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S.B. No. 'lain)

Special Report

12.1.78 CB

# METROPOLITAN POLICE

SPECIAL BRANCH

.....11.....day of.....July.....19.77....

**SUBJECT**
Grunwicks
Day of Action

**Reference to Papers**

1. The strike at Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories Limited, now in its eleventh month has, during the past four weeks produced scenes of violence, often of major proportions, in the streets immediately surrounding Dollis Hill Tube Station. That violence has in nearly all cases, been instigated by the forces of the ultra-left who have seized the opportunity of exploiting a relatively minor labour problem to their own ends. The actual reason for the strike now appears to be of little interest to the more militant who regard the Grunwick case as their arena for conflict with the establishment and therefore with the forces of law and order.

2. Against this background a 'National Day of Action' was called for Monday, 11 July. The day's proceedings were basically divided into two separate events. The first, a massive picket, commencing at about 5 am in the streets around the Grunwick factory, Willesden, NW2, called by the Grunwick Strike Committee and expected to attract large contingents of miners, engineers and builders from all parts of the United Kingdom. The second event of the day was a march from Dartmouth Road, NW2, to Roundwood Park NW10, commencing about mid-day.

3. The march was organised by the Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff (APEX) and the Trade Union Congress. It was the intention of the organisers who fully co-operated with police in the planning and organisational arrangements, that the march should be conducted in a peaceful manner with the aim of emphasising to the public at large the justice of the case of the strikers at the Grunwick factory.

4. Such were the intentions of the leaders of APEX and the TUC. To their obvious discomfort however, the forces of the ultra-left saw the situation in a more provocative light and their press had seized the opportunity to record their feelings on the subject. The National Day of Action had been described as the "Ascot of the Left" and at least one extremist paper, the Trotskyist 'Militant' likened the day's proceedings to the affair of the Saltley Coke Depot in Birmingham in 1972. In that incident, the Chief Constable of the area required the management of the depot to close the plant when eventually he deemed the strength of the police force at his disposal was inadequate to deal with the thousands who turned out on that occasion to impose their will upon an 'intransigent' management.

5. The day's proceedings commenced shortly after 5 am when participants began to gather in Chapter and Cooper Road. At its peak there were some 15,000 demonstrators: 8,000 in Chapter Road, 5,000 in Cooper Road whilst a further 2,000 wandered between

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the two roads. The factory in Cobbold Road was picketed by no more than 30 individuals.

6. [redacted]

7. In Chapter Road, the front entrance, the crowd was closely packed and militant but initially well-behaved. Some of the provincial delegations to the day's event trooped their colours before the assembled gathering, the greatest applause being reserved for the postal workers and the coal-miners. Mrs DESAI of Grunwick's Strike Committee performed a triumphal walk between the ranks, regally smiling and waving her hands to left and right. Violent disturbances, barely contained by police, occurred at about 8.30 am when a hired double-decker bus transporting police came into view and was mistaken for the work's vehicle which was of similar appearance. The violence was the direct result of aggression shown by Trotskyists who repeatedly tried to break the police lines.

8. In Cooper Road the atmosphere was very different. Arthur SCARGILL was the tactician at the back gate. He initially made a great show of asking all Yorkshire miners to picket in Cooper Road and to remain on the pavement, forming a controlled picket. As the miners pressed into the road, firmly marshalled, they pushed into the existing crowd, causing police lines to bulge by sheer weight of numbers. The tactic, deliberately applied, was unsuccessful.

9. The second tactic to be employed was that of charging behind banners at the police cordon. SCARGILL was seen to be in the forefront of the charges which were repulsed on at least three occasions over a period of about ten minutes. He claimed that the fight would be won in Cooper Road, the scene of his arrest some two weeks previously. He exhorted everyone to remain on the picket-line and to hold their positions. He later performed a volte-face and led most of his men away to join the march, leaving the street almost empty, apart from a hard-core of disgruntled militants and miners who felt that to leave the gates was a mistake.

10. Taking advantage of the absence of the thousands of pickets at about 12 noon, the Grunwick's coach was driven into the Chapter Road entrance, to the fury of 200 Trotskyists who remained as witnesses to its arrival. Determined pushing took place against police lines and there were a number of arrests.

11. At this point Jack DROMEY, Mahmood AHMED, (Grunwick Strike Committee), and another APEX official appealed to those Trotskyists perpetrating the violence on the picket line to desist, as it did not help their cause. Their requests were met with shouts of "Sell out" and obscenities. It was readily apparent that

SCARGILL had seriously alienated a section of the crowd and had perpetrated his greatest tactical error of the day by going back on his instruction that his contingent would not go on the march. When he later headed his party through Chapter Road, behind much flashing of press cameras, he was jeered by Trotskyist by-standers who were incensed by the failure of the left to stop the entry of the bus into the Grunwick factory.

