

# Nottingham Defence Fund Newsletter

January 1991

**Nottingham Defence Fund, Box DF, 72 Radford Road, Hyson Green, Nottingham.**

The NDF is an organisation of defendants and others which offers unconditional support for Nottingham people facing criminal charges relating to anti-poll tax activity.

## "JAIL FOR 'PIE' PROTEST IS OVER THE TOP"

Many people will have read the above Evening Post editorial headline after the sentencing on January 8th of Keith Duncombe and Guy Waddingham to 1 month in prison for throwing custard pies (made from shaving foam on paper plates) at councillors during the now notorious "Robin Hood" raid inside the Council House on March 5th 1990, as the Nottingham Poll Tax was set at £390. Both were charged with assault.

The other two people arrested on that day were given conditional discharges for 2 years and were ordered to pay £250 costs each. Guy has already appealed at the Crown Court against his sentence, but this was rejected by the judge. Keith is appealing against his conviction because he has always denied 'pieing' the particular councillor, Barbara Ricks, who witnessed against him in the trial. In fact one of the other defendants admitted during the trial that she had in fact thrown that particular pie, but the magistrates refused to believe her. Keith has been refused bail pending his appeal, so both defendants will be in Lincoln Prison till January 21st (2 weeks each because all sentences less than one year are subject to a half time remission).

The press would have us believe a lesser sentence would have been 'more just'. However the NDF doesn't believe the state will ever give us 'justice'. We recognise the convictions and sentences are to teach the anti-Poll Tax campaign a lesson. They are as worried about our harmful political ideas, as they are about violent action, so it is not surprising when what we might think are minor offences are given high sentences. The lessons we can learn are not to under-estimate the state's power to do what it likes, and to realise we must be hitting them where it hurts if they are taking us so seriously.

The NDF is raising money to pay the court costs, so please help us fund raise. Any money collected will go into our central fund which benefits all our defendants. Two events have also been organised : Firstly, a demonstration outside the council house on Thursday 17th January at 7pm. Bring people and banners. Then on Saturday 20th at 12pm there will be a picket of Lincoln Prison. Phone Nottingham 423363 for transport details.

Please write to Keith and Guy : The addresses are, Keith Duncombe No. JH2569, H.M.Prison Greetwell Rd, Lincoln LN2 4BD, and Guy Waddingham No. JH2568, same address.

If anyone wants to write to other poll tax prisoners around the country, please contact us for a list of addresses.

## OTHER NOTTINGHAM DEFENDANTS

*Ray Hogg served 28 days in Brixton prison whilst awaiting sentencing for a Public Order offence, Section 2, from Trafalgar Square. He was given 240 hours community service.*

*Danny Attwood is on remand after the picket at Brixton Prison, again for a Section 2 offence. Please send letters of support to him at KT1303, Latchmere Remand Centre, Richmond, Surrey.*

*Crispin Oakes is up in court in London on February 20th for a Section 4 offence from the Brixton picket.*

*Three people were arrested outside the bailiffs Julious & Co. on Hucknall road and are in court on February 11th facing charges of obstruction and threatening behaviour.*

*Neil Sankey was charged with criminal damage at a council meeting at Beeston, and is in court this month.*

**Please contact us for court times and places and get down and support these defendants.**



## **PUBLIC MEETING + Video and Discussion**

**7.30pm THURSDAY 31st JANUARY.**

### **International Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham.**

Thank you to all those people who attended our last Public Meeting with defendants and speakers from the Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign and Birmingham Defence Campaign, and Nottingham. Anyone wishing to know how the defendants have got on in their cases please contact us. At our forthcoming meeting, Nottingham defendants will be speaking about their cases and we will be holding the first public showing in Nottingham of the "Trafalgar Square Riot" video. Everyone is welcome.

### **BENEFIT GIG - FRIDAY MARCH 1st, 7.30pm Till Late.**

Bands "Kelly's Heroes" and "Smashing Time" at The Manor Pub, Albert Road, West Bridgford. Tickets £3/£2 (or £2.50/£1.50 in advance from The Manor or Mushroom Bookshop).

### **SUPPORT THE NORTHAMPTON 20!**

20 people were arrested for occupying the treasurer's office in Northampton on 1/10/90, in protest at the council's threat to imprison a 74 year old man for non-payment. The Nottingham defendant is Gary Freeman, secretary of the Notts Anti Poll Tax Federation. We offered him our support but this offer has been ignored.

It is ironic that after a year of opposition to the NDF by the NAPTF, the same people are now supporting a petition and appeal to raise £6000 for the defendants by the Northampton 20 Legal Defence Fund and the All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation. It's a shame that support is only forthcoming for defendants now that one of their own is involved (i.e. a member of Militant)

We wish the Northampton 20 every success with their case, and we know that lawyers do not come cheap. We believe, however, that money raised for defendants in Notts should be distributed fairly amongst all of them, not just to those with influence in Militant or the SWP, but also to the majority of us who have to fend for ourselves. We are all fighting the poll tax and we all need financial support.

## **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT**

The state has decided to hammer anti-poll tax defendants as hard as it can, and this is likely to continue in 1991. It is vital that people can take action and demonstrate knowing they will be supported by the whole anti poll tax movement. The All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation, as well as the Nottingham Federation, has made it clear that they are happy to see genuine, militant resistance to the poll tax criminalised. They are afraid of working class initiatives outside of their control.

In spite of the indifference and misinformation put about by the likes of Militant, independent Defence Funds struggle on. The Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign, the Avon and Somerset Defence Fund and the Birmingham Defence Fund have received the same lack of support for their defendants that we have, not to mention their original threats to grass up 'trouble makers' to the police.

People facing criminal charges for fighting the poll tax must be supported against the state just like people not paying it. We offer our unconditional support to them and whatever help we can with legal costs, fines etc. We desperately need your donations. Please send cheques payable to 'NDF', Box DF, 72 Radford Rd, Hyson Green, Nottingham.

Please invite us to speak at your meeting and do whatever you can to support Nottingham defendants as part of the fight to beat the Poll Tax.