

TRAFALGAR SQUARE PRISONERS

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

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

• **Timothy Donaghy** MW0105 EDR Feb'93

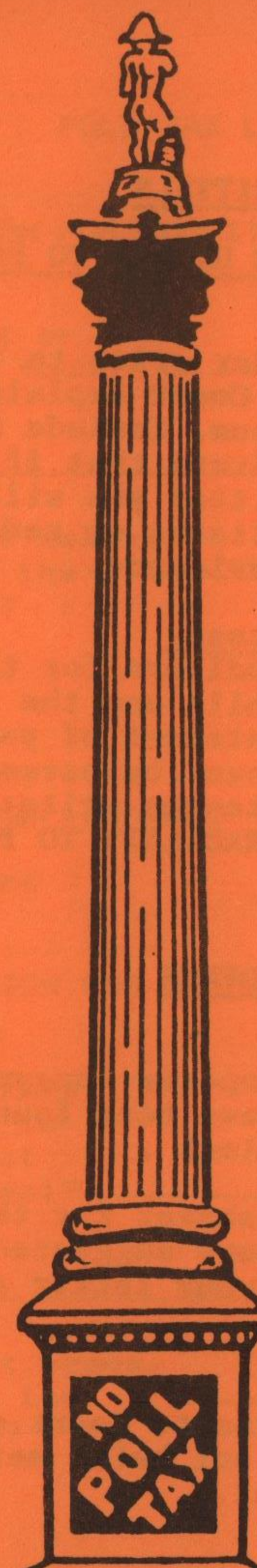
HMP Downview, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5PD
*Tim was sentenced to 3 years on a Section 2 POA charge
at the end of his trial on 29 January 1991. Tim has
recently been refused parole, and may not get another
parole date for quite a while.*

• **Simon Russell** ND1666 EPD May '92 EDR 6 June
'93 HMP The Mount, Molyneux Ave, Bovingdon,
Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 ONZ

*Simon was sentenced to 18 months for Section 2 POA
(31st March) and 30 months on two counts relating to
ALF activities.*

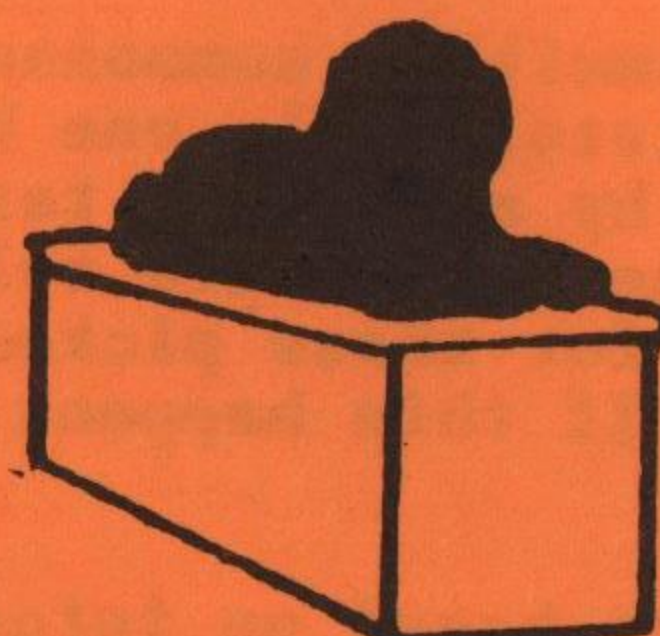
• **Mark Hutchings** MW2737 EPD 24/4/92. EDR
22/1/93. (Please send all mail via the TSDC-PSG until
further notice...)

*Mark was sent down on 22 July 1991 for Two years 3
months. He was convicted on Section 2 POA, Crim.
Damage, & Theft. Also on unrelated Charge of
Possession.*



TRAFALGAR
SQUARE

DEFENDANTS



Brian did not get parole in November but is due to come out
this spring.

Tim has lost his parole. A campaign is being set up to get his
release before September so that he can complete his degree
course at the London College of Printing. Brian and Tim, black
prisoners, had the longest sentences and were the only ones to
lose their parole.

Simon is due out on May 8.

POLL TAX PRISONERS NEWS

April 1992



FREEDOM ISN'T GIVEN,
IT'S ALWAYS WON.

contents: prisoners' support, legal
victories, solidarity action, campaigns and
network details.



P.T.P. MW0105

Over 120 protestors have been jailed for their part in protecting anti-Poll Tax demonstrations from police attacks.

