

# LONDON ANTI-MILITARISTS RAIDED

Plain clothes detectives, mainly from Scotland Yard but backed up by local police, raided homes of pacifists and the London offices of Peace News on Tuesday, September 10, just two and a half days after Pat Arrowsmith was re-arrested and less than a week before two of those raided were to appear in court in Aldershot for distributing anti-militarist leaflets.

The raids, which were so well coordinated that nobody could warn anyone else, began at 7.30 am, when police armed with warrants under the Incitement to Disaffection Act and a crowbar called at the home of Gwyn Williams and Albert Beale. Chris Roper and Juliet Hornsby, who were both arrested in Aldershot in June, were also raided, as was Wendy Butlin, one-time treasurer of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign (BWNIC) and Pat Arrowsmith's former (and would-be) flatmate.

Around 8.30 am, between eight and ten policemen arrived at 5 Caledonian Rd, the mailing address for BWNIC and the building which houses Housmans Book-

shop, the offices of the Middle East Research and Action Group, Gay Switchboard, *Wildcat* (the new libertarian paper) as well as the London office of *Peace News* (the flat of our London worker) and the working group for a weekly peace newspaper.

During the raid, police told John Hyatt, *Peace News*' present London worker, not to use or even answer the phone — even though they have no legal right to enforce this. While they were still searching the building, at 10.30 am, John was taken to Kings Cross police station where he was questioned for 1½ hours about possible involvement in BWNIC, practical help for AWOLs, and *Peace News* articles on discontented servicemen. All evidence collected, he was told, would be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Besides taking a copy of the June 7 *Peace News* (containing an article "So you want to help AWOLs"), the *PN* "Join the Army..." sticker, copies of BWNIC's "Some Information for Dis-

contented Soldiers", copies of *Wildcat*'s supplement on disaffecting the troops, material on the National Council for Civil Liberties campaign against the Incitement to Disaffection Act, and files, diaries and address books (to feed the greedy police computer), police seized an electric typewriter from Chris Roper's home and blocks used for some *Peace News* front pages last year.

BWNIC supporters point out that, because the campaign is decentralised and enough leaflets are in circulation, the raids "would not affect the aspects of the campaign's work concerned with giving information to troops". This can only be stopped by "blanket arrests of libertarians and pacifists all over the country and on the continent" (or, presumably, the disbandment of the armed forces). Within hours of the raids, BWNIC leaflets were again being given out to squaddies on a London railway station.

**BWNIC, 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1.  
NCCL, 186 Kings Cross Rd, London  
WC1 (01-278 4575).**