

Additional notes on Saturday 10th May

The attacks on the picket began when the police strikebreakers prepared to bring out their scab lorries at midnight. They blocked The Highway a little to the west (around Dock Street) in order to open a route for the lorries through Thomas More Street, just farther to the west. Pickets tried to defend themselves against the thugs in uniform as best as possible. The despicable accusations by one official against non-printer pickets are just jumping to the bosses tune of divide and rule. The provocateurs are the police and drivers who have repeatedly driven at or near the crowd in order to provoke.

Shortly after, a single policeman ran into the crowd to make an arrest and he was followed by riot squads who went in to break up a concentration of pickets in Wellclose. Mounted police charged in, knocking down a woman. As pickets surrounded her a solid block prevented further police charges. Attempts by police to pretend concern for her health were repulsed. Police turned their efforts to Dock Street where there was heavy fighting and forty arrests.

Saturday night, 10th May

The editor of the News of the World, Montgomery, had driven up by the World Trade Centre in East Smithfield, Wapping, to get a closer look at the demonstration. He was caught and had his bodywork rearranged.

Pickets rest up for Monday meeting

Picketing printers and supporters are faced with an enormous mountain to climb. The enemy holds the high ground well guarded and the way back is a swamp. Systematically isolated, contained, and lacking professional tools, this has been an heroic struggle which stands us in good stead for the future.

Brenda Deal has never ceased in over four months to try to sell the rotten lie of compensation. The inventiveness of the strikers has been tremendous. But pickets have been pissed around in the streets of Wapping for 115 days by police and officials making deals with each other despite the hostility of pickets to deals. Monday's meeting is crucial. Printworkers are worried about a sellout, based on Gray's Inn Road and redundancy payments. Brenda Deal has been sending out all the wrong signals.

The sacked printworkers need to build on their own organising abilities to picket. "Rank and file" organisation is born from action, not meetings. It remains for ordinary pickets to take complete control of the strike.

Donations: £2 NoW machine; £1 Tele warehouse
£5 Mirror commissionaire; 50p, £1, £1, £1, £1
Sun cleaners; £3 Guardian composing; £2
Guardian Gray's Inn Road; £1 Times graphical
£1 NoW NGA; £10, £20 NGA machine minders;
£11.63 Lesbian and Gay support group; £13
International Thomson Publishing chapel;
£1 postman; 20p Sogat member; 50p, £1, £1,
15p Sogat clericals; £1 engineers assistant;
£2 Times RIRMA; £1 picketing friend.

Picket is grateful for all donations,
however small.

Address: Picket, c/o 628 Tottenham High Road,
London N17.

Published by Sogat/NGA pickets.

Concise written contributions welcome.

NEWS INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE



SATURDAY DEMONSTRATIONS

**EACH SATURDAY EVENING THERE WILL
BE A MAJOR DEMONSTRATION AT
WAPPING IN SUPPORT OF THE
PRINTWORKERS DISMISSED BY
RUPERT MURDOCH.**