The Prisoners Support Group of the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign, and other solidarity groups, have stood by them. Many have served their sentences, but 4 are still in jail and the Colchester 16 face serious sentences.

Many people fear prison for the 'crime' of non-payment. About 200 have already been jailed, the majority by Labour Councils. Many are anti-Poll Tax activists.

Millions of men and women have said NO to the Poll Tax. But the battle has not been won. The government wants to use the threat of imprisonment to spread fear among non-payers. They want to use jailings to smash non-payment, as they used riot batons, police horses and vans to smash our demonstrations.

We must defeat this intimidation by supporting those who are in jail.

This newsletter aims to support both demonstrator and non payer poll tax prisoners.

Deadline for the next Poll Tax Newsletter Monday 18 May
P.T.N., P.O. Box 9, Eccles
S.O., Salford M30 7FX

REMEMBER:
THEY ARE IN THERE FOR US.
WE'RE OUT HERE FOR THEM.



EVENING SENTINEL, Friday, March 6, 1992 (P)

Appeals on poll tax 6.3.92 jail cases

FOUR men jailed for non-payment of poll tax have been given leave to appeal against their sentences to the High Court.

Keele University lecturer Peter Fletcher, 28, and Derek Hulse, 50, Raymond Elliot, 54, and Richard Manning, 37, all unemployed, were jailed a fortnight ago by magistrates at Newcastle.

Released

They were released last week after claiming they were entitled to appeals.

Yesterday, magistrates at Newcastle gave the four men leave to take their case to the High Court following an application by their solicitor Mr Matthew Hall.

He told the court the men were jailed illegally because they were convicted on computer evidence, which was banned by the High Court in recent months.

And he said the case was substantially strengthened because no means test enquiries were conducted before sentencing.

Magistrates granted

By Lisa Rukeyser

the application, but required Fletcher, of Church Plantations, Keele; Hulse, of Pear Tree Lane, Chesterton; Manning, of Etruria Road, Etruria, and Elliot, of High Street, Silverdale, to agree to pay between £100 and £500 if they withdrew the appeal.

Staffordshire county councillor Mr Richard Wise, who is preparing the appeals, said after the hearing: "This is actually quite an important case. As far as I know it is the first time anyone has been released from jail on a poll tax appeal."

Pleased

The Potteries Anti-Poll Tax Federation also revealed about 20 of the 180 people jailed in Britain for non-payment of the tax had been from Newcastle.

A spokesman said: "We are pleased with the decision but are concerned that thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money has had to be spent to win the right to a fair hearing at the High Court."

STOP POLL TAX JAILINGS!

Islington Council in London is intent on making examples of non-payers by jailing some as a deterrent to other non-payers. I am presently waiting for a committal hearing on 21 April where the Council seems determined to use me as one of those examples.

So far Islington has jailed 11 people. They have refused to follow any of the other avenues open to them to recover money eg bailiffs or attachment of earnings. Margaret Hodge, Leader of the Council has clearly made the point that the non-payers are to blame rather than the Government for the appalling services offered. No more do you hear her saying that the tax is unfair, unjust or unworkable. Now she states that she wants tougher laws to hound working class people for this hated tax.

I was facing not just the prospect of jail but on top of that, my boss threatened that I would be sacked instantly on going to jail, thereby facing a double penalty. I work for another Labour Council - Camden. Their basis for this was that it should be expected that any council worker should be contractually bound to pay. After a campaign of petitioning, writing letters to all Labour Councillors and motions to union meetings, I was told that I would now be able to take annual or unpaid leave. THIS WAS A CLEAR VICTORY FOR ME AND ALL NON-PAYERS. It has not left me feeling that I am facing prison alone. The support I gained through campaigning to save my job has meant that many are now committed to coming to demonstrate outside the court on 21st April, both my own union, but more importantly many other local unions. The campaign is now looking to get the maximum number of people down to the court, sending messages of support to me and others facing jail, and to send letters of condemnation to Margaret Hodge, Leader of Islington.

Messages of support c/o Camden Stop the Poll Tax Campaign, 4 Mornington Terrace, London NW1.

Letters to Margaret Hodge, Leader of Council, The Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1.



Phoeb Watkins

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS—KNOWING WHICH SIDE YOU'RE ON
CLASS ANALYSIS—KNOWING WHO'S THERE WITH YOU

HIGH COURT RULING - "WE" WON AND THE MAGISTRATES HAVE TO PAY MY COURT COSTS.

