

U DX348

Defend the 14+ Campaign

1975

Historical Background:

The British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign advocated a political solution by the Irish and not a military one imposed by the British. The group issued a statement in June 1973 and published a leaflet "Some information for British Soldiers". Pat Arrowsmith the peace campaigner was arrested and charged with incitement to disaffect and in May 1974 was sentenced to 18 months. The leaflet was re-worded and re-issued as "Some information for Discontented Soldiers" and activity increased – with leafletters from different parts of the country subsequently arrested.

Fourteen people were charged with conspiring to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act of 1934, including possession of a leaflet entitled "Some Information for Discontented Soldiers" which was targeted at those who had already decided to leave the army. The wording of the Act made the attempt to 'seduce' a member of HM Forces from their duties an offence. The case did serve to highlight issues surrounding the use of conspiracy charges and the fact that many of the conspirators had not met or communicated with each other until the trial. The maximum punishment for incitement was two years, but conspiracy to incite carried a life sentence.

The 14 were, in alphabetical order: Albert Beale (journalist, London); Wendy Butlin (secretary, London); Phil Cadbury (student, London); Bill Hetherington (social worker, Walsall); Juliette Hornsby (secretary, Chelsea); John Hyatt (journalist, Nottingham); Frank Keeley (unemployed, Liverpool); Ronnie Lee (solicitor's clerk, Luton); Chris Roper (aeronautical engineer, Essex); Paul Steed (student, London); Bob Thomas (factory worker, Cardiff); Rick Walker (unemployed, Liverpool); Mike Wescott (make-up artist, Birmingham); Gwyn Williams (social worker, London);

Two of the 14 were also charged under the 1955 Army Act with helping soldiers who were absent without leave. Other individuals were then charged with related offences including distribution of leaflets and supporting the 14 which is why it became the "Defend the 14+ Campaign".

On 10th December after a 51 day trial and an estimated cost of £250,000, the jury took just 30 minutes to return a unanimous not guilty verdict on all 31 charges. (this was conspiracy against all 14 and other charges under the Incitement to Disaffection Act. The two individuals who had pleaded guilty to assisting a soldier who was absent without leave were both fined.

Custodial history:

Donated by Mr Jim Cowley, Sheffield, January 2012

Description:

Small collection of printed material produced by the Defend the 14+ Campaign relating to a group of individuals charged with conspiring to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act of 1934

Extent: 9 items

Hull History Centre: Defend the 14+ Campaign

Related material:

Filing case. 'Incitement to Disaffection Act 1935' relating to campaign of 1974 [U DCL/355]]
Material relating to 'The Incitement to Disaffection Bill' (1934) [U DBN/16/1 and U DCL/86/1]

Other repositories:

Archives of Peace News (1936 to date), University of Bradford Special Collections and
Archives [Ref Cwl PN]

Access conditions:

Access will be granted to any accredited reader

U DX348/1	<p>Fourteen Face Trial</p> <p>Printed leaflet about the case coming to trial. With a brief chronology of events between June 1973-June 1975. Calls for people to join the Defend the 14 Campaign with details of other individuals and groups who are supporting the campaign.</p> <p>1 item</p>	[Jun] 1975
U DX348/2	<p>Defend the 14 Campaign Newsletter</p> <p>Typescript newsletter sent to supporters of the Campaign. Includes details of local campaign contacts across the country and details for individuals seeking accommodation in London the weekend before the trial starts when further demonstrations were planned, also includes suggestions on how individuals can support the work and fundraising effort of the campaign. With a list of forthcoming events (Aug-Sep 1975) including; documentary on ITV about the charges; start of trial at Preston of Andrew Lloyd for possession of leaflet and attempt to incite others to breach the Incitement to Disaffection Act; Labour movement meeting to support the Campaign; demonstrations in London, Liverpool and Nottingham.</p> <p>2 items</p>	20 Aug 1975
U DX348/3	<p>Britain's Political Trial Season Starts on 15th September</p> <p>Typescript notice about the impending trial of Andrew Lloyd in Preston calling for campaign supporters to form a picket outside the Home Office in London</p> <p>1 item</p>	Sep 1975

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U DX348/4	<p>British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign Defence Group Newsletter Update on the trial of Andrew Lloyd where some charges were dropped and the jury could not decide so it was sent for a re-trial; calls for support for the Weekend of Action with details of how to get to the various sites which include the Old Bailey, the Home Office and Goldsmiths College. 1 item</p>	22 Sep 1975
U DX348/5	<p>Defend the 14 Campaign Newsletter Update on the trial as it entered its seventh week at the Old Bailey and calling for supports to turn-up on the picket line outside the Old Bailey. Also includes diary of other forthcoming events including the retrial of Andrew Lloyd, the trial of the Aberdeen 4 and possible charges against Howard Clark and Penny Strange under the Army Act 1 item</p>	12 Nov 1975
U DX348/6	<p>Where there is persecution, we have an obligation to resist! Typescript update on the trial outlining the prosecution and defence cases including reference to the showing of a programme "So you think it's a free country" made by the National Council for Civil Liberties and shown on the BBC.</p> <p>With updates on other trials including the case against Alix Otten in Manchester that was thrown-out of court by the magistrates and a date being set for the trial of the Aberdeen 4. 1 item</p>	19 Nov 1975
U DX348/7	<p>Defend the 14 Campaign Newsletter Update following the jury's unanimous not guilty decision. Updates on 11 people still facing charges against the Incitement to Disaffection Act and calls for further action to get these cases dropped and calls for the Act to be repealed.</p> <p>Further information for individuals interested in continuing involvement with campaign group encouraged to contact National Council for Civil Liberties and Amnesty International. 1 item</p>	15 Dec 1975
U DX348/8	<p>Peace News Issue No 2010 contains a detailed account of the trial including photographs of the 14 who had been accused, also a Question & Answer piece with a few of the accused about how they feel after the verdict. 1 item</p>	19 Dec 1975