

Nottm & District Trades Council



Feb 02
Dear Sister / Brother

2002 Membership Renewal

I'm writing to inform you that your branch affiliation fee to Nottingham & District Trades Council is now due. Your branch's continuing support of our work is of great importance to us. As such we would appreciate if you could pass this form to your Branch Secretary or Branch Treasurer for approval.

Any branch of each Trade Union affiliated to the TUC and based in the Nottingham & District Area is entitled to become a member of the Trades Union Council.

If your branch is not already a member then invite a speaker to come to your next branch meeting to talk about why you should join, or simply fill in the form below and send it direct to: Nottm & District Trades Council, C/O Nottingham City UNISON, 4-6 Perth ST, Nottingham NG1 3LU.

Yours In Solidarity
Bill Walton
Treasurer

Delegate Numbers for Monthly Meetings

- ★ Branches with less than 100 members are entitled to 1 Delegate.
- ★ Branches with more than:-
 - 100 -250 members are entitled to 2 delegate.
 - 250- 500 members are entitled to 3 delegate.
 - 500-750 members are entitled to 4 Delegate.
 - 750-1000 members are entitled to 5 Delegate.
 - 1000-1500 members are entitled to 6 Delegate.
 - 1500-2000 members are entitled to 7 Delegate.
 - 2000-2500 members are entitled to 8 Delegate.
 - 2500-3000 members are entitled to 9 Delegate.
- ★ Branches with more than 3000 members are entitled to 10 Delegates.

Name of trade union.....
 Name and/or number of Branch.....
 Branch Secretary.....
 Branch Address.....
 Number Of Members.....
 Membership Fee Due.....
 To Be paid Annually 6 Monthly

MEMBERSHIP RATES

Membership rates are (£10 Minimum for any branch)

10p per member per year for the first 1000 branch members

Plus 5p per member per year for branches with 1000-5000 members

Plus 2p per member per year for branches with over 5000 members

Nottm & District TUC is supported by branches from the following Trade Unions.



P+P by Nottm & District Trades Union Council C/O Nottm City UNISON, 4-6 Perth St, Nottingham

Leveller



Newsletter of Nottingham Trades Union Council

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY MARCH 8th



+ PRIVATISATION. IT JUST DOESN'T ADD UP

**Want To Contribute
Something to
Nottingham Trades
Council Newsletter?**

**Articles, reports on Union
activities, whistle blowing on
bad practice, news- in fact
anything that would be of
interest.**

We'd love to hear from you!

**Send your contributions to
Nottm & District TUC
C/O Nottm City**

**UNISON, 4/6 Perth
St, Nottm NG1 3LU**

or E-mail

**maydayuk@
yahoo.co.uk**

By 01.04.02



ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

**This newsletter can
be available in a
range of accessible
formats.**

**For details
please
contact the
above**



Medical Aid Appeal for Hunger Strike Survivors in Turkey

The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT) has issued an urgent appeal for donations towards the medical treatment and rehabilitation of survivors of the long-running hunger strike in Turkish prisons.

In October 2000 some 865 political prisoners in 18 jails began a rolling programme of hunger strikes against isolation in new 'F-type' cells, torture and brutality. The hunger strike escalated and is still continuing. By January this year over 40 prisoners and fasting sympathisers had died.

After surviving for months on water, sugar, salt and vitamin B1, a number of hunger strikers have now been released to their families because of their serious health problems. 340 of them have sought treatment from doctors attached to the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey. Many have suffered central nervous system damage, including loss of memory, sight, hearing and ability to walk. Some now have the minds of children.

According to the doctors, *if specialised medical and psychiatric intervention reaches these survivors soon enough, many could still be restored to health.* But the cost of caring for them is way beyond the resources of the HRFT.

Long-term treatment for one survivor costs \$US 1000. Please help by sending a donation Cheques payable to: 'TURKYEE INSAN HAKLARI VAKFI' (Human Rights Foundation of Turkey). Bank details: TURKIYE VAKIFLAR BANKASI, YENISEHIR SUBESI, DEMIRTEPE, ANKARA, TURKEY.

US\$ Account No 008-4000310; Euro Account No 4005329; Turkish Lira Account No 1047.
Many thanks!