Solidarity Anne

13/3/92



The third ALL BRITAIN ANTI POLL TAX FEDERATION CONFERENCE was held in February. More than 170 delegates and visitors attended. The main discussion was on amnesty, jailings and how to fight committals.

Speaking as a recently jailed non-payer I know the fight is continuing. Through the help of the the FED, family and friends I took my case on wrongful arrest and refusal to read my medical records to the High Court.*

I served 15 days of a 30 day sentence. It is comical to learn that, although convicted, one is classed as a civil prisoner. They do not know what to do with us. Almost all the officers in Holloway say "We have not got time and space for you." In short, we are not wanted there.

It would be funny, if it were not vicious, vindictive and soul destroying. My own arrest certainly was. What an indictment on this government who allow the Maxwell brothers to live on in luxury, after stealing a workforces pension, who cancels Segal's (Guinness affair-corruption and fraud) case because of his "mental state" and he walks free. Doesn't everyone get into a mental state facing prison- yes even unemployed non payers of the Poll Tax.

The fight back from all who CAN'T PAY WON'T PAY is tremendous, and we will get amnesty. After all we got rid of the worst prime minister this country ever had. We got £140 knocked off this atrocious tax, we will finally bury it.

We now have more greed and profiteering than ever before along with child prostitution, drug abuse, suicide and social decay. Now is the time for a Labour government committed to real socialist policies.

The only road to democracy is to stand together and fight for our rights. The Tories must return £46 billion they stole from the Councils which will allow provision of local services. The right to a livable wage, a decent home for all, an education for our kids, the Youth and pensioners properly provided for, a return to our N.H.S., the end of racism and so on. It begins and ends with US standing and fighting - together.

May I thank all Poll Tax prisoners who signed cards and wrote letters to me in prison. I have always been in touch with our International comrades imprisoned in Palestine, South Africa, Chile and indeed throughout the world.
Fraternally,
In solidarity, Anne Ursell
(out pending judicial review and now FREE.)

* I am representing 19 million non payers

Poll Tax Rebellion is the gripping inside story of the biggest mass movement in British history, one which at its peak involved over 17 million people.

no justice - no peace

To be better organised for the future, to be more capable of achieving total success, we must educate ourselves from our history. Danny Burns' new book "POLL TAX REBELLION" (published by Attack International at £4.95) is a useful beginning in looking at our most recent struggle. It clearly and enthusiastically goes through every aspect of the fight against Thatcher's Flagship giving a detailed picture of the capabilities of working class people in struggle. Many of the activities and tactics used during the Poll Tax rebellion will be used time and again in future struggles; the street organising, the symbolic protests, the 'bailiff no go zones'. Having said that, many of these tactics have been used in struggle before - those we continue to use we can probably agree are the most effective. So it's a very necessary exercise to go through the details of our struggles, the details of our lives, so we don't forget in future.

It is also vital to examine the 'politics' of our struggles. Not just the details and the tactics but also the strategies and long term aims. Danny details the initial debates that were to prove so necessary over the strategy of mass non-payment and collective civil disobedience. He draws an important lesson out when he shows the difference between a 'protest movement', albeit one involving thousands and thousands of people and a movement of non-cooperation making it impossible to continue as before. The analogy of a strike - in other words, of the whole country striking with its wallets against the government - was a vital one during the struggle and one Danny correctly places in pride of place. The Poll Tax struggle had the power because the government and the councils just couldn't continue without our money.

In general I agree with much of what Danny says about the 'politics' of the movement. I do disagree with him, though, on his insistence on the fact that the lack of national coordination was almost a virtue (page 194). Although his moans about the All Britain Federation are totally right, and his statement that it was almost totally irrelevant to the movement are only too true, this was not the ideal situation in my view. We needed an open movement, but a united movement too. The vital test came after March 31st. We should have gone straight back on the streets on a national level to assert our right to demonstrate. The original demo was called by a national coordination and it needed such a national coordination to lead the call following March 31st. Because of the craven cowardice of the Militants' leaders when faced with the real world of a violent class struggle, the movement as a whole suffered a setback from which it never totally recovered. We were put on the defensive when we should have gone on the offensive. Local groups couldn't lead such a national coordination; it's not within their capabilities. And yet the ruling class is not just locally based, it acts on a national and international level. So must we when we move into battle with them.

The discussion and learning must continue. But whilst it does, we must also take up the vital task of defense of those fallen in struggle. The need for continued prisoner support is critical, particularly as the movement winds down. We cannot forget those inside. We must not.

