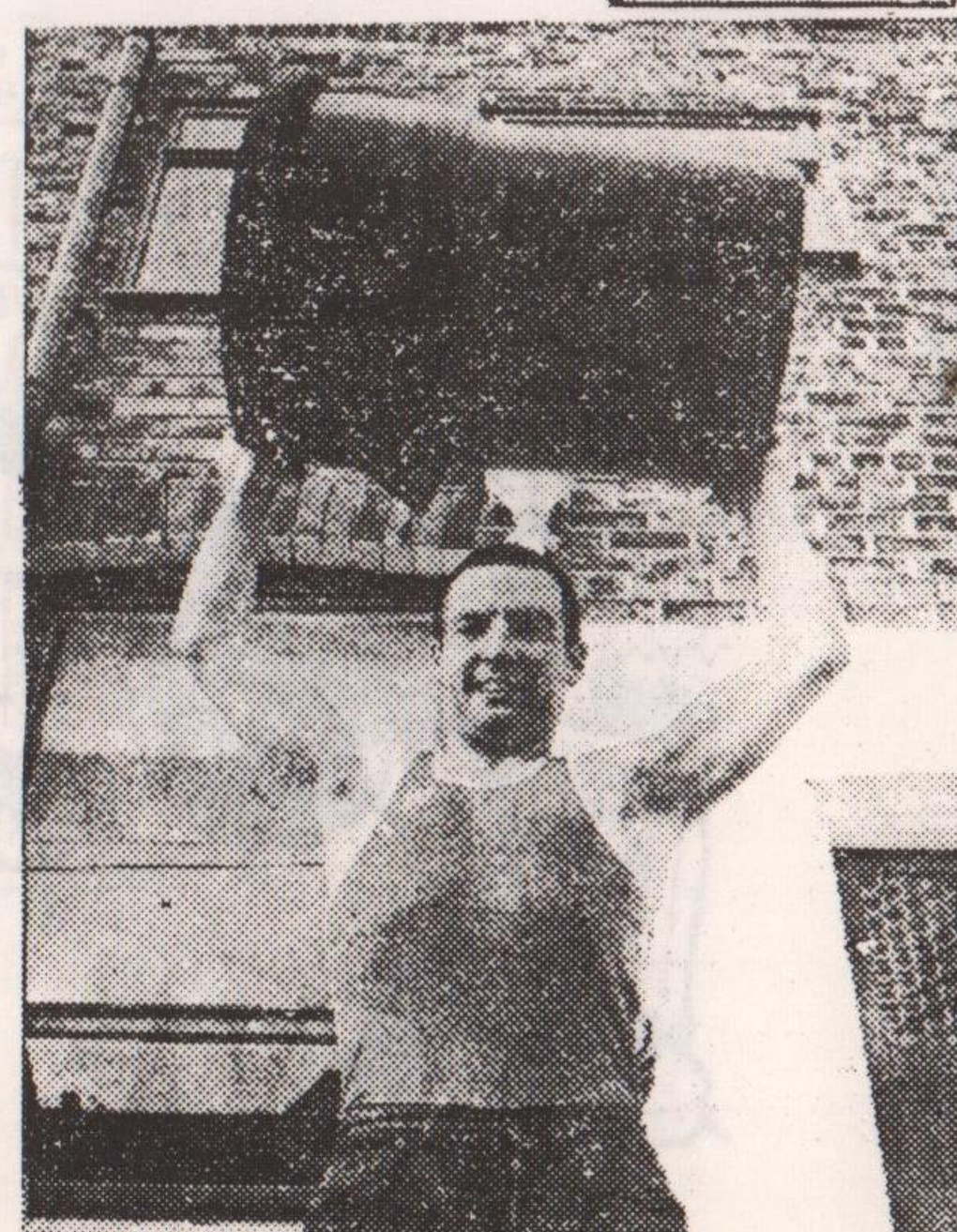
Dennis, 33, of Robert Street, Prestwich will skipper the team and he has no doubts about the importance of putting up a good show.

He said: "If we win it it could make our jobs safe for life. I'm sure it would be difficult for anyone to get rid of the country's best crew."

Dennis, who keeps to a fearsome fitness routine each week, has transformed his crew, known as the Unsworth Flyers, into a champion team who have slashed the time for their round by half.

Said Dennis: "I exercise every day after finishing work. I enjoy running and keeping fit." Dennis and his men begin their bid for the title of Britain's super binmen next month.

**Dennis' flying binmen**



● Dennis Bushell, leader of Bury's super-binmen. (KWP/148/13)

probably not many people would turn up.

The unions might have got the support they needed had they done more to communicate with and mobilise their membership during the six months after signing the March 1982 agreement. Meetings at the depots, which would probably have been well attended, could have been supplemented by evening meetings in Radcliffe Town Hall—even if fewer people came it would have been a way of building support for the campaign. Having failed to do this, the unions had failed to get across that the privatisation fight could be won.

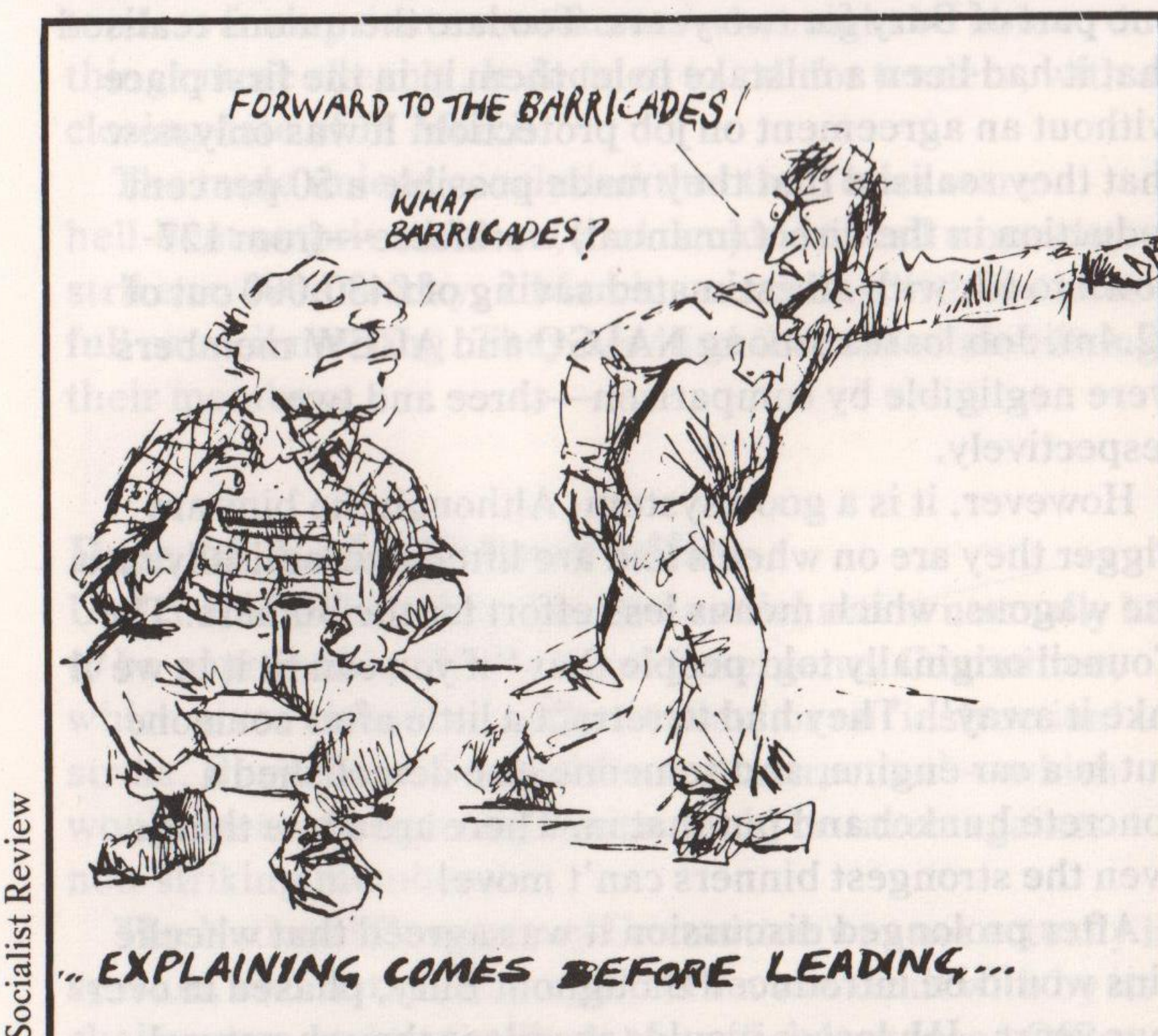
One of those present at the meeting summed it up:

"We'd come to them cold. We'd given them no information. All the information they had was about Wandsworth—where people went on strike, they were sacked, and they lost their redundancy money. It's not surprising that they didn't vote for a strike."

The reluctance amongst the binners to take strike action was clearly a setback for the unions, but it was not a total catastrophe—indeed, it spurred them on to try new tactics and to work on building up the organisation across all the services again.

## Whitley victory

The unions had one more procedural card to play. They approached the regional arm of the Whitley Council (the



body which oversees agreements on pay and conditions in Local Government), known as the North West Provincial Council, and asked its Disputes Committee to rule on the Council's action.

"The Trade Unions' case is... that... a clear agreement was reached in March of this year... that instead of proceeding further with privatisation, steps would be taken to consult with the employee representatives... to ascertain whether further... savings were possible... We had agreed to co-operate in... these discussions. None of this has taken place and the Authority has then

issued us with a decision that completely breaches the original agreement without any justifiable reasons."

Albert Little turned up in person to put the employer's case. This was unprecedented, since it is always officers of the authority, not elected members, who present cases at such hearings. He made a pretty poor job of it, and the Disputes Committee of the Provincial Council ruled in the unions' favour, on 8 December 1982:

"that the case is established. The Committee express the hope that local discussions and consultations take place in accordance with the agreement reached in March 1982."

The unions were aware that this ruling would not on its own succeed in halting privatisation. They did stave off privatisation for the time being—but in their case to the Provincial Council they had practically committed themselves to accepting some degree of 'savings', ie. job loss, even if not redundancies.

## Discussing savings — but not tendering

Following the Provincial Council ruling, the Council did meet the unions, on 22 December 1982. The unions had decided that while willing to discuss savings they were not prepared to submit a tender in competition with private firms, since this would be capitulating on the principle of privatisation. This was a crucial decision. Unions cannot hope to compete with private contractors' cut-throat prices, unless they agree to the very wage cuts and reductions in working conditions which the private contractors offer.

Once drawn into the tendering trap, trade unionists will find themselves on a downward spiral. Even if they actually win the contract they'll have lost many of the things they were originally fighting for.

The unions warned the Council that if they did not comply with the ruling of the Provincial Council, it could affect other agreements, eg. the provision of emergency services during the winter. The Tories did agree for the time being not to invite outside tenders for the bins service. A Working Party of officers and union representatives was set up to look at possible ways of re-organising the service and making savings.

## The Labour Party

While the unions were successfully fighting a tactical battle between October and December, and building up the organisation amongst their members, they were not so successful in gaining support in the labour movement outside. In particular, they did not harness the local Labour Party to their struggle. Indeed, twice, approaches from the Labour Party were rebuffed. There were, however, specific reasons for this.

In December 1981 the District Labour Party had been formally asked to support the campaign. It did pass a motion opposing privatisation, but most of the District Labour Party apparently opposed any close identification with the campaign, eg. by making anti-privatisation a major plank of local Labour Party policy or getting local



members to distribute anti-privatisation leaflets. They seemed to think it would be an electoral liability.

The unions did also get a resolution of support and a donation of £5 from Bury Trades Council. But apart from this it seems that not much effort was put into winning support from trade unionists outside the Council.

Towards the end of October 1982 the Constituency Labour Party approached one of the members of the JTUC, a full-time official, to enquire whether the unions wanted public Labour Party support. He sent a letter replying that the Labour Party should not get involved because it was essentially an 'industrial matter'.

This reflects a particular trade union viewpoint that the way to settle a dispute is to negotiate amicably with the employer, while 'keeping the temperature down' by avoiding the involvement of politicians or the general public. This approach may be appropriate when employers are seeking an amicable compromise. But today, Tory councillors are all too often seeking total victory over unions—like the chopping of the workforce and elimination of active trade unionists, as happened in Southend. In these circumstances the unions have no chance of winning unless they pull out all the stops to mobilise the workforce and win public sympathy. As the Bury unions were finally to do three months later.

This full-timer did not consult the JTUC before replying to the Labour Party's approach—just two of the manual union officials. This was contrary to the whole idea of having a JTUC directing the campaign. Luckily the incident did not seriously harm the Committee—sufficient trust and goodwill had developed to hold it together; the official took little further part in the campaign, his members being ably represented on the Committee by their shop steward.

The second missed opportunity was just before Christmas 1982. Some Labour Party members had requested a meeting with the unions. What they had in mind was a leafletting campaign in Bury Precinct plus possibly also using Labour Party organisation at ward level to distribute leaflets throughout the town.

A meeting arranged with three full-time officials on 21 December 1982 fell through because two did not arrive. During the pre-negotiation union meeting the following day, the Labour Party's approach was raised, but someone expressed opposition—"It's a delicate situation. It's better not to get the Labour Party involved"—and discussion ceased.

Those who opposed Labour Party involvement did so because they felt it would provoke the Tories into becoming more intransigent—as would any public

campaigning. They sought a compromise with the Tories based on avoiding privatisation by agreeing to substantial savings.

In retrospect the decision to reject the Labour Party's approach was mistaken—based on a misreading of the Tories' intentions. In fact, some Labour Party wards and individual members did do quite a lot: they distributed public leaflets, attended the lobby of the Council, helped to produce material, and one ward had an article on privatisation in their newsletter; some councillors put the case against privatisation very strongly in the Council debate. But at the formal level, the public campaign which the unions were soon forced into lacked official Labour Party backing.