12. The feeling of the militants was that they had been badly let down by SCARGILL and betrayed by the Strike Committee. Many felt that the day's efforts had been wasted. On the next occasion they all appeared at the Grunwick plant, SCARGILL said, the Saltley Gate comparison would be a more realistic one. No march would be held. The picket would be so strong as to prevent anyone entering the factory.

13. The picket lines were manned by militant Trotskyists and working people whose general appearance and manner was such as might be expected to intimidate ordinary bystanders. The march by contrast was orderly and quiet and supported by an entirely different type apart from the miners. Civil and public servants and clerical workers were predominant in number, the largest single group being that of the Workers Revolutionary Party numbering no more than 200. They were noisy but well behaved.

14. Eighteen thousand participants in the march began assembling in Dartmouth Road, NW2, from 11 am, a number of groups having arrived direct from the Grunwick picket line. At 11.30 am, to the cheers of those already assembled, the Grunwick postal workers took their position near the head of the march. By 12 noon marchers stretched the entire length of Dartmouth Road having been marshalled into position in an orderly and disciplined manner by the official stewards. Whilst waiting for the signal to set off, the marchers were kept in a light-hearted frame of mind by the entertainment of the Brodsworth Colliery Band and a group from the Musicians Union.

15. At 12.05 pm the march commenced and took the following route:-

Dartmouth Road
Walm Lane
High Road Willesden
Sandringham Road
Chapter Road
Dudden Hill Lane
Colin Road
High Road Willesden
Cobbold Road
Roundwood Road
Longstone Avenue
Roundwood Park

16. No incidents of great significance occurred along the

route of the march although it is perhaps worth mentioning that the Yorkshire miners halted briefly outside Willesden Green Police Station to shout left-wing slogans and give the raised fist salute. Of more interest was the reaction of various Trotskyist supporters in Chapter Road who had remained at the Grunwick picket lines and declined to participate in the march. They clearly felt they had been betrayed by the more moderate of the demonstrators who were on the march and consequently the marchers were subjected to a considerable amount of abuse from them as the procession passed the main gate of Grunwicks. Prominent amongst the slogans shouted by the Trotskyists was "Where were you when the scabs went in?" a reference to the possibility that the bus containing the Grunwick workers would not have got through the picket lines had the pressure on the police been maintained by the maximum number of demonstrators.

17. The head of the march arrived in Roundwood Park at about 1.15 pm and by 1.55 pm all participants had entered the meeting area. Clearly a large number of the marchers had no intention of staying for the meeting and a considerable number immediately left for home, leaving approximately 9,000 to 10,000 persons to hear the speeches. Those numbers were rapidly depleted as interest waned.

18. The Chairman, Ken SMITH, Vice President of APEX, welcomed those present and introduced the first speaker, Laurie PAVITT, MP for Brent South.

19. PAVITT said that he had not seen a rally of such proportions since Aldermaston. He praised all those who had turned out and highlighted the support the Grunwick strikers had had from some thirty members of Parliament.

20. The second speaker Mahmood AHMAD, secretary of the Grunwick Strike Committee made a halting speech to which the audience listened politely but without much interest. He did however endeavour to emphasize the importance of continuing the struggle and maintaining pressure on the picket line.

21. Norman WILLIS, representing the TUC spoke next. He introduced the question of the Grunwick dispute being about racial equality as well as the right to belong to a union. He described Grunwicks as being a "sweat shop out of the 19th century". Such places were a "blot" on our civilisation and only concerted action by the working classes would force the issue and bring about decent working conditions and good wages.

22. The final official speaker was Tudor THOMAS, the assistant General Secretary of APEX. He made a fierce attack on George WARD whom he described as using every device and indignity in an effort to discredit the Grunwick strikers. WARD,

who had expressed sincere feelings for the maintenance of law and order, had shown little interest in the recommendations of ACAS. On the other hand, he praised the tenacity and determination of the regular pickets who had turned out week after week since the dispute began. It was his opinion that their efforts had been a great contribution to building an effective multi-racial society. He condemned the National Association of Freedom and suggested that its members should direct their attention to the freedom workers should have to "join a union" rather than the freedom not to do so. He expressed the opinion that the High Court would find in favour of APEX as long as the pressure on WARD and the establishment, by the trade union movement and the left wing, was maintained.

23. At 2.30 pm the official meeting was closed by the chairman and this signalled the departure from the proceedings of further large numbers of demonstrators for home. It may be said, at this point, that none of the official speakers had been received with great enthusiasm and the general attitude of those present was of having participated in a subdued and somewhat disappointing affair.