One of the most pressing needs, if we look at our whole history of struggle in the last thirteen years, is for us to be adequately prepared to defend ourselves. Danny touches on the critical role the TSDC played in the lives of many like me. But we need now to think of the future. The TSDC should never have needed to be set up - it should have already existed in the form of a political organization for prisoners defence.

A number of us who've been imprisoned are discussing how to go about such a task at the moment. We feel it is wrong to leave it until after the event. We all know that a defence campaign is absolutely vital for those of us caught by coppers, and the better organized, the more more powerful and the more capable such a defence organization the less likely we will be sent to jail.

So let us learn the lessons of March 31 st and of the whole time of our brilliant fight against the Poll Tax. But let us prepare for the future.

Matt Lee

Birmingham

17/3/92

The average prison sentence for non payment of a poll tax of £300 is five weeks.

On this basis Peter Clowes - sentenced to ten years in prison for fraud of £115 million - would have been sentenced to 36,859 years.

Conversely the poll tax payers sentence would have been 14 minutes.

Richard Adams, Bristol

N.B. This letter was given star treatment by the Sunday Mirror, it was incorporated into Militant's front page and was printed in The Bristol Journal.

SOLIDARITY WITH POLL TAX PRISONERS

*Jailed for Trafalgar Square
Jailed for non-payment*

CAPTIVE, The Vicarage, Turville, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 6QU
POLL TAX LEGAL GROUP P.O. Box 13335 London N4 2EG

WALLS HAVE VOICES

"I am refusing to pay my Poll Tax on principle to show solidarity with those for whom it is a hardship. If the Government were to offer an amnesty for those who have fallen into arrears due to genuine hardship then I would freely pay up. Unless the Government offers an amnesty I feel it is a matter of standing up to the bully boys and taking the stick they hand out".

Donald Paxton, a Bristol non payer, sent this statement from prison to be put on the petition demanding his release. Action, not appeals for sympathy, was his message.

The voices of the demonstrators have penetrated through prison walls. The network set up by the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign has enabled them to correspond with supporters in the U.K. and abroad. Non payer prisoners have also been given a voice by Militant and Socialist Worker.

WALLS HAVE VOICES is an expression used by Professor Ngugi detained for a year in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Though never charged, he threatened the Kenyan establishment. His crime ? Helping to write a play in Gikuyu which involved the local community. In his prison cell he fought off a "thousand demons struggling for the mastery of his soul" and wrote a prison diary, and the novel "Devil on the Cross". His message to readers: "Those outside the barbed wire and the stone walls must ask questions and demand answers. It's the only way to defeat the culture of fear and silence. And if a community of millions were to ask questions and demand answers, who would deny them ?"

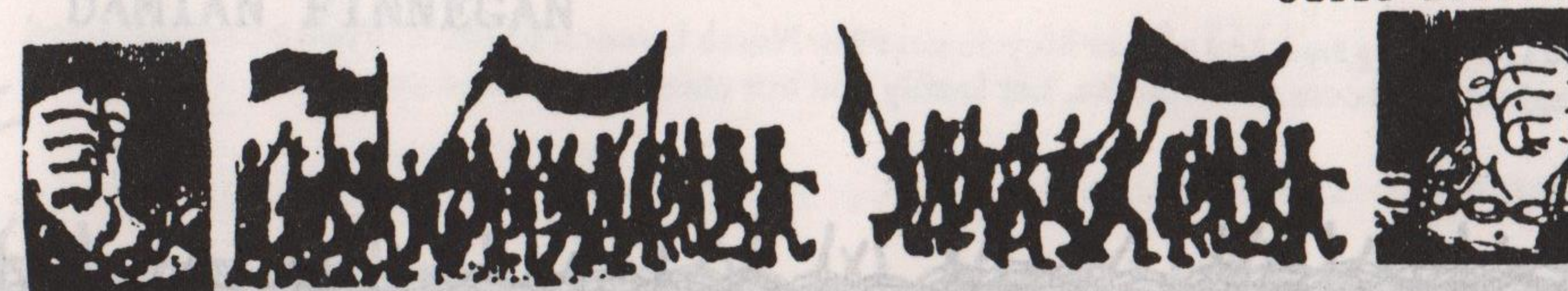
Students (and some staff) of Nairobi University and many others campaigned for Ngugi's release.

Will the N.U.S. and other organizations ask questions and demand answers on behalf of Tim Donaghy ? Tim is a student at the London College of Printing and has already spent the past year in prison. He has lost his parole and faces another year banged up.