### Wheelie bins

When the Working Party of unions and management met after Christmas the Council officials put forward for consideration fourteen different ways of re-organising the service. The Working Party then recommended that further consideration be given to two alternatives: plastic bin bags, or a wheeled bin system. The unions also put forward some other proposals, eg. fewer but bigger wagons, with a crew of seven instead of five—this would cut down on trips to the tip, and was a system that was working well in Wigan.

The 'Wheelie Bins' had been in use experimentally in one part of Bury for two years. Too late the unions realised that it had been a mistake to let them in in the first place without an agreement on job protection. It was only now that they realised that they made possible a 50 per cent reduction in the direct (manual) workforce—from 127 down to 63, with an estimated saving of £430,000 out of £2.4m. Job losses among NALGO and AUEW members were negligible by comparison—three and two respectively.

However, it is a good system. Although the bins are bigger they are on wheels and are lifted hydraulically into the wagons, which means less effort for the binners. The Council originally told people that "if you can fit it in we'll take it away". They had to retract a little after someone put in a car engine, and someone else demolished a concrete bunker and put that in. There are some things even the strongest binners can't move!

After prolonged discussion it was agreed that wheelie bins would be introduced throughout Bury, phased in over four years. Job losses would take place through natural wastage, early retirement, voluntary redundancy and re-deployment, but not through compulsory redundancy.

## Day of Action

### Another broken agreement

On Monday, 21 February 1983, the Council's Public Services Committee met. The trade unionists expected the approval of the Working Party's recommendations, ie. savings without privatisation, to be a mere formality. The NUPE Convenor and two NALGO branch officers did attend the meeting, to check that the Council would stick to its pledge. To their shock the Committee decided not to adopt the Working Party's report until it had received tenders from private contractors who might be able to do things more cheaply. It decided to call for tenders, with a closing date of 11 March.

The trade unions concluded that the Tories were hell-bent on privatisation, and decided to call a one-day strike on Wednesday, 2 March, coinciding with the next full council meeting. They now had the task of mobilising their members.

### Role of NALGO head office

Under NALGO's rules, local industrial action normally has to be approved by the National Emergency Committee, which gives either an 'authorisation' or an 'instruction' to strike. Bury NALGO asked for an 'instruction'—which would mean disciplinary action could be taken against non-striking members.

The National Emergency Committee was not actually in session, and so the Bury application was dealt with by its chairperson and two or three top officials at Head Office. (Somebody at Head Office is reported to have been shocked when a Bury branch official rang up asking for the names of all the members of the National Emergency Committee.)

The application fulfilled NALGO's rule that an 'instruction' should only be granted where there had been a successful strike ballot. But the top officials refused an 'instruction', on the pretext that the ballot was 12 months old and did not specify a date for the industrial action. (Although there is nothing in NALGO's rule to justify invalidating a strike ballot on these grounds).

All Head Office would give Bury was an 'authorisation' to strike, which meant no disciplinary action could be

### Privatisation means-

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ● compulsory redundancies and permanent loss of jobs | ● opportunities for disabled   |
| ● less pay for longer hours                          | ● higher personal charges for services                                 |
| ● reduced sickness benefits and pensions             | ● need for increased forms of insurance                                |
| ● shorter holidays                                   | ● higher rents   |
| ● less job security – hiring and firing              | ● poorer quality service   |
| ● less training                                      | ● less responsive to changing social needs                             |
| ● inferior health and safety conditions              | ● longer waiting lists for old peoples homes, repairs, hospitals, etc. |
| ● little or no trade union organisation              | ● services you cannot rely on  |
| ● fewer jobs   | ● less opportunity to control services                                 |



taken against members who ignored it. And since it was a one-day strike, no strike pay would be paid from national funds.

It is remarkable how little support NALGO nationally gave its members in Bury, considering that it was on the point of launching a £1m public campaign against privatisation.

### NALGO prepares

Head Office's refusal of an 'instruction' did not prove fatal because over the past 16 months the branch leadership



had worked hard to convince the membership of the need to fight privatisation. The fact that the Council was seen as breaking an agreement—that of March 1982—was also very persuasive.

At lunchtime on Thursday 24 February a mass meeting of NALGO Public Services members voted to strike on the following Wednesday with only two against.

There then followed a series of lunchtime meetings of NALGO members in almost all the Council departments on Friday 25 February and the next Monday and Tuesday. Each was attended by branch officers who put the case for strike action. This call won majority support everywhere. Even in departments where there was no danger of privatisation—eg. the Central Library—there was overwhelming support for the strike. This was also despite a rumour spread by management that some departments weren't coming out after all. To contradict this rumour the NALGO branch officers had to go round a second time to some departments.

Finally, on Tuesday afternoon, 1st March, the strike was endorsed by a special general meeting of the whole branch, which was "very well attended" (about 300 people) and "strongly in favour of industrial action".

### The Manual unions

Just as NALGO had first of all found out whether its members in the Public Services Dept were willing to strike before going round other departments, so the manual unions agreed that they could not ask their members to

"SELLING OFF REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICES" is on the agenda for next Wednesday's Council. The meeting is at 6.00 p.m. at Bury Town Hall.

Last year the Council decided to sell off Bury's Bins, then they agreed to find savings in the present service. The Trade Unions involved have willingly met the Council on several occasions to see where savings can be made. Only last week the unions and the Council met and agreed a system which would save up to £430,000 the estimated savings given by the private consultants hired by the Council last year were only £250,000

DOES THIS MAKE SENSE TO YOU ?

We believe the Council never had any intention of serious talks with the Unions, we can only believe that this Council is absolutely determined to follow the Conservative Party Policy and sell off our assets despite the cost to you the ratepayer, and despite the dangers to your health, your service and your democratic right to decide how that service is run.

Please join us and give an hour of your time to LOBBY THE COUNCIL on WEDNESDAY MARCH 2ND at 5.30 p.m. outside BURY TOWN HALL.

Contact your Councillors — tell them you want to keep the services under your control — Don't let PRIVATE PROFITS come before the public's welfare



Printed and Published by  
NALGO NUPE TGWU  
AUEW UCATT GMB

# NALGO

## ONE DAY STRIKE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 1983

National and Local Government Officers Association, Bury  
Metropolitan District Branch

### NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

There will be a one day strike of all members on Wednesday, March 2, 1983, in order to express our opposition to the Council's plans to privatise the refuse collection and associated services. This action is official and has the full support of the National Emergency Council and all members should not report to work on that day.

### NOTICE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Nalگو apologises for any inconvenience you may be caused as a result of our one day strike. We have been forced to take this action by the totally unacceptable attitude of the local Council. Our action is intended to protect your public services from attack by private contractors.

### HELP US DEFEND YOUR SERVICES — LOBBY THE COUNCIL MEETING

Bury Town Hall, 5.30pm, Wednesday, March 2, 1983

KEEP PUBLIC SERVICES PUBLIC

HANDS OFF BURY'S BINS

NO PRIVATISATION

Ian Stephenson  
Branch Secretary

take action until it had been determined what the binners were going to do.