**The Views expressed in this
newsletter are not necessarily
those of Nottm & District
Trades Union Council**

UNISON International

Victory in Cali



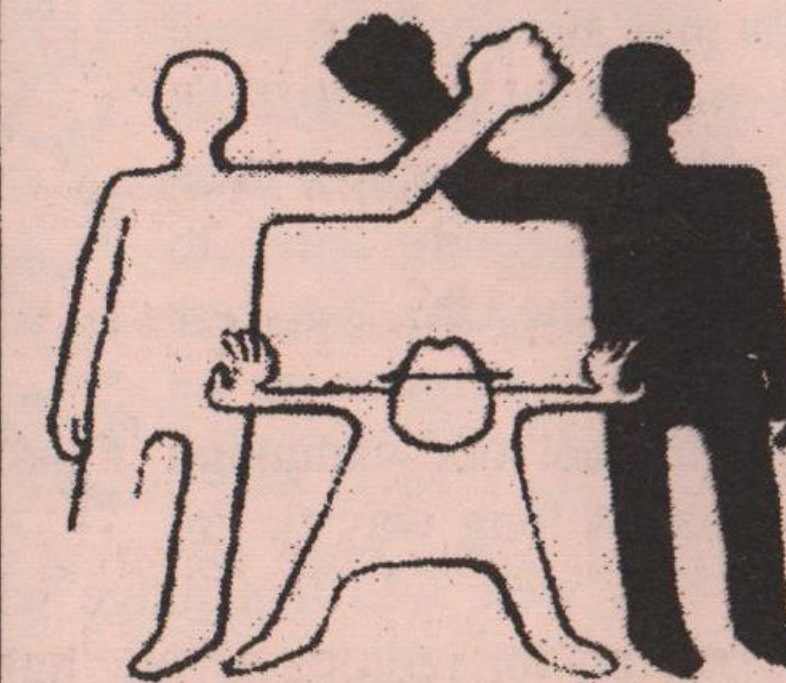
After 36 days in occupation of their company headquarters, the workers of Emcali, which provides water, electricity and phones to the city of Cali in Colombia, have won a fantastic victory. Proposals to privatise the company have been defeated by the alliance of union and community fighting together. Members of the SINTRAEMCALI union marched out with their banner flying and massive public support, having beaten the privateers and their government backers.

**SINTRAEMCALI VICTORY RALLY
Monday 4th March at County Hall
in the Council Chambers 7.00pm**

Speakers:

Luis Hernandez, SINTRAEMCALI President,
Berenice Celayta Human Rights Campaigner, Hector
Vaca, Colombian USO Oil and Gas workers Union

WORKERS



TOGETHER

The next meeting of Nottingham & District Trades Union Council is Wednesday 20th March at The International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd, Nottingham

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of previous Meeting
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Correspondence
- 5 Reports
- 6 Motions
- 7 Disputes
- 8 A.O.B
- 9 Date of next meeting

Respect at work ?

Know your employment rights. For our advice leaflets call:

0870 600 4 882

Lines open every day 8am-10pm Calls charged at the nation rate.

www.tuc.org.uk/rights

WE DID IT!

You may already have heard the wonderful news that the Alpdogan family have been granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK. We were all taken by surprise as we thought that our campaign still had a long way to go.



First they were told that judge who was examining their application for judicial review has said the case should have a full hearing and referred it back to the immigration adjudicator. Then that Ali, the oldest child, who had never been in Germany, had been granted leave to remain and finally that they all had. All this in the space of a week.

Undoubtedly your support and that of everyone who has written to the minister and/or John Heppell, got petition forms signed, attended meetings, sent donations to the campaign fund- all this has contributed to the change of heart at the Home Office.

It has also helped to keep the family going through this very difficult time. Mahmut, Zeynep, Ali, Tarik and Fidan have deeply appreciated all the support- and warmth- they have been shown.

With very best wishes and thanks for all your support Myra Woolfson, Alpdogan Family Campaign. C/O 118 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham NG1 3HL Tel 0115 9859546

The Battle For Cable Street

On 4th October 1936 the workers of London's East End fought and won the Battle of Cable Street, preventing Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists marching through a working-class area with a large Jewish community.

The main fighting that day took place between the police- 6000 were protecting thousands of fascists- and up to 250,000 workers, including anti-fascists from the Communist Party, Labour Party and Independent Labour Party, as well as Jewish anti-fascist organisations. The anti-Nazi painted the slogan "No Pasaran" (They Shall Not Pass)- an anti-fascist slogan taken from the struggle in Spain against Franco- all over the East End.

After 1934 the BUF had turned to virulent anti-semitism. They built branches in the East End but never over-ran the area.

They were stopped by workers' action.

Campaign Against US Death Penalty Mumia must go free!

A US Federal Judge, William Yohn, overturned the death sentence of Pennsylvania political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal on December 18, Mumia- a radio journalist, former Black Panther and outspoken critic of police brutality- has spent 20 years on death row after being framed for the 1981 shooting of white Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

Yohn ruled that Albert Sabo, the notoriously racist judge who presided over Mumia's trial, gave improper instructions to the jury during the sentencing hearing. This is the first time a court has

recognised that there was anything wrong in Mumia's case. But while Mumia's death sentence was thrown out, Yohn upheld his murder conviction- despite a mountain of evidence that Mumia didn't get a fair trial. Prosecutors are under orders to hold a new sentencing hearing for Mumia in the next 180 days. But they have already filed a notice of appeal, which means the re-sentencing will be delayed. Though Mumia's death sentence may be lifted, the judge's ruling will make it difficult for Mumia to prove his innocence.

Clearly, Yohn felt the pressure of anti-death penalty activists who have long fought for Mumia's freedom. International outcry and protests stopped Mumia from going to the execution chamber in 1995 and 1999.

With re-sentencing hearing pending and a new appeal underway, Mumia's case will re-enter the spotlight in the coming months. We need to use this opportunity to organise against prosecutor's efforts to get Mumia re-sentenced to death, and to build the fight to win his freedom.