MARCHES BEGIN AT 8-30PM AT TOWER HILL

Picket

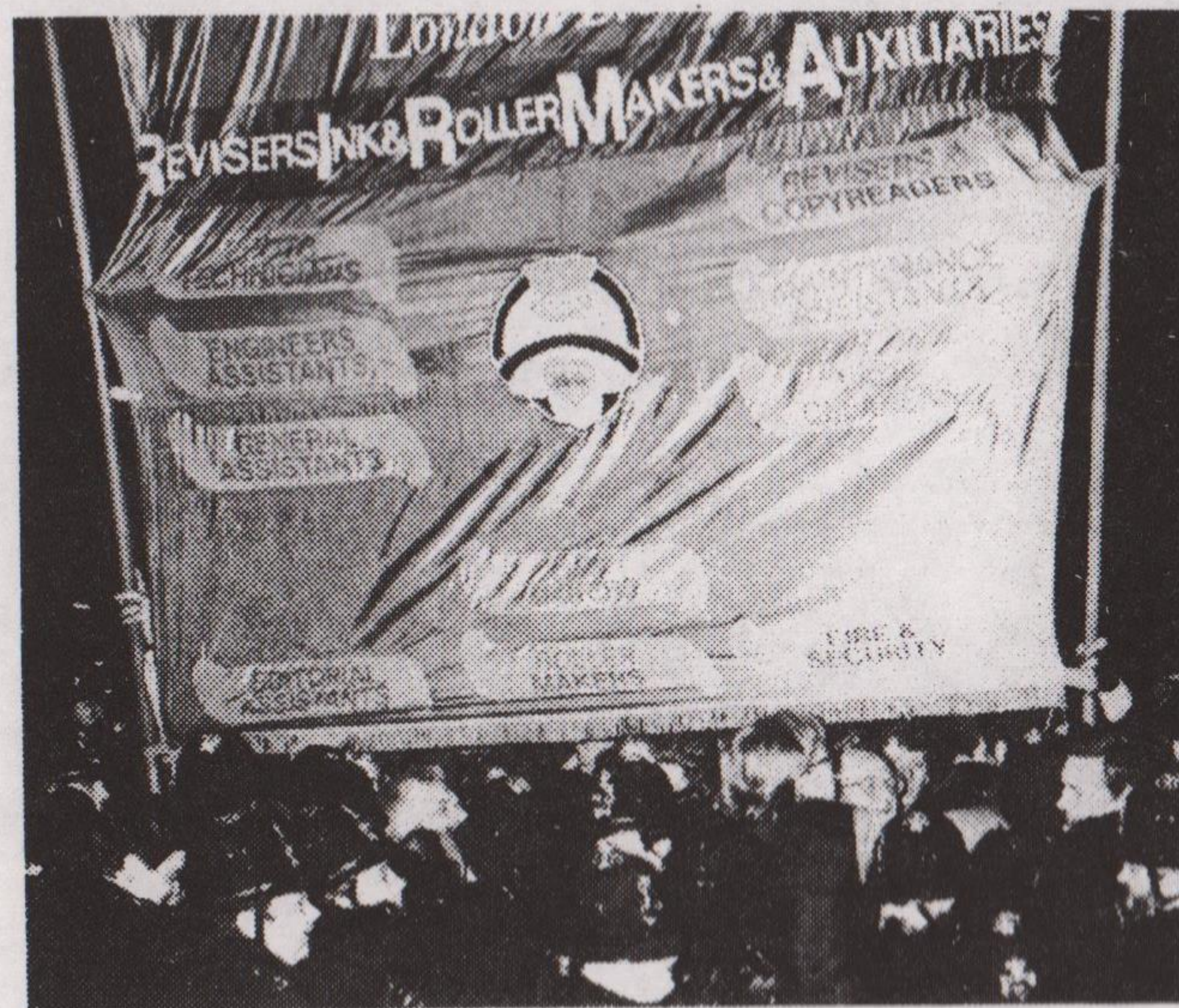
Part 2

1st April to 18th May
(includes Picket nos 5 to 12)
(plus 3 pages of additions to part 1)