It was not until 7.00am on Tuesday, 1st March, that the unions were able to organise a mass meeting of the binners. This was partly due to practical difficulties in scheduling a meeting without disrupting normal work, but also because they wanted Radcliffe and Fern Hill people to meet together rather than have two separate meetings which might vote different ways. There was also a problem of the full-time officials not being able to get there on an earlier date.

The vote was 64 in favour of striking and 48 against.

It was not till after this meeting that the Convenor of the manual unions was able to send word to the membership in all the other Council departments that they were expected to support the action the following morning. Most members were, however, aware the week before that a one-day strike was likely.

Some groups—eg. the electricians in Building Maintenance—did manage to hold meetings, where they decided to support the strike. But because the Council workplaces are so spread out, it was not possible to contact everyone, and some only learnt of the strike on Wednesday morning when they encountered pickets outside their places of work.

### Public support

The unions made a bid for public support by leafletting in Bury Precinct on the Saturday before the strike, asking people to come to the mass lobby of the Council meeting on 2 March.

NALGO inserted a notice in the 'Bury Times' the day before the strike, aimed at both its own members and the general public.

### Who came out

The NALGO branch officers were amazed at the level of



Impact of the Day of Action: Car Parks and even the Cemetery were closed.



## LEADER GETS WARNING

COUNCIL leader Albert Little was given a "verbal warning" by police on Wednesday after striking council workers had reported that his car had no front number plate.

Police were informed when Coun Little parked his blue S reg Mini outside the town hall during the unions' day of action against plans to

privatise the bins service. Coun Little explained: "Some friend reported that my car had no front number plate. A policeman came and asked me if I was aware that I was not displaying a number plate. I said I was not. There was no suggestion that I would be charged." The councillor said he went and bought a new number plate straight away.

support from their membership: 90 per cent came out; over a hundred took part in picketing various buildings—some standing for ten hours in pouring rain.

Given the short notice the Council's manual workers responded very well. Some, who had not known about the strike and gone into work, walked out when they heard about it on the radio. Members from all the unions stood side by side on the picket line.

The shutting of the municipal car parks made a considerable impact on the life of the town. The market was also shut until traders with keys opened it up. Libraries, cemeteries and most of the Town Hall were shut. In fact, the unions had to send the porters back in to open





Trade unionists lobby councillors arriving for the Council meeting on 2 March 1983

Manchester Evening News



Idle bin wagons in the depot on the Day of Action

Bury Times

up the Public Gallery of the Council chamber so that they could watch the Council meeting!

### The binners themselves

The participation of the binners themselves in picketing was patchy. At the Lord Street (Radcliffe) Depot there was a good turn out, but at Fern Hill (Bury) the picketers were virtually all either NALGO or AUEW members.

The explanations for this is that union organisation was very weak among the Fern Hill binners during 1981-83 because the people who had held it together previously had gone. The NALGO and AUEW members continued to have an affective union leadership; while a new shop steward emerged at Radcliffe in early 1983, and played a very active role in the campaign.

The only binner who went to work (and nearly ran down a steward on the picket line) regretted it when he came to empty the bin of a NALGO member. She rushed out and started hitting him about the head with an umbrella, shouting, "What are you doing working? I'm out on strike for you! Go and join the picket line!" He beat a hasty retreat.

### Comment

From what happened it is clear that lack of members support for the unions should not be regarded as an insoluble problem. Support can be won, but only if the active trade unionists go out and communicate with their members, persistently, and seek out potentially active



Manchester Evening News

Pickets at the Market on the Day of Action.

members to get them to come forward and accept union office.

The argument which is so often heard these days from some full-time union officials, that "The members don't want to fight. They're not interested," may often apply to the officials themselves. Rather than go out to try to mobilise the membership they stick to their safe daily routine. Many have no stomach for a fight against cuts, privatisation or anything else. A strike for them means extra work and possible friction with their union superiors.



# Collision Course

## Strategy

The unions' strategy after the Day of Action could be summed up as to prepare for further industrial action while engaging in an intensive publicity campaign to win public support and strengthen that of the membership.

## Industrial action

What was contemplated was an indefinite strike of the bins section of the Public Services Department, and, if necessary, occupation of the depots to prevent private

contractors coming in. A ballot of NALGO members in Public Services was overwhelmingly in favour of an indefinite strike. The rest of the authority would strike for one day in solidarity and then take various forms of selective action. NALGO planned to ballot its members in Libraries & Arts on a series of one-day strikes and those in the Rates Section of the Finance Department on refusal to send out rate demands or to deal with tenders. The Parks Dept and gravediggers proposed to come out on one-day strikes.

Other forms of selective action considered by NALGO were to hold up payments to private contractors and not to process councillors' expenses claims.

NALGO's National Emergency Committee was much more supportive than it had been just before the Day of Action. After their ballot, it instructed all Public Services Department members to strike, provided the binners also came out. It offered them 60 per cent of gross pay as strike pay (ie. roughly equivalent to their normal take-home pay) and also offered this to anyone who took selective action.

## Union organisation

During this period the unions tried various ways of strengthening their organisation.

### 1. Joint Shop Stewards Committee (JSSC)

The Bury campaign had early on bridged the gap between staff and manual unions. But until now the JTUC had been unbalanced: on the white collar side it included lay union representatives from all local authority departments. But on the manual side it consisted almost entirely of full-time officials with many other responsibilities besides the dustbins campaign.

All shop stewards and staff reps in the local authority were therefore invited to a meeting of stewards to form a JSSC. It first met on 15 March 1983 and thereafter weekly in the evening at a town centre pub.

Most departments sent shop stewards to the JSSC. But at the second meeting—on 22 March—the NUPE convenor commented:

"There's still a lot of apathy within our membership.

There was a terrible turnout last week and it's not much better tonight. There's a handful of people doing far too many jobs."

Reasons why the JSSC was not more successful may include the following:

- That manual shop stewards from elsewhere in the authority had not previously worked with NALGO—and so there was a degree of suspicion which needed time to be eroded.
- The existing group of active trade unionists had not time to build the JSSC because the campaign was at a critical stage and they were overwhelmed with work.

The time to set up a successful JSSC would have been six months or a year previously. Why this did not happen is unclear. Possibly the existence of the JTUC made it seem unnecessary. This committee had merely followed in the tradition of representation on the main JCC, and it seems no-one had thought of a joint stewards committee.

### 2. Involving Members

Right to the end, the campaign revolved around the efforts of a small group (stewards from AUEW, NUPE and TGWU plus several NALGO people). Because there were so few of them they were forced to work intensely hard.

A proposal for involving more people was put forward at the NALGO special general meeting on 15 March—that eight project groups should be set up, each co-ordinated by a branch executive committee member, and responsible for:

1. The petition.
2. Publicity.
3. Local campaigns by area (Bury, Radcliffe, Prestwich, etc.)
4. Social events.
5. Liaison with councillors.
6. Liaison with trade unions and fund raising.
7. Street theatre.
8. Research.

This ambitious proposal was never really implemented. However, a 'research group' was set up—consisting of four or five NALGO members—which "did work extremely well". They set out to look into privatisation prospects for each group of workers in the authority and produce leaflets targetted at each of these groups. They also took over publicity for the public meeting on 5 April.