Join the international campaign visit www.mumia.org

CONFERENCE TO DEFEND ASYLUM SEEKERS Sat 23 March MANCHESTER

arming activists with the arguments, building greater co-ordination across campaigns, working with refugees and migrants' organisations

Main Speakers

Louise Christian, Suresh Grover

Venue

Cross St Chapel Unitarian Church, Cross St, Manchester M2

Cost

Asylum Seekers Free, Individuals £10,
Trade Union delegates £20

Notts Anti-Fascist Alliance

Notts Anti-Fascist Alliance meet on the last Tuesday of the month at The Newcastle Arms, North Sherwood Street, Next Meeting February 26th 7.30pm



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BEFORE THEY TAKE ROOT**



Little Thorn Books Co-op

For all your reading needs

Not just for Local People

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75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, Tel 0116 2512002

SUMAC CENTRE NEWS

Work on the new independent community, resource and social centre at 245 Gladstone Street nears completion. Formerly the Rainbow Centre, the name the 'Sumac Centre' has now been adopted after a shrub in the gardens. The former Sitch Ukranian Social Club was purchased by the Rainbow Centre collective in June 2001. Major reconstruction work was undertaken by NECTA (Nottingham Environmental Construction Training for All) and other local trades people. Since then volunteers from the local community have worked on, replacing floors, walls, ceilings, doors, windows, stairs, toilets, electrics and plumbing! Finally the end is in sight. The newly plastered walls and refurbished toilets are being painted, the community cafe is being built and the furniture fire-proofed. Sufficient facilities are now completed for the centre to have hosted or booked meetings for local residents groups, animal rights conferences and training days, environmental/roads gatherings and more. With a final push it is hoped that the new centre will

be ready to open during March, after which work will continue for the planned Social Club.

With completion of this first phase so close supporters are urged to get involved, both with the final works, which continue on a daily basis, and with planning the activities and running of the centre once opened. As there has been so much more work to be done than expected, the opening date, and therefore opportunity to earn income, has been deferred several times.

However the mortgage and other bills wait for no-one, so the gap in funding continues to grow. We have been very encouraged by the practical support, grants and donations received, but for long term security we are very keen to invite investment by way of loans, with interest offered from 0% to 5%, repayable over 1, 5 or 10 years. To find out more, or to give practical or financial support, contact the Sumac Centre at 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX, call 0845 458 9595 or email sumac@veggies.org.uk.

<http://www.veggies.org.uk/sumac>.

NOTTINGHAM & DISTRICT TRADES UNION COUNCIL

May Day 2002

NOTTINGHAM

May Day 2002

Organising Meeting

Tues 26th Feb 7.30pm @ The ICC Mansfield Rd



Prominent women's labor rights activist Dita Indah Sari has rejected a \$50,000 human rights award from sporting apparel giant Reebok in protest against the meager salaries the company pays its Indonesian factory workers.

"The factories do not pay a living wage. The pay packet cannot cover basic needs," she was quoted as saying by the Associated Press on (5/2/02).

She said it would have been hypocritical to accept the money, even though it could have been used to fund her cause to improve the conditions of Indonesian labourers.

Dita, who was jailed by the regime of ex-president Suharto,

Dita Sari Spurns Reebok Award

was the main labour rights campaigner and unionist within the left-wing People's Democratic Party (PRD). She founded the National Front for Indonesian Workers' Struggle.

Since her release from jail after the 1998 fall of Suharto, she has resumed organizing rallies aimed at getting low-income workers a better deal.

Workers at Reebok factories in western Java receive minimum wage, which is less than \$2 a day.

Footwear factory owners argue that laborers receive benefits including allowances for transport and health care. Some factories also pay school fees for their workers' children.

Recent increases in minimum wage levels have put the Indonesian footwear industry on the brink of collapse.

Factory owners point out that if salaries are increased further, companies would leave Indonesia and move to countries with lower labour

costs, such as China and Vietnam

Such a scenario would worsen Indonesia's unemployment problem.

Reebok said it was sorry that Dita would not be accepting the award because it strongly supports her cause, AP reported.

The Reebok human rights awards are to be presented Thursday (7/2/02) in Salt Lake City to coincide with the Winter Olympics.

Reebok has been handing out human rights awards since 1988 in what critics claim was an effort to divert attention away from allegations that it profits from workers in Asian sweatshops.

The Reebok Human Rights Award annually recognizes four activists aged 30 or younger who have made significant contributions to the field of human rights through non-violent means.

CENTRAL AMERICA SUPPORT APPEAL

9th ANNUAL SPONSORED WALK

For The Orphans & Street Children Of Central America

Sunday 24th March 2002

Meet at 11am High Peak Junction Visitor Centre, Tour Of Wirksworth Moor (about 6 Miles)

For further details contact CASA Central America Support Appeal, 7 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham NG1 3FB. Tel 0115 934 8458

Celebrate
International
Women's
Day
at

Nottingham Women's Centre
30 Chaucer St, Nottingham

Fri 8th March
10am to 3pm

Information Stalls, International Lunch,
Free Crêche, Computer Taster



THE ORIGINS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

The idea of an International Women's Day first arose at the turn of the century, which in the industrialized world was a period of expansion and turbulence, booming population growth and radical ideologies.

On 8 March 1857, women working in clothing and textile factories in New York, staged a protest. They were fighting against inhumane working conditions and low wages. The police attacked the protesters and dispersed them. Two years later, again in March, these women formed their first labour union to try and protect themselves and gain some basic rights in the workplace.

