

Pat picked up at 'PN'

Peace News' London office became a rather insecure sanctuary for Pat Arrowsmith on Saturday evening, September 7. Pat, who was imprisoned in May under the Incitement to Disaffection Act, escaped from Askham Grange "open" prison 13 days earlier as part of her policy of non-co-operation with her imprisonment.

She decided to address the anti-National Front rally and was promised that she could speak from the official platform of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, only to be told at the last minute that she couldn't. So Pat spoke from the International Marxist Group platform. Police made just one attempt to breach the protective lines formed in front of the IMG platform, but withdrew after fights with these grim-faced and hard-hatted guardians.

After the rally, Pat asked for sanctuary at the National Council for Civil Liberties, but was turned away. So she came to *Peace News'* London office. From here she phoned the press who, in turn, phoned the police, it seems. Soon police appeared on the doorstep to say they'd heard rumours that Pat was in the building. There followed an embarrassing 15-minute performance as the Superintendent asked if he could be treated as an individual and be allowed

to have just a look around. Only if he took off his uniform and came in as a civilian, we said.. If he wanted to look around as a policeman, he would have to get a warrant. It got complicated when we were asked to see if Pat, who we were not prepared to admit was in the building, would like to talk to the police.

Next to arrive was Commander Lowndes of N division, who also asked if he could come in to talk with Pat. He got the same reply, at which point the superintendent waves his warrant like a flag, rallied his troops and charged into the building.

After an initial moment of nastiness, in which the *Peace News'* London worker was told he would be arrested, Pat was delicately extricated from the linked arms of about 15 supporters (all singing "We shall not be moved"), carried over their heads and out to a waiting police car. Although the situation got rather heated, the arrest was carried out with the minimum of force and no other arrests were made.

Peace News gave sanctuary to Pat, as it would give sanctuary to anybody who asked for it. But Pat was not, in fact, asking for sanctuary but for a public place to be arrested in. This fits in with her strategy of gaining maximum publicity in the hope that it will encour-



age more people to leaflet troops and bring more attention to the iniquities of the Incitement to Disaffection Act. She could be more sensitive towards the people whose help she asks, particularly with regard to security. Word got around that she was to attend the rally, and not just amongst nonviolent activists — some of whom were approached to surround her on the march in order to keep the police at bay. People who'd helped Pat were disconcerted to find after the rally that that morning's *The Times* had been able to predict that she would speak there.