Co-ordination remained a problem. One NALGO member spelt it out:

"We need to find somebody to take responsibility for co-ordinating the petitions. Nobody knows who's responsible for chasing people up, eg. Labour Party wards. Nobody has overall responsibility for publicity for the public meeting. The few people involved at the moment cannot cope. Everybody here should be responsible for co-ordinating a particular thing." (JSSC, 29 March 1983)

Out of a NALGO branch membership of 1,300, only 15 to 20 people were really active in the campaign. (Many NALGO branches would no doubt say, "That many?") This does not seem to have been purely because nobody

## Never too old

The following anecdote illustrates the support which NALGO by now enjoyed among its ordinary members:

On the Day of Action, one guy, he was 64 and he's now retired, was on the picket line at 6.00 in the morning and he was still there at 9.00 at night. All day in the rain, the wind. And on a few occasions we said, 'We'll take you home. We'll get you some dinner.' And he said, 'I'm not coming off the picket lines.' There were people in their twenties and thirties dropping with exhaustion. And he was still there.

He hadn't previously been active but the way in which the employers performed in the dispute and the fact that it was the whole department going, and he had worked in the authority for years. It was public services. He had been a public employee providing services for the public for most of his life. And they were coming in saying they were going out to contractors. And it got to him.

When it came to the ballot on indefinite strike actions, we said to him: 'You're exempt from this action because it's going to affect your pension for the rest of your life.' But he said, 'I don't give a toss about my pension. I'm coming out on strike with my brothers and sisters because what's important is their jobs and this bin service.' There was no way he was going to back down. We had to rescind the exemption.

It was speeches like that which pulled people right. He was lovely. The support swelled, really, from his saying that.

else was interested in becoming involved. The active members seem—quite unintentionally—to have become a closed group, difficult for any outsider to join. When asked how people could assist the campaign, the Branch Secretary's response was often, "Go down to the NALGO office—there's always something to do there, eg. addressing envelopes." But giving them menial, boring tasks to do is not the best way of getting more members involved in a campaign. The proposal outlined above for eight project groups, each with an experienced co-ordinator, would have provided a structure for getting more people actively involved. But it would have taken a lot of time and effort to get it organised, and time was one thing the active members did not have.

### 3. Breaking Down The Barriers

While people on the JTUC had been working well together for some time, there was still a lack of unity amongst members of the different unions.

One attempt to get over this problem was by producing a joint union newsletter, which was intended to become a regular feature.

Another proposal was to organise social events, to break down the suspicion and distrust separating manual and white collar workers:

"If you're at a disco and you see your boss pissed and

Local elections, Thursday, May 5

Vote to save  
our public  
services



Vote to put  
people first

**nalgo**



# DEFEND PUBLIC SERVICES

This is the first of a regular newsletter which is being produced for all manual and staff trade union members. We hope to keep you informed of the progress of the Privatisation dispute in the Public Services Dept. and provide you with any useful information.

## SHUT OUT CONTRACTORS



P&P :- AUEW, EETPU, GMBATU,  
NALGO, NUPE, TGWU, UCATT.

falling over a table, you'll start to see that these NALGO people are not so bad after all."

### Fund raising

It was vital to plan for industrial action by ensuring people would not be 'starved' back to work. While NALGO members would receive 60 per cent of gross pay from the union, other unions' strike pay is not so generous. The bin workers could expect to receive strike pay of about £20 a week from their unions, but even this would take some time to come through. It was felt that this would need to be topped up to at least £50 a week.

There was also the cost of producing and printing leaflets, both for the general public and aimed at council workers.

So a Fighting Fund was set up. Bury NALGO circulated every NALGO branch in the country and received a flood of donations. The other unions also raised money—mainly from within the North West, though all fund raising through one union was blocked by the top regional official. Money was also raised by a voluntary levy of union members.

In total, several thousand pounds were collected.

### Publicity campaign

"We've got to make Bury a Bins Town."

The unions sought to publicise the campaign in a whole range of different ways, aiming mainly at the general



Bury JTC

All helpers welcome for petitioning in Bury Precinct!

public, but also at their own members.

### • LEAFLETS

The unions produced a leaflet for the general public which was one of the best produced during the campaign. It gives a number of strong anti-privatisation arguments in a more readable format (wider spacing) than previous leaflets.

### • LOGO

The campaign was fortunate at this stage to have among



## Social Evening

at

REBECCAS, The Haymarket, Bury.

on

MONDAY APRIL 25th, '83

8pm-2pm

no.

PRICE £1

its active supporters someone with expertise in graphic design, who produced the logo 'Save Bury's Bins' and the badge 'Don't Sell Me Off'. It was felt that these were needed to make the campaign stand out visually.

### • BADGES

A mentioned above, badges were also produced to publicise the campaign. However, it was decided to withdraw one idea which showed the Tory leader, Little, with a noose around his neck, captioned: 'A Little Privatisation Is Too Much'.

One noteworthy idea was that the badges should be sold rather than given away because this would mean those distributing them had to convince people that the campaign was worth supporting.