On 8 March 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York demanding shorter work hours, better pay, voting rights and an end to child labour. They adopted the slogan "Bread and Roses", with bread symbolizing economic security and roses a better quality of life. In May, the Socialist Party of America designated the last Sunday in February for the observance of National Women's Day.

Following the declaration of the Socialist Party of America, the first ever National Woman's Day was celebrated in the United States on 28 February 1909. Women continued to celebrate it on the last Sunday of that month through 1913.

An international conference, held by socialist organizations from around the world, met in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1910. The conference of the Socialist International proposed a Women's Day which was designed to be international in character. The proposal initially came from

Clara Zetkin, a German socialist, who suggested an International Day to mark the strike of garment workers in the United States. The proposal was greeted with unanimous approval by the conference of over 100 women from 17 countries, including the first three women elected to the parliament of Finland. The Day was established to honour the movement for women's rights, including the right to vote (known as 'suffrage'). At that time no fixed date was selected for the observance.

The declaration of the Socialist International had an impact. The following year, 1911, International Women's Day was marked for the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. The date was March 19 and over a million men and women took to the streets in a series of rallies. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded the right to work and an end to discrimination on the job.

Less than a week later, on 25 March, the tragic Triangle Fire in New York City took place. Over 140 workers, mostly young Italian and Jewish immigrant girls working at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, lost their lives because of the lack of safety measures. The Women's Trade Union League and the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union led many of the protests against this avoidable tragedy, including the silent funeral march which brought together a crowd of over 100,000 people. The Triangle Fire had a significant impact on labour legislation and the horrible working conditions leading up to the disaster were invoked during subsequent

observances of International Women's Day.

As part of the peace movement brewing on the eve of World War I, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on the last Sunday in February 1913. Elsewhere in Europe, on or around 8 March of the following year, women held rallies either to protest the war or to express solidarity with their sisters.

With 2 million Russian soldiers dead in the war, Russian women again chose the last Sunday in February 1917 to strike for "bread and peace". Political leaders opposed the timing of the strike, but the women went on anyway.

The rest is history: Four days later the Czar of Russia was forced to abdicate and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote. That historic Sunday fell on 23 February on the Julian calendar then in use in Russia, but coincided with 8 March on the Gregorian calendar used by people elsewhere.

Since those early years, International Women's Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike.

In December 1977 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. Four global United Nations women's conferences have helped make the demand for women's rights and participation in the political and economic process a growing reality.

A woman's place is in her union
Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)

Chilean fiesta
In Aid of Chilean
Political Prisoners &
AnaClara Women's
Training centre

Fri 15th March
Live Salsa 8PM
Music

@ Willoughby Hall,
West Entrance,
Nottingham University
Tickets £7.50 & £5.50
(including food)
Organised by:
Michael Woodward Group
working with Chile

Nottm Women's Centre
WOMEN
WOULD YOU LIKE
INFORMATION ON

- ◆ Hundreds of different careers from unskilled to professional level
- ◆ Issues such as age and employment
- ◆ Access to higher education
- ◆ Alternatives to unemployment

WHY NOT BOOK
AN APPOINTMENT
TO USE OUR
CAREERS
GUIDANCE
SOFTWARE?

For further
Information and a
appointment ring Sue
0115 9240041

The Political Fund

Where Should it go?

Saturday 16 March 2002

Socialist Alliance conference for all trade unionists 11am to 4pm @ The Camden Centre, Bidborough St WC1 (back of The Camden Town Hall opps St Pancras Station) £4 waged £2 unwaged. Phone 020 7791 31378 for details

An Appeal From Matt Wrack

"The Debate over the political fund is one of the most important issues facing trade unionists at this time. The way many trade union leaders deal with the political fund takes no account of the views of rank and file unionists who are massively discontented with New Labour. The debate really opened up last year, particularly in the FBU and UNISON, which allows the opportunity for the political fund to be democratised.

The Socialist Alliance conference is a brilliant opportunity to discuss the way forward. This conference allows rank and file trade unionists to organise together to discuss how we can put pressure. It is also a great chance to bring union activists together to organise how to fight privatisation and job cuts.

The Socialist Alliance has initiated the conference. But in the FBU the debate involved a much wider layer of people, including both former and current Labour Party activists. I hope this wide range of people will be repeated at the Socialist Alliance conference.

I would urge every trade unionist and every union branch to debate the union branch to debate the issue and come along to the conference."

Firefighter Matt Wrack who proposed the motion on opening up the political fund at the FBU conference last year.

FANCY THAT!

Fewer Cleaners = More Infections

There has been a five fold reduction in the number of domestics since hospital cleaning was privatised in Scotland. In 1985 there was one domestic for every 60 patients treated and now there is just one for every 306 patients. At the same time the number of patients acquiring infections in hospital has increased, at a cost of £160 million to NHS including 457 deaths.

NHS pays for agency nurses
Agency and temporary nurses cost £810 million last year and cover 1 in 10 shifts. The Audit Commission say this is 'a risk to patients'.

Education Spending drops
By sticking to the Conservative spending plans Education spending was cut to a 40 year low (when Harold MacMillan was prime minister) 4.5% of GDP in 1998 and 1999. Even after Comprehensive Spending Review finishes in 2004 it will be up to the level of the early 1990's.