Tim made this statement at the end of his trial: The prosecuting barrister tried to convince the jury that this is just another criminal proceeding. Hell, no! The question that must be asked is 'Who broke which law and for what reason ? If I stand charged with riot and violent disorder, surely the frenzied baton wielding riot cops, should stand alongside me ? But no! The law protects a maniac who attacks the innocent indiscriminately with a horse or a van or a baton as long as he wears a blue uniform. I will not feel remorse for what happened. The only possible course of action for us on that demonstration was to do as we did. What does upset me is that the last strands of democracy in this country are rotting. What hope is there for any of us if there is no way to peacefully oppose government policy ?"

The walls of H.M.P. Downview still have a voice. Listen.

Julie Boston



14/3/92

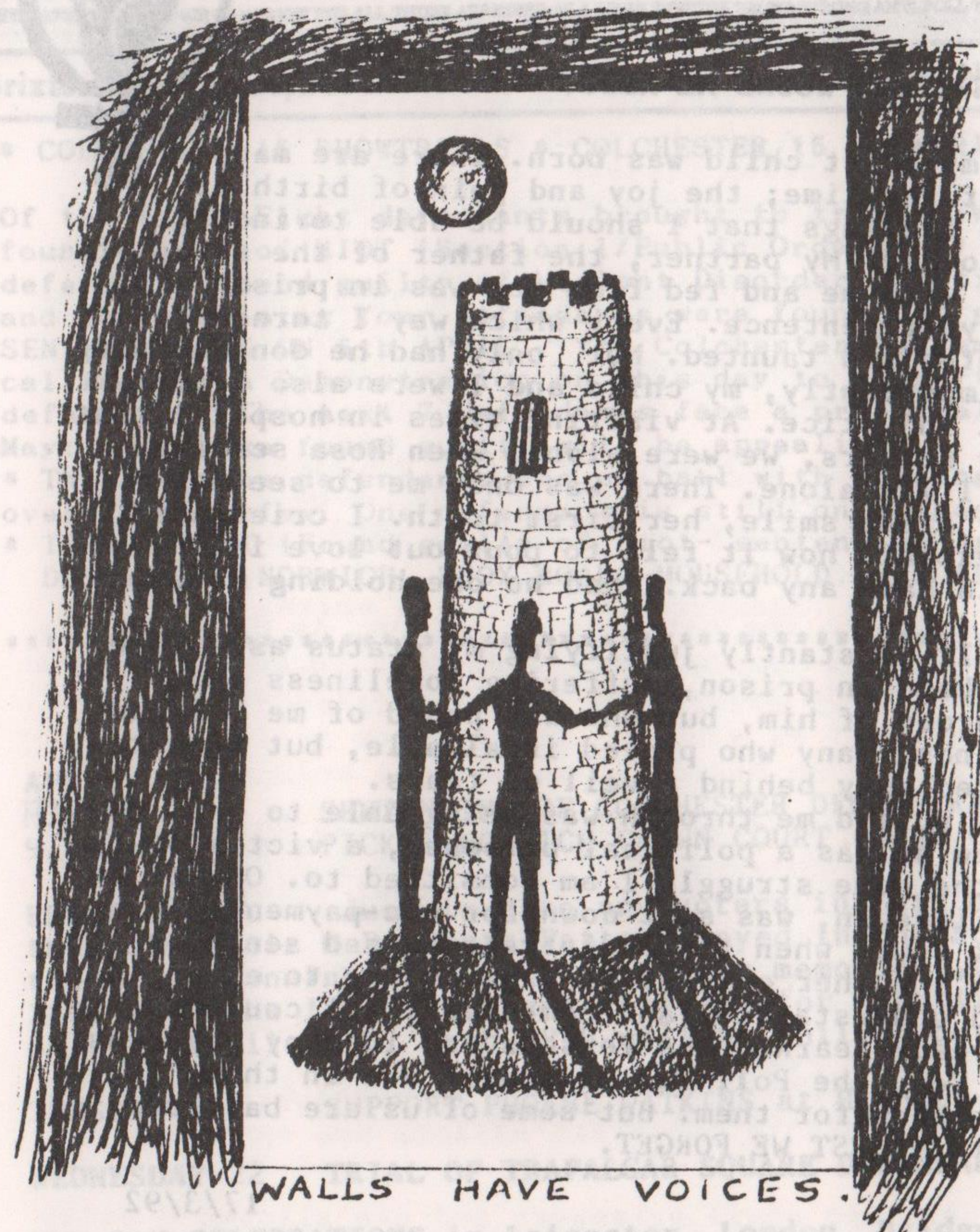
Dear All,

Now I'm finally on my way out of the prison system I would like to thank the Prisoners SUPPORT GROUP of T.S.D.C. for its support. The monthly money and other items helped a lot but far more important were the letters I received - especially those of you who wrote almost every week. I've been inside almost a year and in all that time there has been only 4 days (barring Sundays) when I did not receive a letter. There is no way of putting a price on the worth of those letters.