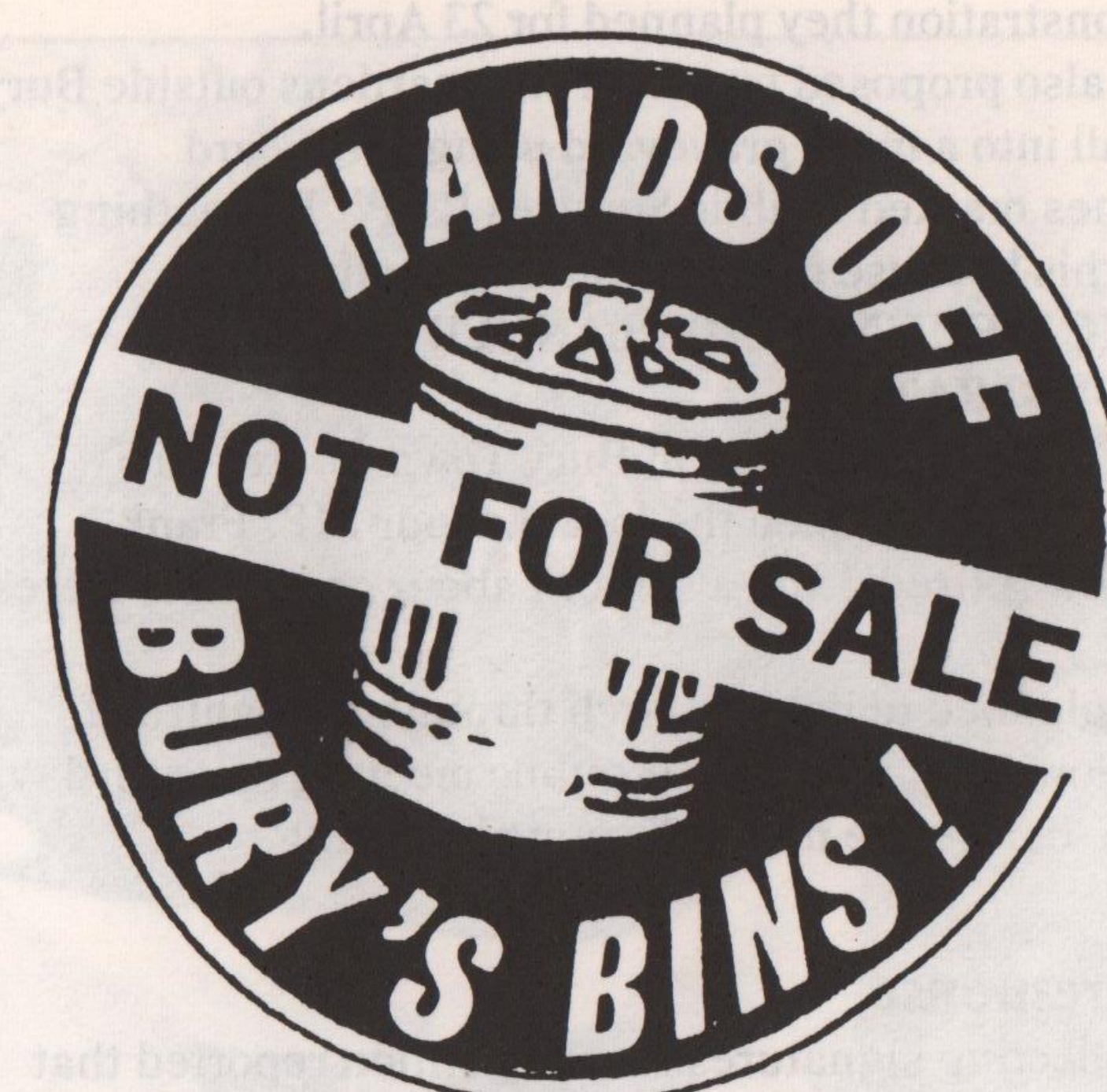
### • PETITION

The collection of signatures for an anti-privatisation petition was a major objective. People stood every Saturday in Bury Precinct next to a plastic dustbin marked 'Save Bury's Bins' in huge letters. Individuals also went to other major shopping areas within the borough—eg. the centres of Radcliffe and Whitefield—or went from door to door in residential areas.

### • LOUDSPEAKER VANS

The unions hired a van to drive around Bury with posters plastered on its sides. On Saturdays two shop stewards drove it around different parts of Bury, calling out through a loudspeaker slogans like:

Save Bury's Bins.



Say no to privatisation.

Bury jobs for Bury people.

Write to your local councillor.

Come to the van and sign the petition.

When you're up town in the Precinct go and sign the petition.

Go to the public meeting on 5 April in Derby Hall at 8.00pm—Frank White will be speaking.

### • BUSES, BALLOONS AND TOMBSTONES

The unions also tried, unsuccessfully, to buy advertising on local buses and considered hiring a hot air balloon for

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP US

Come to the PUBLIC MEETING

8.00pm. on TUESDAY, APRIL 5th.,

at the DERBY HALL, Market St., Bury.

★ Write to your Councillors

★ Sign the Petition

★ Support our events

★ Write to the Local Papers

★ Tell the Binmen you support them

★ Ask your friends to do these things too



Councils all over the country have considered 'selling off' their Refuse Collection Service.....

Most of them have turned down the idea because the real cost was too great.

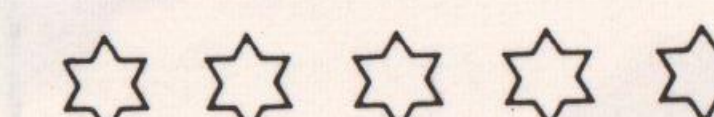
Private Companies are not interested in giving you a good service - they are in it to make a profit.

Today your service is accountable to you..... you can complain to your Councillors or the staff if it's not right- and they can make changes....

Who are you going to complain to when the contractors are in .....

We care about the service you get because we have a stake in Bury - wouldn't you rather have people working for you with an equal stake in Bury's future.....?

Private companies go bust- they move on- they are not accountable to you.... you can't vote them in or out of power.... They are only interested in profits.



The Joint Unions want to keep our Refuse Collection Service under local control

P&P :- AUEW, EETPU, GMBATU,

NALGO, NUPE, TGWU, UCATT.



the demonstration they planned for 23 April.

It was also proposed to convert the gardens outside Bury Town Hall into a mock graveyard using cardboard tombstones marked 'Public Services R I P'. But nothing came of this because of doubts about legality.

# • **PUBLIC MEETING AND PLANNED DEMONSTRATION**

A Public Meeting was held in Bury Town Centre on 5 April. Speakers included the local Labour MP, Frank White (now retired), and a senior Labour councillor, Derek Boden.

It was planned to hold a march through the centre of Bury, followed by an open-air public meeting on Saturday 23 April—before the next full council meeting.

## **Public response**

Those collecting signatures for the petition reported that very few people refused to sign.

"People say: 'The bins, that's right. It's not like canvassing for the Labour Party. There's no argument.'" (NALGO rep)

"While we were out in the loudspeaker van a lot of people came out to ask how it was going. Most had signed the petition in the precinct." (Shop steward)



Bury JTUC

### *The Loudspeaker Van*

A Labour councillor says that people "from all strata of society" appeared puzzled as to why the Tories had chosen the dustbin service—with which there was virtually no public discontent—for privatisation. (He thought there might be some public discontent with other services).

However, privatisation did not become a burning local issue for many Bury people. Attendance at the public meeting was disappointing—only 40 people. (It was also very low at the demonstration—but by then the issue had effectively been settled.)

Perhaps anti-privatisation campaigners should think twice about organising public meetings or demonstrations which might attract disappointingly few people. The time which these take up might be better used generally to publicise the campaign by, eg. leafletting or collecting signatures on a petition.



Bury JTUC

Rally, 23 April 1983



## **DEMONSTRATE TO KEEP YOUR SERVICES PUBLIC**

Bury Council intends to 'privatise' its refuse collection and associated services, by handing them over to a private contractor. We believe that such a move will not only mean a loss of jobs and deteriorating conditions of service amongst the existing employees of the Council, but also a much poorer and eventually much more expensive service for the people of the Bury area.

The first responsibility of any contractor will be to the private shareholders of the company. The present responsibility under the local authority is to the people of Bury, who will effectively lose democratic control of the service if it is 'privatised'. The Bury Joint Trades Union Committee has called for a demonstration and rally on Saturday April 23rd to show our opposition to the Council's plans.

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT — ATTEND THE MARCH AND RALLY —  
SAVE JOBS AND KEEP PUBLIC SERVICES PUBLIC**

The march will assemble between 10.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. in the park opposite Bury Town Hall. A rally with speakers will follow the demonstration at approximately 12.30 p.m.



# Settlement

## "Gone with the Bins" — retained by popular demand

Adrenalin was running high when the Council's Public Services Committee met on 12 April 1983. It decided not to privatise but to introduce the wheeled bin system on the lines proposed by unions and management back in February.