The Peoples Prayer- Lord Biro

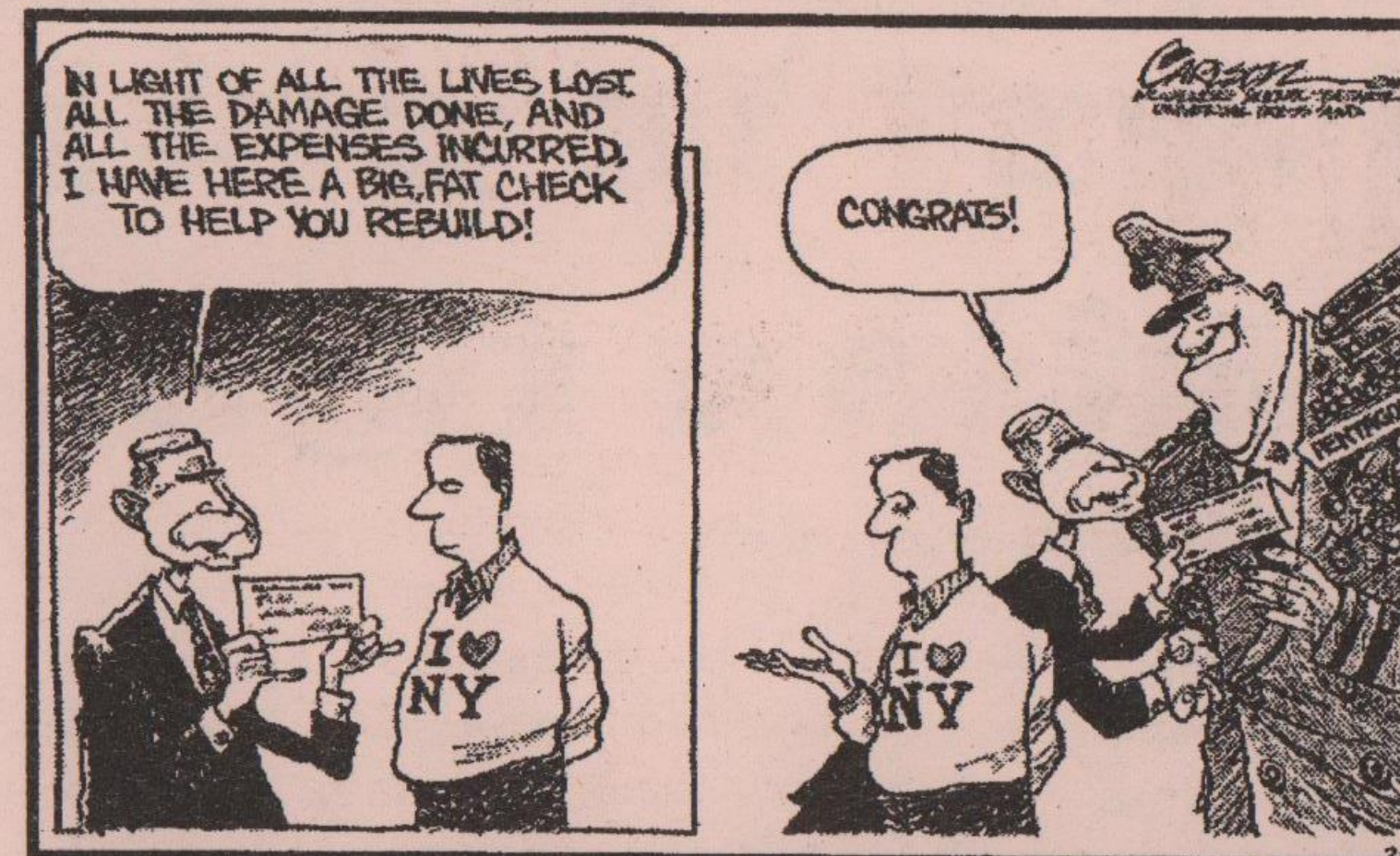
Our Father who
Art in Downing St

Give us this day
Lots of bombing
On the Telly

Pity about
The Refugees
And all that.

For Christ's sake
Don't come here

I hope I've
Won The Lottery
Amen



Robert Hamill Campaign



Robert Hamill Campaign meets monthly at the International Community Centre. Dates of the next meeting as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 4th Mar 02 | 5th Aug 02 |
| 8th Apr 02 | 2nd Sep 02 |
| 13th May 02 | 7th Oct 02 |
| 10th Jun 02 | 4th Nov 02 |
| 1st Jul 02 | 2nd Dec 02 |