24. Possibly due to the feeling of anti-climax prevailing a number of speakers mounted the platform amongst these were the following:-

(1) Fred HOPPER, AUEW, Convenor for Desoutters. He drew attention to a similar fight to the Grunwick affair which was going on at Desoutters. He would welcome, he said, support for pickets from "any quarter" and went on to point out that a mass picket would take place every Thursday between 12 noon and 2 pm. Finally, he appealed for financial assistance for the Desoutter pickets.

(2) Unknown speaker from the Richard MAULL Defence Committee
He said that Richard MAULL had been framed by the police. On the day he was arrested he was part of an official ASTMS delegation on the picket line. He appealed to all union branches and groups to affiliate, with the Defence Committee and to support the picket outside Willesden Court on 18 August 1977.

(3) Bill FREEMAN, NATSOPA
He emphasised the need for pressure to be maintained on the picket lines rather than participation in marches and meetings.

(4) Three postal workers (a) [redacted];
(b) an unidentified postman ([redacted]) and
(c) an unidentified postman ([redacted]).
The first two postmen spoke hesitantly and without effect. They supported their colleagues and the Grunwick strikers. The third postman, however, was particularly well received by the audience. He stated that his fellow employees were currently under great pressure to return to work and therefore

they needed all the support they could get from trade unionists. He was also particularly critical of Tom JACKSON and it was his opinion that supplies of gas, electricity and water should be cut off from the Grunwick's factory.

(5) Unknown speaker from the Indian Workers Movement
He spoke mainly about the exploitation of racial minorities by capitalist bosses. He said that Indians in this country were workers and as such they formed part of the trade union movement and would not "go down on their knees" to acquire a decent wage.

25. At this point in the proceedings calls were made for Arthur SCARGILL, the Yorkshire Miners' leader to address those remaining. Although it is thought he was present in the crowd he refused to respond to the invitation. After a short pause in the proceedings, Jack DROMEY addressed the audience. He was apparently impressed with the outstanding response given to the rally. He praised those participating, in having taken part in what he referred to as a "victory" - they had stopped the Grunwick bus from entering the factory for five hours. He compared their efforts with the success of workers outside Saltley Gates in 1972 and believed that pressure on the picket lines would aid their cause in respect to the findings of the High Court over the Grunwick dispute. DROMEY drew attention to the group of Grunwick drivers who had all now joined the T & GWU and come out on strike themselves. Reminding those present that there would be a meeting that same afternoon of the Strike Committee to decide dates for further action, he referred specifically to the 23rd August 1977, the twelve months' anniversary of the dispute. The speaker anticipated that massive support from the trade union movement would again be required.

26. This Day of Action was called for by Arthur SCARGILL, following his apparent determination to secure his own arrest at Grunwicks on 23.6.77. He had not disclosed his intentions, so far as is known and everyone was left to guess at his plans. He led his men against the police ranks repeatedly. He sought and was accorded the limelight. Despite his efforts, the workforce was admitted to the factory. The day, therefore, saw a succession of defeats and even humiliations for him. Should he re-appear in Cricklewood with his men behind him, he will be even more determined; the police problems will be even greater than those experienced today.

27. In terms of numbers the day's events will be regarded by the trade union movement as a success, albeit that they failed in their primary objective of stopping the work force. There were areas of conflict between the ultra-left and the trade unions, which may leave scars in the relationships between the two sides for some considerable time.

[redacted]
Chief Inspector

[redacted]
A/CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

APPENDIX 'C' CONFIDENTIAL

## OFFICIAL MEETING - SPEAKERS

1. Chairman: Ken SMITH
   Vice President APEX

2. Laurie PAVITT
   MP Brent South

3. Mahmoud AHMAD
   Sec. Grunwick Strike Committee

4. Norman WILLIS - TUC

5. Tudor THOMAS
   Ass.Gen.Sec. APEX

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# BANNERS - GRUNWICK DEMONSTRATION 11.7.77

Grunwick Strike Committee

TGWU

" Grunwick Drivers

APEX

" London & Home Counties

" N.W. London Branch

" Scottish Area Council

" Holborn

" NE Area Council

" Norbury

" North Area Council

" Richmond

Solidarity with Postmen

UPW

" Cricklewood

" London Overseas Telephones No.1 Branch

" EDO No. 1 Branch

" Bow Branch

" Foreign Section Amalgamated Branch

" Willesden

" Hendon

Post Office Engineers Union for Social & Technological Progress

POEU

" London & City

" London Factories Branch

" Corby

" Paddington No. 1 Branch

" SEPO No. 1 Branch

" " No. 2 Branch

POEU Weybridge [redacted]