The tenders submitted by private contractors for the bins service ranged from £1,860,805 to £2,294,731. The estimated cost of the inhouse service—after introducing wheeled bins—was said to be £1,886,988. But this figure would not be reached for about **six or seven years**; before that it could be up to £2m more expensive. The Tories talked about 'margins of error' but that was just an excuse.

So why did they decide to reject privatisation? One could argue that the Tories did not go private in the end because they had successfully used the threat of privatisation to extract from the unions a substantial saving through a drastic cut in jobs. Viewed in this way the Bury campaign was hardly a victory for the unions. Albert Little received an OBE—so the Tory government must have been quite pleased with his efforts.

The trade unionists do, however, believe that they won at least a limited victory. They see the Tories as having been ideologically driven to privatise the service, but in the end backing off, at least partly, because of the unions' campaign and the threat of a strike causing rubbish to pile up in the streets in the run up to the May 1983 local elections.

It is significant that there was no mention of privatisation in the Tory election material for the May 1983 elections. If they had managed to privatise the bins, a whole list of other services would have been sold off to private contractors just waiting to strip the Council's assets. It was obvious that the Tories could not face taking on the unions and public again so soon.

In this sense, the campaign was certainly a victory for the unions, and one which will strengthen their hand in future. What is more, although jobs will be lost, if the bins had gone private the outcome would have been far worse.

The mass compulsory redundancies, selective re-hiring, speed-up, erosion of conditions, and destruction of union organisation which have happened elsewhere, eg. at Wandsworth and Southend, would no doubt have come to Bury.

At least the job loss is being spread over four years and will not involve compulsory redundancies (unless a binner refuses to be redeployed to a vacancy elsewhere in the Council).

### Continuing negotiations

A management-union Working Party has been set up to

## Save Bury's Bins SAVED BURY'S BINS?

THE PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE OF BURY COUNCIL, MET ON THE 12TH APRIL AND DECIDED TO RECOMMEND TO THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 27TH APRIL, THAT THE REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE IN BURY IS NOT PRIVATISED.

FROM THE UNIONS STANDPOINT, THIS IS A CLEAR VICTORY AND THE DIRECT RESULT OF A EFFECTIVE ANTI - PRIVATISATION CAMPAIGN THAT BROUGHT TOGETHER NOT ONLY THE UNIONS BUT OTHER SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY.

HOWEVER THE COUNCIL HAS NOT YET FORMALLY AGREED NOT TO PRIVATISE THE SERVICE SO OUR PUBLIC CAMPAIGN WILL CONTINUE ALTHOUGH WE WILL NOT BE TAKING ANY STRIKE ACTION AS HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED PRIOR TO THE MEETING OF APRIL 12TH.

WE THEREFORE URGE PEOPLE TO CARRY ON WORK AROUND THE PETITION BUT EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND THE DEMONSTRATION DETAILED OVERLEAF THAT TAKES PLACE ON 23RD APRIL. THE DEMO. WILL STILL BE GOING AHEAD AND WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

PUBLISHED BY 'SAVE BURY'S BINS' JOINT UNION COMMITTEE.  
PRINTED BY NEW LEAF PRESS, DANTZIC STREET, MANCHESTER M4 2AD.

finalise the details of the introduction of the wheeled bin system. Management is going for the abolition of the 'task and finish' system, which is a long-held and valued working practice. This will increase working hours. It will, however, reduce the pace of work, which will be better for the binners' health. "Task and finish is one mad rush."

Management talks as if the changes in working practices which it wants to introduce are a fait accompli. However, there is presumably some room for the unions to negotiate over these. It is important to note that NALGO is not in any way involved in these negotiations. Nor has there been any suggestion that NALGO use its industrial muscle to get the binners the best possible terms. The previous unity between staff and manual unions is no

longer in the forefront.

Like all new technology, the wheeled bins may fail to deliver the savings expected of them. It has very recently become evident that the reduced crew of two men may not be able to get them onto the trucks because people are putting more rubbish than expected into the new bins and overloading them, so that they become too heavy for the reduced crew to move.

The Tories have said that if the new system doesn't produce the required savings they may once again consider privatising the bins. Past experience demonstrates very clearly that the issue of privatisation has very little to do with cost. It is first and foremost a political issue, and must be treated and fought as such.



The 'Unsworth Fliers' came straight from competing to lobby the Council on 12 April—they could have won the title as Britain's best bin crew and lost their jobs on the same day.



# Conclusion

IN THIS conclusion we draw out some of the main lessons to be learned from Bury's campaign and make a final comment to encourage people who may feel a bit daunted by the task in front of them.

There are some standard maxims which apply in almost any campaign—the need for:

- Joint union organisation.
- Membership awareness.
- Public sympathy.
- Support from district or national trade union structures.

- Research on potential contractors' performance elsewhere.

However, every campaign is in some sense unique. Things which worked in Bury will not necessarily work elsewhere, eg. the anti-privatisation slogans 'Hands Off Bury's Bins' and 'Bury Jobs For Bury People' gained their resonance from something in the nature of Bury as a community—an outlying part of Greater Manchester, somewhat cut off and hostile to outsiders—including giant London-based multinational contractors.

The Bury JTUC scored a number of notable successes; but there were also gaps (rather than failures) in their organisation. These can be summed up as follows:

## SUCCESSSES

- Joint union action from the start—broke down traditional barriers.
- Mobilised members when necessary.
- Won public support.
- Produced some good leaflets for members and the public.
- Refused to be drawn into tendering process.
- Policy of non-cooperation.
- Strategy of selective action.
- Used appropriate legal action—partly as a delaying tactic.
- Drew on experience elsewhere.

## GAPS

- Development of links with trade unions outside Council—no factory meetings.
- Keeping members informed and interested during a lull in action.
- Getting more members actively involved.
- Joint union bulletin from the start and throughout campaign.
- Strong support from union headquarters.
- Involving local Labour Party and getting them to take privatisation up as a local election issue.

## Industrial action

The Bury unions were lucky in that the two occasions when they reached the point of threatening strike action were both during the run-up to the local elections, in May 1982 and May 1983, which made the Tories averse to a confrontation.

The vote against industrial action at the binners' mass meeting on 22 October 1982 was in one sense a setback, reflecting lack of effort to mobilise the membership. But if the vote had gone the other way the Tories might have sat out and defeated an all-out strike during November-December 1982, much as they did in Wandsworth.

Unions should certainly think carefully about what forms of industrial action are open to them besides an all-out strike, eg. selective action, backed by a levy; occupation of key sites.

## Missed opportunities

The campaign stretched over twenty months—from August 1981 to April 1983. Local authorities are slow moving bodies—usually. This gave the unions a certain amount of time to get their organisation up to scratch:

- to build inter union unity, especially through setting up

a Joint Shop Steward Committee.

- to build membership awareness and participation, eg. through holding regular meetings to inform and get involved;
- to build public support.

Yet these opportunities were largely missed. They involved a long term approach to the campaign whereas the predominant union orientation was short term. Thus when the March 1982 agreement was reached, many on the union side felt that they had 'won' the dispute, when by agreeing to a select list of contractors and to discussions about savings they had left the Council in a position to move forward again when it chose.