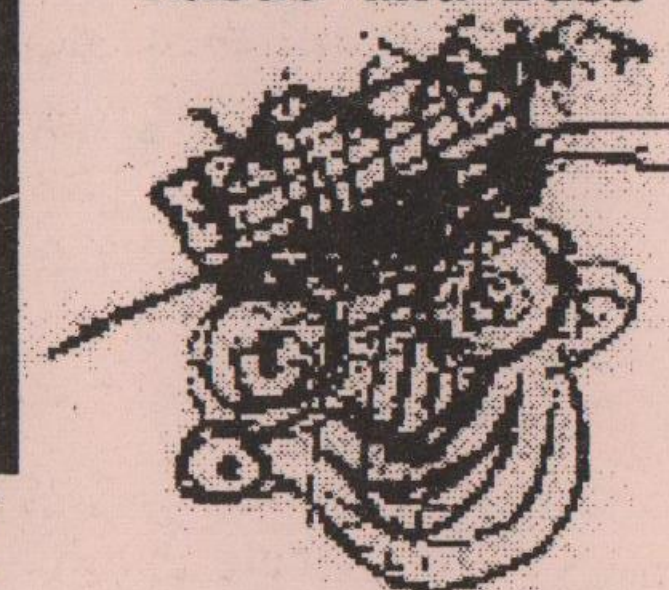
Players No 2 - Lord Biro
Goodbye Malboro Rose
smouldering cocktail snout
You met your perfect match
but blew Group Capstan out.

It's Poetry Night down at the "Old kabul and Bush"- Lord Biro

In the era of political consensus through the social anaesthetic of apathy, thank goodness for Lord Biro. In this modern age, when not joining in the public outpouring of grief following death by luxury car crashing of a pampered princess or not

agreeing with the bombing of shepherds to preserve oil rights is considered treason, be gratefully for the good Lord Biro. Express that gratitude by pooping into Echo Retail Therapy on Cannon Court off Angel Row and exchange a pound for the photocopied poetry pamphlet considered either too hot to handle or not

It's Poetry Night down at "The Old Kabul and Bush"



sufficient in packaging glitz by all other high street stores. Those familiar with Lord Biro's work will find the usual prickly comfort in his snapping at the heels of any establishment or cultural hate figures that come into sight Edited from City Lights

NOTTINGHAM STOP THE WAR

STOP BUSH & BLAIR'S WAR

DEMONSTRATION
SATURDAY 2 MARCH
1pm, Hyde Park, London
Supported by CND

Nottingham Coaches
leave Salutation Inn,
Maid Marion Way 8am
Tickets £8/£6

No retreat in anti privatisation fight

Despite Post Comm's deliberate intervention last week, a convincing Yes vote has been achieved in the pay strike ballot. Consignia will carry on pleading that they are skint and that a strike would threaten jobs. But the hypocrisy of the Consignia board of directors, who earn around £19,000 per month, offering its workforce an extra fiver a week is there for all to see. As is the board of directors squandering of the billion pound profit that postal workers have made for the Post Office since 1996.

Consignia will face competition as a result of Post Comm's proposals. We must defend jobs and stop privatisation. But we must also be prepared to take strike action on pay. We must turn around the argument that a strike would threaten jobs by combining our pay claim with demands for investment from the Government to save jobs and protect the universal service.

Consignia say there is no money for a pay rise. Where's the money gone? If Consignia had not been given commercial freedom, they would have been required to make their accounts public. As it is, we are given no evidence as to how the business has just lost £280 million - just threatening propaganda about having to make savings because of the 'new competitive environment'.

Consignia's financial crisis is a problem of their own making. Consignia management want to blame workers and customers for their own incompetence. The Mail Centre efficiency plan and the new Delivery Specification are two ways of Consignia attempting to do just that. The union should oppose all budget savings that have an adverse effect on workers or users. For us, the measure of the success of the postal service is how much of a benefit it is to local communities, not on how much profit can be

squeezed out of it. Meanwhile, Labour ministers hypocritically blame the Tories for the mess whilst patronising postal workers about partnership. They expect to take credit for giving the Post Office commercial freedom, in order to be able to remain silent on any issues affecting Consignia. Their regulator will do that for them of course, and Post Comm's decision last week was aimed at breaking our looming pay strike.

Our response to Post Comm:

- Our share of increased productivity now. If Royal Mail are serious about moving basic pay to £300 a week by 2003 then they already owe us £15 per week since last October.
- No job cuts, no redundancies! Consignia's offensive against the universal service must be resisted by any means necessary
- The CWU must begin to recruit and organise workers in the private courier firms. A joint campaign demanding equal pay and conditions with Royal Mail workers ensuring solidarity during industrial action would stop the privateers from playing off workers against each other.
- We must put forward an alternative to the chaos of postal privatisation based on a public postal service under the democratic control of those who work in the system and those who use it.
- The TUC should call a mass demonstration to defend public services. The battle over the post is crucial in the fight to stop the profiteers from destroying health, education and transport.