Last October I had the worst time of my life. A member of my family died and other personal events all conspired to hit me in the space of a few weeks. It was only by writing out my troubles that I pulled through. I was truly on the brink. The idea of prison officers looking out for prisoners is a myth. For almost a week I hardly ate or left my bed.

So my heartfelt thanks to the people who run the P.S.G. and all who wrote to me. Never think that your letters are worthless even if not replied to.
Yours for liberation,
Simon Russell.

P.S. I'll leave here on May 8 th, 7 days before my 28 th birthday.



From the BIRMINGHAM 6 to the TOTTENHAM 3
How long before you come for me ?
Or anyone else who's not the same
As the people who play in your power game ?
If you're black or Irish or working class
Better watch out mate or they'll kick your ass.

But watch out 'cos we can kick too
and when we get organized
we'll be gunning for you !

DAMIAN FINNEGAN

THE TEARS OF MY SISTERS WOUND ME ALSO



On July 2nd 1991 my first child was born. There are many memories I have of the time; the joy and pain of birth are unique. Yet those feelings that I should be able to indulge myself in were clouded. My partner, the father of the scrap of humanity that lay with me and fed from me, was in prison - 3 months into a 2½ year sentence. Every which way I turned I seemed to be haunted and taunted. Not only had he done nothing wrong, but more importantly, my child and I were also victims of the same cruel injustice. At visiting times in hospital that were reserved for fathers, we were alone. When Rosa screamed during the night I was alone. There was only me to see her first sit up, her first smile, her first tooth. I cried one day, I tried to explain how it felt to pour out love into a child and never to have any back. I had no one holding me when I cried.

I found myself constantly justifying my status as a lone parent with a husband in prison, suffering loneliness and derision. I was proud of him, but who was proud of me? I had comrades and friends, many who proved invaluable, but I wanted Matt. He was locked away behind a veil of tears.

I think what pulled me through was being able to understand. I knew he was a political prisoner, a victim of the class struggle, the same struggle I am committed to. One of our friends, Damien Finnegan, was sent down for non-payment. I remember being at court when the magistrate passed sentence (6 weeks) and Damien's mother collapsed. As we clung to each other there was a solid understanding and comradeship. I could assure her, as I had already learned the lessons and in many ways was older and wiser. Yes, the Poll Tax prisoners are in there for us and we are out here for them. But some of us are battered, bruised and bereft - LEST WE FORGET.

Christina Lee

17/3/92

Deborah Hall Born 24th May 1954 Died 13th March 1992

Debbie Hall was a feminist and a tireless campaigner against injustice.

She was an active member of Camden Stop The Poll Tax, and was largely responsible for pressing the case that computer printouts are inadmissible as evidence in Magistrates Courts, recently upheld in the High Court.

Until his release from prison, she could be seen every Wednesday as part of the non-stop vigil outside South Africa House in support of Nelson Mandela.

She was the sort of person that the world can ill afford to lose.

She was a mother, a fighter for causes and a natural student. She was also a gifted violinist with a wide range of musical tastes, equally at home with the works of Mozart or playing jazz with Mervyn Africa.

She died after being knocked off her bicycle near her North London home. She will be sadly missed by her daughters Rebecca and Martha, her family and her many friends and comrades.

Geof Branch

TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANTS' CAMPAIGN

THE NATIONAL DEFENCE CAMPAIGN FOR ALL THOSE ARRESTED AS A RESULT OF THE 700,000 STRONG ANTI-POLL TAX DEMONSTRATION ON MARCH 31ST

c/o Brixton Law Centre, 506 Brixton Road, Brixton, London SW9 8EN

Tel: 071-738 7586

* COLCHESTER 15 SHOWTRIALS * COLCHESTER 15 SHOWTRIALS *

Of the first Eight defendants brought to trial: Two people were found guilty of RIOT (Section 1/Public Order Act) a further two defendants found guilty of Violent Disorder (Section 2/POA), and the remaining four defendants were found not guilty. SENTENCING IS ON 6th APRIL - the Colchester 15 campaign is calling for a Demonstration on this day to support the defendants. The next 7 defendants face a pre-trial hearing in May: all those found guilty will be appealing...

