

HIGHFIELDS ANTI POLL TAX UNION NEWS

NON PAYER JAILED - AND RELEASED!

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On December 7th Bryan Wright, a 21 year old unemployed builder, was jailed for 21 days in Grantham for refusing to pay his Poll Tax. He had been taken to court once and had a Liability Order issued against him and had turned away the baillifs so the Council took him back to court for a means inquiry. Given the choice of payment or prison he refused to pay.

The Council immediately came under massive pressure and there was a large lobby of the council a few days later. On December 15th there was a 1000 strong demonstration in Grantham with about 40 people from Leicestershire. This was followed by a strong picket of Lincoln Prison where Bryan was being held.

In prison Bryan was treated as a hero by the other prisoners and received a flood of cards and letters supporting him - 500 xmas cards and 300 letters! On December 21st the

council suddenly discovered that Bryan was unemployed and said that as his circumstances had changed he was entitled to a rebate and could be released from prison. The truth is that the pressure made the council give in and Bryan was released a week early still owing his Poll Tax but with the council not able to try to collect it. Bryan says that he's willing to go to prison for not paying next years Poll Tax as well!

As this newsletter was being produced we heard that another non-payer had been jailed - this time on the Isle of Wight. Pat Westmore was sent to jail for 10 days despite being on Income support. Send your messages of support to:

Pat Westmore,
XC2314 Winchester Prison,
Romsey Rd.
Winchester.

TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

Leicestershire Fed and the Trades Council are organising a Trade Union Conference against the Poll Tax on 24th of February from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm.

The conference is open to all Trade Union bodies and workplace groups who can send 3 delegates. The cost is £5.00 per delegate. There will be a creche and food.

Applications should be sent to:

Tony Church,
4, Bidford Close,
Braunstone,
Leicester LE3 3AF

Observers will be charged £5.00 waged and £2.00 unwaged. Cheques should be made payable to the Leicester Trade Union Organising Committee. The conference venue will be announced later.

The conference is a crucial part of our battle to fight the Tax and needs maximum support. Raise the conference in your Union branch and get them to send a delegation.

JUDICIAL REVIEW

On December 21st the High Court gave their judgement in the judicial review of Leicester City Magistrates refusal to allow McKenzies friends. They decided that people have no right to a McKenzies friend and upheld the Magistrates decision. This is now being taken to the Court of Appeal.

People have still been turning up in large numbers and forcing adjournments - over 200 were adjourned when people from Wigston were taken to court.

IF YOU'VE BEEN ADJOURNED - TURN UP! YOU WON'T BE ON YOUR OWN! IF YOU GET A SUMMONS - GET IN TOUCH WITH US!

WOMEN'S DAY PICKET

A picket of the Poll Tax office on Belvoir St/King St is being organised on International Women's Day - March 8th - between 12.00 and 2.00 pm.

LOBBY THE COUNCIL!

There will be a lobby of Leicester City Council on 31st of January from 4.00 pm in Town Hall Square to protest against their continued prosecution of non payers and their intention to use baillifs.

It is a disgrace that a Labour Council is continuing to implement the Tax when no one seriously defends it anymore. By collecting the Tax the City Council is sharing in the responsibility for it. The Council should stop the prosecutions, stop the baillifs and write off the debts of non payers. They must refuse to make cuts and demand that the Tories pay for the crisis brought on by the Tax.

Come to the lobby and keep up the pressure on the Council.

NORTHAMPTON 20

On January 14th the Northampton 20 appeared in court charged with Public Order offences. They occupied the Borough Treasurers office to protest against the threat that Cyril Muddin, 74, would be sent to prison for non payment. Several of the 20 are from Leicester and the rest are from around the country.

The 20 were fined £50 each with £50 costs - a pretty trivial sentence considering the Police originally tried to fit them up for false imprisonment!

The movement now has to raise the money to pay these fines and continue to support Poll Tax defendants.

TSDC CONFERENCE

The Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign is holding a Conference in London on Feb 9th. If anyone is interested in going please come to the next HAPTU meeting.

NEXT HAPTU MEETING
FEB 7TH 69 CHANDOS ST
7.30 PM