Us vs. Them

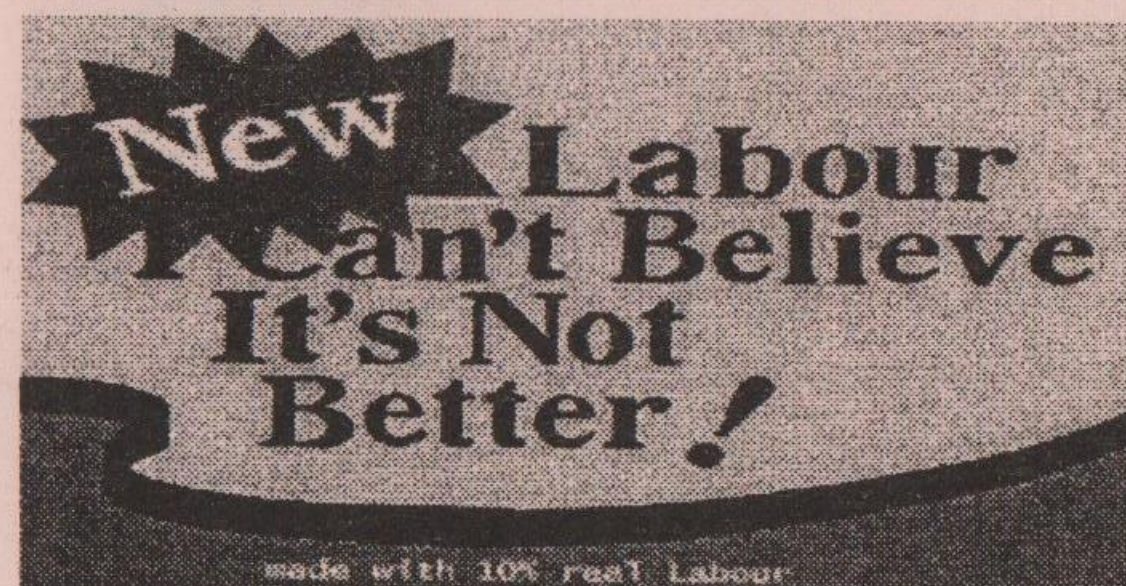
We cannot afford to be isolated. A victory for postal workers on pay must be seen as a catalyst for demanding investment in the public sector, paid for by taxing the rich.

This dispute is one of the most important for the labour movement for years. We must appeal for support from other unions, Labour MPs and the wider public. Consignia are no allies of ours against New Labour, the Tories and Post Comm. They have already said that they do not oppose the introduction of competition on a level playing field - i.e., either that the universal service obligation is shared, or that it is abolished altogether - and have been trying to force through the privatisation of whole chunks of the industry for the past six months. They were only stopped by the threat of industrial action by the CWU.

Our task is to win over public opinion, not to cower in the face of condemnation from the media. Since when have big business media ever supported workers in dispute

We need a co-ordination of the industrial and political wings of the union. The postal leadership must be guided by the political policy of fighting privatisation. A debate is needed about our relationship with the Labour Party: our union is giving Labour money while they try to privatise us! We must be forcing Labour MPs to oppose Post Comm and campaign for legislation to reverse the postal services act. We should withdraw financial support and publicly condemn any MP who does not support us.

Article from Alliance For Workers Liberty Postal Worker Feb 2002



DEFEND TIM COOPER

Tim Cooper, the CWU rep at Nottingham South office, has been sacked following action he took to highlight the disregard for the safety of postal workers and the security of post at his office.

Tim has lead the union in his office in two important victories over the last two years - one that forced management to give 300 extra hours, 10 extra staff and five day weeks across the board; the other saved the jobs of PHGs victimised by management.

It is no secret that management have had Tim in their sights for his activity as a union rep - and, when Tim took action to highlight the level of theft by a small minority of agency workers and orchestrated muggings and theft from postal workers on delivery, management sized their opportunity to sack him.

The Leveller fully support all action to win Tim his job back. The CWU must call a ballot for strike action first at Tim's office and, if that does not work, on a wider scale. Management must not be allowed to victimise reps for leading a fight to defend postal workers

PCS Benefits Agency Strike

Members of PCS working in Benefits Agency and Employment Services are currently in dispute with our employer. 60,000 staff nationally held a 2 day strick on 28th & 29th Jan after failure of talks to resolve the escalating dispute over safety.

PCS members regret having to take action but whilst management have stalled negotiations the attacks on staff in jobcentres and benefit offices continue on week.

The reason for this letter is not only to inform you of our action, but also to request financial support as most of our members are extremely low paid and loosing 2 days pay for the second time in a few weeks is hard. Thank you for your time reading this, if you have any questions. would like more information or would like to donate to our hardship fund please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours truly Vivien Perkins

PCS, Benefits Agency, 57/59 Upper Parliament St, Nottingham, NG1 6AX



PRIVATISATION: IT JUST DOESN'T ADD UP

Nottinghamshire County Council has announced that it is looking at a Public Private Partnership (PPP) for its central support services. It claims that it needs £27 million to bring its services up to date to meet a 2005 deadline for e-Government. This PPP could involve privatising 600 central support jobs in IT, Personnel, Finance Sections from across the County.

On looking into the figures, UNISON was shocked to discover that the Council's headline figure of £27 million justifying this proposed privatisation was a vastly inflated sum. We have found that the actual amount needed to meet the e-Government deadline of 2005 is £3.2 million.

So where does the total of £27 million come from? Notts County UNISON Branch Secretary Chris Tansley has described the remaining £23.8 million as "an opportunistic wish list to improve computer systems throughout the Council". UNISON's investigations have found that many of the work items included on the "wish list" have already been done in some departments of the County Council, throwing further doubt onto the £27 million headline figure.

When the proposed PPP privatisation was sprung upon an unsuspecting workforce, UNISON reacted by setting up a members' meeting in the Council Chamber and getting stewards along to as many management briefings as possible. Once the picture became clearer, stewards representing the areas affected and branch officers met to develop a detailed strategy.