" London Head Office Branch [redacted]

Hackney Committee Against Racialism [redacted]

Aylesbury & District TUC

NUM Kent

" South Wales

" Derbyshire

" Liverpool

Workers Socialist League [redacted]

TGWU Wales (Llandrindod)

N.G.A. [redacted]

ASLEF [redacted]

" Earls Court Branch [redacted]

Merseyside Dock Labour Shop Stewards Committee

Hull - ditto -

Southampton - ditto -

Central Hull Labour Party

AEU St Georges & Shrewsbury District

Newcastle Trades Council

Camden Trades Council [redacted]

Manchester Trades Council

Huddersfield Trades Council

Daventry Trades Council

Stafford " "

Wakefield " "

Crowley " "

Rhonda " "

Acton Trades Council [redacted]

Colchester Trades Council

Swansea Trades Council

Ealing Trades Council [redacted]

Enfield & Edmonton Trades Council [redacted]

Canterbury Trades Council

Haringey Trades Council [redacted]

Hampstead " " [redacted]

Gateshead " "

York " "

Luton " "

Plymouth & District TUC

Hammersmith Trades Council [redacted]

Brighton & Hove " "

University of Sussex Trades Union Group

Brent East Labour Party [redacted]

Bristol West Labour Party

Brent North " " [redacted]

Wood Green " " [redacted]

Penstone " "

Canterbury " "

WRP [redacted]

Wigan Trades Council

Right to Work Committee - Leeds

" " " " Doncaster

" " " " West London

Boilermakers Union - London District [redacted]

AUEW - HQ Branch [redacted]

" Engineering Section

" Joint Office Union

" London & North [redacted]

" Southall

" Acton

AUEW - Manchester

Rolls Royce Motors [redacted]

" " " - Bristol

" " " Coventry

NUSMCH & DE - Southend Branch

Southern District Council

Joint Shop Stewards Committee [redacted]

Southwark Union [redacted]

" " TUC [redacted]

AUEW Swindon

" Corby

Communist Party Swindon

Yarrow Shop Stewards

TGWU - Fords Dagenham [redacted]

" Ellesmere Port

British Leyland Trades Union

British Aerospace - Weybridge (BAC)

Vehicle Building and Automotive Group (Birmingham)

TGWU [redacted]

Coventry Trades Council

Warwick Labour Party

Austin Shop Stewards Committee

Association of Cinematograph TV & Allied Technicians [redacted]

- ditto - BBC TV Centre [redacted]

ASTMS [redacted]

" Divisional Council [redacted]

" Hammersmith [redacted]

" Charing Cross [redacted]

" Imperial College [redacted]

ASTMS - Yorkshire

" East Midlands

ASTMS "Free R A Maull"

SOGAT

" London Central

" Solent

NATSOPA

" London Joint Branches

" Watford

" Bristol

" East Anglia

NUJ

" Magazine Branch

Electrical Trades Union

" " " London Trades Branch

NGA

" Bristol

" London

" Waveney

" Kentish Times Branch

AUEW - Rotherham

Musicians Union

POEU

" London Parcels Div

UPW - Oxford

Brent Trades Council

CPSA

" DHSS HQ Branch

Society of Civil & Public Servants

NALGO

NALGO - Islington

" Hammersmith

" Camden

" Sheffield

" Leeds

" Avon County

" Lothian Regional

" Edinburgh

" St Andrews University

NUPE

" North Eastern Division

" Greater London

" Ealing

" Northern Region

" Birmingham Social Services

N.A. Teachers in Further & Higher Education

- ditto - Inner London Regional Council

- ditto - Tottenham

- ditto - Middle Hendon

- ditto - Middlesex Polytechnic (Hendon Branch)

UCATT

" Merseyside

" Northampton

" Eastern

" Yorkshire

" Acton

" Portsmouth No. 3 Area

" Southern & South Western Region

Southampton Labour Party

London Borough of Camden [redacted]

NUAAW [redacted]

" Strike for recognition

GMWU [redacted]

" London Region

" Northern Region

" International Language Teachers [redacted]

" Yorkshire Region

" Hartlepool "

" Liverpool "

EEPU Glasgow

" London [redacted]

Electrical Trades Council [redacted]

USDAW [redacted]

" London Co-op Branch [redacted]

National Union of Dyers, Bleachers & Textile Workers [redacted]

APEX Leicester General

Women Against Racists & Fascists [redacted]

London District Committee of the Communist Party [redacted]

West Middlesex Communist Party [redacted]

Halifax " " [redacted]

'Morning Star' [redacted]

Scottish Socialists

West & Central London Young Liberals [redacted]

Association of Indian Communists (Leicester Branch)