* Three of the defendants are on bail with signing-on & overnight curfew. One defendant is still on Judges Remand:

* TERRY FROST (Found guilty of Riot- sentencing April 6th) DL1911 HMP NORWICH. KNOX ROAD MOUSEHOLD. NR1 4LU.

APRIL

MONDAY 6
9.30 am

SENTENCING OF COLCHESTER DEMONSTRATORS
PICKET NORWICH CROWN COURT (near Cathedral)

ELECTION DAY Just in case any voters in Bath had forgotten the role their M.P. Chris Patten played in the Poll Tax fiasco the City Planning Dept will jog their memories. It has summoned 1800 of Bath's least affluent citizens for liability orders on.....April 9th. Bath APTU will be pulling out all the stops

TUESDAY 21 SUPPORT PHOEBE WATKINS at Highbury Magistrates

WEDNESDAY 22 TRIAL OF TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANT STARTS

MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS in Leicester, London, Bridgwater etc

MAY 8 FRIDAY Release of Simon Russell after 12 month stint

POLL TAX PRISONERS SUPPORT NETWORK

BIRMINGHAM	021 558 8022
BRISTOL	0272 248 274
LOTHIAN (daytime)	031 557 1595
LEEDS	0532 653 816
	0532 623 822
T.S.D.C.	071 738 7586
MID GLAMORGAN	0222 830 029
OXFORD	0865 249 406
NORTH WEST	061 707 1584
NORTH EAST	091 232 8761
	091 276 2953
NOTTINGHAM	0602 812 529
SUSSEX (daytime)	0273 671 213

■ Messages of support to Tommy Sheridan, Civil 2/92, Saughton Prison, Edinburgh, or fax 031 455 7247.

POLL TAX PRISONER 59 year old Lingval Cousins NV2501, HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Rd London N7 ONU90 days..

JUNE P.T.P. NEWSLETTER

Contributions on A 4, preferably typed and illustrated, needed.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Check if P.T.P. is happy with a prison picket as this is a useful way of keeping in touch. AVON ANTI POLL TAX UNION has held regular Saturday prison pickets from 2 pm - 3 pm to support our four non payers through their 60 day sentences.

BANNER

Bristol's energetic APTU treasurer makes a dazzling banner for each poll tax prisoner using off-cuts supplied by the local hot-air balloon industry. The prisoner is given this at their coming out party.

A STREET STALL near the prison is a way of publicizing the P.T.P. It also gives people a chance to sign a petition and writing supportive messages on a solidarity card

PRISON RULES

Rules vary according to the category of prison. As demonstrator prisoners are serving long sentences they tend to be in prisons with slightly less rigid rules. Queries to the Prison Welfare Office.

LETTERS

Letters are vital. Sender's name and address must be written on the back of the envelope. It's worth enclosing a S.A.E. even if P.T.P. is only allowed to use it to explain that stamps are not allowed !

SOLIDARITY CARDS FOR SOLIDARITY EVENTS

AVON ANTI POLL TAX UNION has devised an A5 card using a two way communication process. Inside the card is the name and address of the prisoner with plenty of space for friendly greetings. At the back is artwork publicising the event.

VISITS

Non poll tax payers are civil prisoners and are allowed a daily ½ hour visit between 1.30 - 3.30 pm (Most of the time is spent in the high security waiting room). Visiting Orders are not necessary for non payer prisoners.

BOOKS

Many prisons allow second hand books to be sent in but the prison library might become their permanent resting place !

NEWSPAPERS

PRISONERS SUPPORT GROUP (T.S.D.C.) have ensured that the 120 demonstrators have received a daily paper.

FUND RAISING

Essential. P.T.P. need writing paper and money for bills etc. Their visitors need money for travel.

COMING OUT PARTY

Most P.T.P. welcome a social occasion to celebrate.

Mass campaign of support keeps spirits high for poll tax prisoners

TOTTENHAM AGAINST THE POLL TAX

Don't Register/Don't Collect/Don't Pay

c/o 72 West Green Rd, N15

NEWS FROM HARINGEY

081 802 9804 (messages)

We are maintaining anti-bailiff publicity (fly posting) and support at weekly committal hearings (one bloke jailed in the last 8 months)- released after 3 hours as his family paid the bill.