The strategy was to firstly carry out some research:

- Looking at the Council's figures (see above)
- Trying to establish which groups of staff are involved (which is proving difficult as the Chief Executive has written to the branch stating that he is not sure!)
- Visiting other branches who have gone through the PPP process
- Investigating firms that might be involved

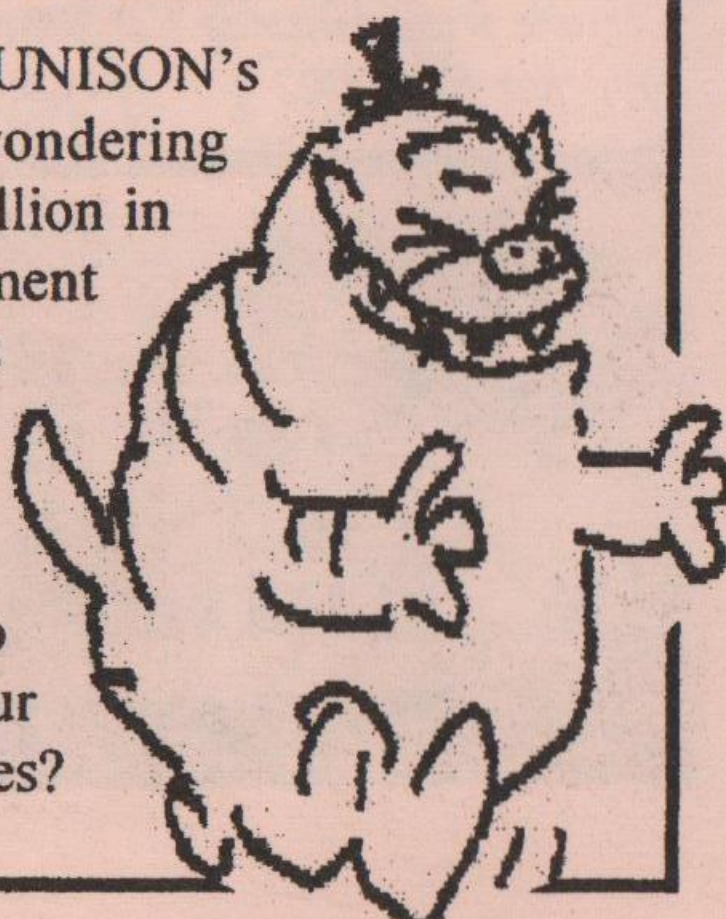
- Gathering examples of the many privatisation failures

After doing the research, we are using the results to campaign and lobby against the proposed privatisation by:

- Encouraging members to write to their County Councillor, using examples of privatisation failures, highlighting the costs involved, the errors in the figures being quoted, and asking what would be the point of having a Councillor if the service was privatised.
- Writing to the press making many of the same points
- Sending Xmas cards to individual Councillors and to the Council Leader, Mick Warner (including a Santa delivery for the press)
- Taking out adverts in the local papers around the County

We are also getting involved in the two working parties set up to look into the PPP and any alternatives. As a last resort, UNISON is looking into the possibility of industrial action should the lobbying and campaigning fail to make the Councillors see sense

In all this process, UNISON's member are left wondering why, with over £5 million in reserves at the moment and a couple of years to sort out e-Government, are some Councillors and senior officers so keen to sell off our central support services?



How the Fat Cats Got The Cream

A new UNISON report commissioned from the Labour Research Department looks at how boardroom executives are benefiting from public services. The key findings are:-

- X Executive directors earn as much as 77 times the average pay of their employees and the gap between boardroom pay and average worker's pay is getting wider.
- X Executive directors also have better pension schemes than their staff. e.g. at Compass Group and Rentokil Initial, directors' pension build up at twice the rate of the normal company pension. For each year of service directors in these companies build up



1/30th of their final pay and so it will take them only 20 years to build up a pension of two-thirds of their pay while their employees will have to work 40 years to get the same proportion.

- X Top directors are paid as much as £1 million per year. (Sir Clive Thompson- Rentokil £1,076,000) and some have given themselves huge increases over the previous year (Rodney Aldridge of Capita + 72.4%)

Things to make you go hmmm...

1. One in five of the world's people live on \$1 a day.
 2. Eight companies earn more than half the worlds population
 3. The three richest men in the world are wealthier than the 48 poorest countries combined.
 4. Over 12 million children under five will die from poverty related illness this year.
 5. For every £1 of aid put into poor countries, multinational companies take 66p of profit back out.
- If ever there were reasons to hate those fat cats...

The Wonderful" the private sector

Waltham Forest Council and ICL have negotiated the terms for returning the authority's council tax, business rates and housing benefit service to the council. Although due to expire in 2006, the contract is being brought back in-house after a failure of the benefits service, after which ICL also decided to withdraw from the revenues service.

The final cost to the council is

being kept confidential but it is known that it takes into account the higher cost of providing an improved service.

An investigation has been launched by Bradford police and FOCSA, which holds the refuse collection contract with Calderdale Council, following an accident involving an 11 year old boy. The boy was in intensive care after being hit by a bus as it overtook a stationary

refuse wagon. The investigation will establish whether the boy had been helping the refuse collectors empty rubbish when it happened. Witnesses have said they had seen him wearing a brightly-coloured tabard and helping take rubbish to the wagon