## The Labour Party

The unions failed to build strong links with the Labour Party because of opposition from certain people on both sides.

The campaign would have benefitted from the active involvement of more people, for example, to collect signatures for the petition. But given the Labour Party's electoral unpopularity during 1982-83 it is possible that the campaign would actually have lost out from being more closely associated publicly with the Labour Party.

## Inter union unity

The experience of working together—sharing some tense moments—for nearly two years has broken down a lot of the reserve with which key figures on the manual side originally viewed NALGO.

But the unity is still very fragile. The only people on the manual side who have gone through this experience of working with NALGO on a long term basis are the full-time union officials—who have other responsibilities besides Bury Council—the convenor, and the bin workers' stewards. (These were the manual union representatives on the Joint Trade Union Committee which started meeting at the end of 1981). It was only in the last six weeks of the campaign (March-April 1983) that stewards in all the other council departments became actively involved, through the one-day strike and the Joint Shop Stewards Committee. And as for the members of all the unions it is debatable how united they feel.

It is not clear whether the JSSC is going to continue meeting. The summer break followed soon after the end of the campaign, and so far there has been no meeting for some months.

A NALGO member observed that a JSSC would be a way to dispel a lot of the antagonism which builds up because manual workers identify NALGO with management:

"The other day I had a shop steward come up to me who complained that his members weren't being paid the right money. Because he spoke to me I went and got the problem sorted out. But if we had a JSSC, NALGO and the manual stewards could get together and sort out all these problems. They are constantly cropping up—very often NALGO members are in a supervisory role over the manual workers."

## Increasing involvement

Several thousand council workers came out on strike for one day. Many thousands of people signed the petition. But the ongoing work of meetings, negotiations, preparing publicity material, dealing with the media, etc. was limited to a much smaller group who at the climax of the campaign found themselves rushed off their feet. Appeals for help to the rest of the membership brought in two or three people who made an outstanding contribution. More members might have become actively involved if the JSSC had been set up earlier.

A problem with all campaigns is that newcomers are often intimidated from taking an active role because the 'old timers' know so much more than they do. This is particularly so at times of crisis when the 'old timers' have no time to explain things to newcomers. The moral is that a campaign should try to recruit extra people well before the crisis. On the other hand, it's very difficult to convince those extra people to do anything **until** a crisis occurs. In this situation it needs some thought as to what keen, inexperienced, people can do. The proposal to set up eight sub-committees, each with an experienced co-ordinator, could have been an effective way of getting more people to **do** things. As it was, the petition was the main way (and certainly a useful one) in which members were forced to come to grips with the issues and present them to the public.

## Final comment

While we were writing this pamphlet the one on Wandsworth was published—'**Public Jobs For Private Profit**'. We suggest that you get hold of a copy of this excellent pamphlet as soon as you can. It seems unnecessary to repeat the practical suggestions which the Wandsworth pamphlet makes, particularly in terms of:

- pushing for greater national union involvement in campaigning (p19-22).
- building up support amongst the public through community groups and organisations (p24-27).

We have given in some detail views relating to two of their other suggestions—organising joint union committees and winning support of members, because these are so crucial.

There is no doubt that unless a good deal of groundwork is done on both these issues, then it will not be possible to cobble something together when the crunch comes. It was noticeable in Bury that NALGO had a much greater response to the call for strike action on the Day of Action, and this must reflect the painstaking work that had gone into explaining the issues, holding meetings and winning members' support, over a long period of time.

However, what if you haven't got a joint union committee already or you haven't had any (well-attended) meetings recently for members to discuss the issues, and you're suddenly faced with the threat of a particular service being privatised? Do you sit back and say, "It's too late, we'll never get anything organised now, we should have done it months ago." Or do you rush into producing leaflets, calling ad hoc meetings, and trying to get something organised with the other trade unions, even



though you're sure you'll fail?

We would certainly recommend you do the latter. There's always a slim chance that you might win, at least a partial victory. But more important than that, at least you won't have let privatisation come in smoothly and quietly without a whimper. To be seen to be doing nothing implies that you're not bothered—it confirms all the worst things that some members feel: that trade union leaders want to negotiate cosily behind closed doors, and if they can't they say nothing can be done or blame the members as the reason for not taking any action. It's no wonder that members appear apathetic if they've never been given any opportunity, or any leadership, to voice their problems and to show positively that they can get things changed.

There were several occasions during the Bury campaign when opportunities were missed or when members were left high and dry not knowing what was happening and not being further involved. Obviously it's impossible to say whether the outcome would have been better (ie. no job loss at all) if the campaign had run absolutely smoothly throughout, snowballing the support. At times it seemed almost insurmountable hurdles lay in the path, and that the lack of, or lapse in, groundwork would prove disastrous. But the fact is that the campaign leaders did not give up, even when they knew things had gone wrong or they weren't well enough prepared.

This will no doubt strike a chord for many people. Have you ever planned a case or campaign in the same clear-headed and systematic way as you did when on a trade union course? It's a rare person who gets everything perfectly prepared, and with time to spare. Lurching from one crisis to another, rapidly 'thinking on one's feet' seems to be much more common. It's not to be recommended as a policy, but it's often the reality.

What is more, organising over one issue, even if it leads to defeat, can provide a much sounder basis for the future. A good example of this is in the Health Service. Initially many health service workers were demoralised when the long, drawn-out, pay dispute in 1982 ended in a paltry pay rise. But, faced now with the full onslaught of cuts and privatisation, in many areas the trade unions are finding they do have a good foundation on which to build. Joint shop stewards committees set up during the pay dispute are still functioning, and are able to react much more quickly to the need for publicity, for organising members, and for winning public support.

Trade unionists should not be put off from trying to organise against cuts or privatisation or whatever just because it seems too late to do it; though they should be aware that they're not very likely to win the issue. The very fact of organising, of winning support from even a few members, of setting up links with other trade unions—these will all provide the basis for building on when the next wave of attacks comes.

### Further reading

**Profit Out of Health.** 1983. Birmingham & Solihull NALGO Health Branch, 6th Floor, Trafalgar House, Paradise Circus, Queensway, Birmingham B1 2BQ. £1.00

**Public Or Private, The Case Against Privatisation.** August 1982. Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF. 70p

**Privatisation, Who Loses, Who Profits.** May 1983. Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF. 85p

**Improve Public Services, Shut Out Contractors—Stop Privatisation Education Pack.** May 1982. NUPE London Division (researched and designed by SCAT), 13-15 Stockwell Road, London SW9. £2.00

**Public Service Action—An Anti-Privatisation Newsletter for the Labour Movement.** No 1: March 1983, No 2: May 1983, No 3: July/August 1983. Services to Community Action and Tenants (SCAT), 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1. 30p each

**Public Jobs For Private Profit.** August 1983. Wandsworth Trade Union Publications, 95 Bedford Hill, London SW12. 90p for trade unions, etc; £1.40 in bookshops

**Making It Public, Evidence and Action Against Privatisation.** 1983. Dexter Whitfield. Published by Pluto Press. £2.50

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