The Council have started a 'No Amnesty' publicity drive, but their official posters all over the borough have been mysteriously amended from :

YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY to WE'LL GIVE UP - Haringey Council.

We have bought 200 copies of the POLL TAX REBELLION book to sell at cost price to local activists and supporters - its an excellent inside story of our movement.

The main development is that Tottenham APT and Hornsey & Wood Green APT have transformed themselves into general Solidarity Groups. Whilst maintaining APT work as first on the agenda, other struggles are now being worked on -ie housing, police,

We feel that every neighbourhood in the country needs a community based solidarity organization taking up the successful experiences of the anti-poll tax movement- openness, practical work, collective decision making, thinking big, independence from all political parties, building street based networks and contacts.

In this way we can create a grass roots country wide movement based on struggles to make not only the Poll Tax unworkable but to challenge and abolish all forms of oppression and control over our lives.

This means long term patient work over the next decade and beyond.

We send solidarity to all local activists.

Dave Morris (Tott'm APT & Solidarity Group)

P.S. Send S.A.E. for latest leaflets.

Tottenham Against the Poll Tax - There has been a recent flurry of activity and enquiries over the admission by the Government that almost all 9 million 'Liability Orders' are unlawful due to being granted on the basis of inadmissible computer evidence. However, local magistrates are STILL continuing to work hand in glove with the Council to force orders through (150,000 so far in Haringey). This is being fought. 60% of Tottenham residents are now not paying. It is uncollectable and all debts must be written off, with the Government responsible for re-instating the resources and local services stolen from our community. TAPT still meets fortnightly, and has leaflets on HOW TO BEAT BAILIFFS, CAN NON-PAYERS BE JAILED, HOW TO DEAL WITH THE COURTS, and it WINTER NEWSLETTER. New posters demanding Amnesty for all non-payers are being done.

POLL TAX LEGAL ISSUES - COMMITTALS

FIRST APPLICATION FOR COMMITTAL

Culpable neglect or wilful refusal found? No > Reject the application for committal.
Yes <

Based on current means, No > Adjourn for a period of time
Yes <

Fix a term of imprisonment
 Suspend it
 Set conditions

SECOND APPLICATION FOR COMMITTAL

Was failure to keep conditions due to culpable neglect or wilful refusal? No > Reject the application for committal.
Yes <

Based on current means, No > Adjourn for a period of time
Yes <

IMPRISONMENT A POSSIBILITY

SELF HELP AT POLL TAX COMMITTALS

HOT TO REMIT OR REDUCE THE DEBTS OF THOSE UNABLE TO PAY

LIABILITY ORDERS

Following a liability order write to the City Treasurer at the Poll Tax Office, Amelia Court explaining why you failed to pay the first installment/sum. Include full details of your income and expenditure. State that if Bristol Magistrates Court seek a warrant of committal you will explain your inability to pay and apply for remittance or reduction of the debt. Keep a copy of this letter as evidence.

COMMITTAL HEARINGS - how to contest the case.

Make two detailed lists of expenditure for the period between the day you received your final bill and the liability order. Make an income and expenditure statement of your current means. Include details of ill-health, recent bereavement, threat to livelihood etc. Under this statement write:
 I HAVE NOT PAID MY POLL TAX BECAUSE OF INABILITY TO PAY.
 PLEASE REMIT THE DEBT.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO PAY DO NOT MAKE AN OFFER

WHAT IS THE CHARGE ?

If the magistrate imposes repayments with a suspended prison sentence ask if you have been found guilty of wilful refusal or culpable neglect .

Prison for debt cannot be used as a punishment for those who cannot afford to pay. Follow the procedure suggested for liability order and hand over a copy of your letter and your income and expenditure as evidence.

MAKE THE LAW OBEY THE LAW

Anyone who returns to court due to conditions of suspended prison sentence not being met should produce their income and expenditure list.

PRISON SENTENCES

Committal summonses have been issued against 1,345 people in Bristol. Only one has been arrested - by bailiffs. Pressure by anti poll tax activists got him released within the week. The police are reluctant to arrest. The greatest danger is for those picked up by police for a different offence. If this happens the non payer must be taken back to court.

These guidelines are based on information from East Dorset Anti Poll Tax Union. Five to seven out of every 10 people summonsed to Bournemouth Magistrates Court for committal hearings have had their debts remitted.



STOP POLL TAX JAILINGS!

