

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

8 day of September 19 77

SUBJECT

Socialist Workers Party

Reference to Papers

400/77/141

1. Further to our report of 2.8.77, which dealt with a meeting of the Finsbury Park Branch of the Socialist Workers Party on 6.7.77, in which [redacted] had reported back details of the National Conference of the SWP, the following additional information has been learnt from a reliable source about the National Conference debate on the Rank and File Movement.

2. [redacted] Rank and File debate was opened by [redacted] who concentrated on the revitalisation of the Movement, which it was decided would share offices with the Right to Work Campaign at 265a Seven Sisters Road, N4. Three members of the Central Committee - namely [redacted] and [redacted] - were [redacted] to run it. [redacted] commented on the manner in which the Party had intervened, with limited success, in the Heathrow dispute and maintained that from this point the experience gained by the Party had been showing dividends, with the Grunwick affair providing good training ground in the use of tactics on the picket line. However, he argued that the latter dispute had been going on for too long before it had come to the notice of the Party and he recommended that, in future, branches and districts should play a greater part in grass roots involvement at an early stage and pass on contacts etc. to the Centre.

3. What was also needed, as disputes escalated within factories, were cells having the limited opportunity to persuade any labour still working to join their colleagues on the picket line. Such cells could also assist in organising occupations. To this end a local list of unemployed comrades must be kept up-to-date, in order that they can join a workforce at short notice and start or build up a cell. In addition, greater use should be made of daily newsheets.

4. Because activity at picket lines had to be improved, lessons and briefings on tactics would now be organised beforehand. The issue at Grunwick had shown that what was needed was in excess of 1,000 comrades who had a pre-set plan to attack or block the gates. This would have to be done forcefully and quickly to wrest the

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initiative from the Police (it was obvious that Police tactics had hitherto relied on the basic inability of comrades to organise and to carry out their plans).

5. [Privacy] concluded by saying that the importance of the struggle at Grunwicks could not be over-emphasized and had the factory been stormed and occupied in the first days of the mass picketing, then the Police would most certainly not have been able to re-take it without creating a confrontation with the TUC and the Government. He declared that the SWP had the ability to take such action but not the 'know-how' to organise it - this was the problem, he said, that the Party must solve in the following months.

6. The Conference voted to set up a National Advisory Committee, to consist of 44 members (24 men, 15 women and 5 blacks). To this new committee four members of the North London District of the SWP were elected, namely [Privacy] from the Communist Defence Campaign and [Privacy] from the Teachers' faction of Rank and File, and [Privacy] from the Gay Faction."

7. References:-

[Privacy]

[Redacted]

1 [Redacted]

G.T.M. Craft

Chief Inspector

*J. Smith*  
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

[Redacted]