Picket
c/o Housmans Bookshop
5 Caledonian Road
London N1 9DX

13th February

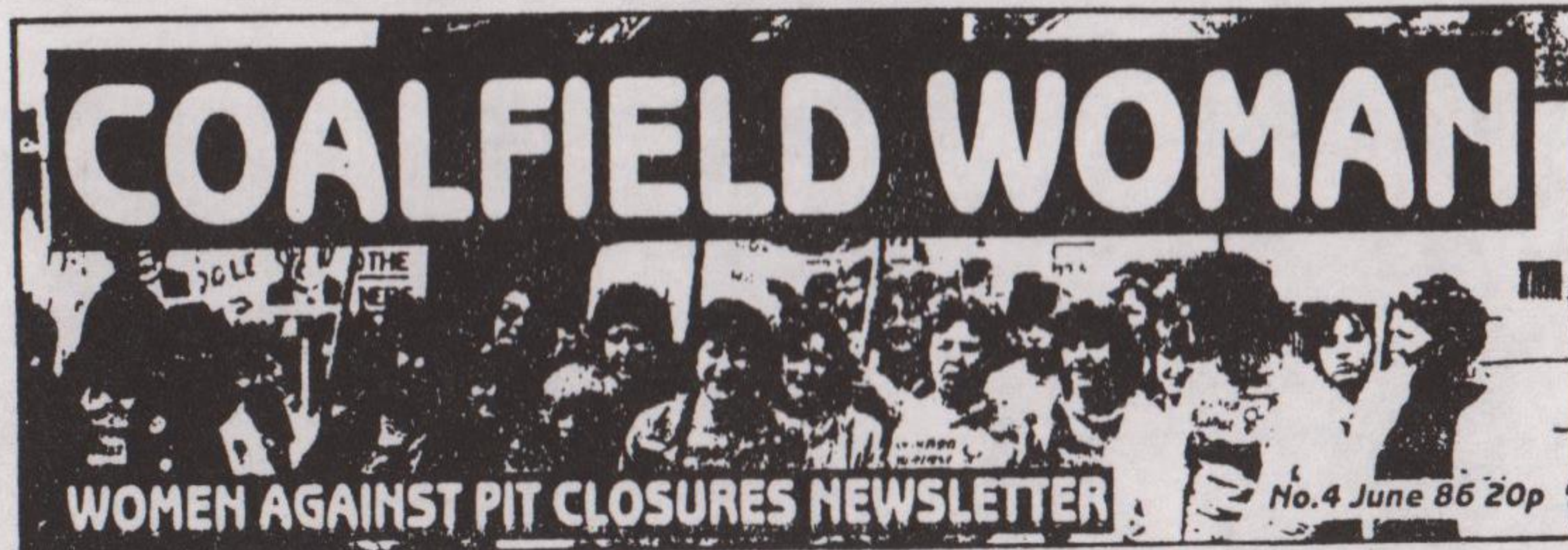
Thursday, 21st day of the strike. "In the bitterly cold early hours ... pickets arrived outside to try to stop distribution. Printers and other trade unionists from Southampton and Portsmouth ... A determined effort was made to stop the scab papers coming out. The police reacted with extreme violence. Pickets were kicked and punched indiscriminately, with several arrests. The scab vans drove straight at pickets - one of whom was hit by a van doing 20 mph at least. Several pickets were injured. At the end of the day, the numbers weren't great enough to stop the scabs." (Militant, 21st February)



22nd February

Saturday, 30th day. "A successful picket of the WH Smith depot at Cambridge by local trade unionists, printworkers and strikers from the Sun occurred last weekend. A brazier and games of football kept spirits high and pickets warm. The picket remained throughout the bitterly cold night forcing management to decide against bringing in any Murdoch titles but diverting them instead to other distribution centres." (Militant, 28th February)

"Sogat and the NGA called a mass picket last week in Bristol at WH Smith. Despite the short notice 80 people gathered in the early hours. Three of Murdoch's vans were turned away. Unfortunately by the time they returned an hour later enough police were present to drag the pickets away, though one driver went over a policeman's foot. Some Sogat drivers responded to the picket by, for the first time, refusing to handle Murdoch's papers." (Socialist Worker, 1st March)



It was on 2.45 on February the eighth when we decided to go to London to join the Wapping picket. All we knew was that we had to be at Tower Hill for 6pm. Flying down the motorway we made it — in fact we were a bit early.

We joined the women's march, and as soon as it was known that we were miners' wives we were taken up to the front. There we met Betty

Heathfield, who was to speak at the rally.

The march to Wapping reminded me very much of the first Barnsley rally — women strong and united with the men lining the route clapping and cheering. Betty Heathfield must have looked as if she belonged, for one of the women asked her if she was a dismissed cleaner!

As we approached the plant

at Wapping I was surprised to see how few police there were. (Obviously the surrounding area and side streets must have been full of them). We could have taken the plant. I'm sure if only for half an hour, combining the strength of the women with the backup of the men, but respecting SOGAT's wishes for a peaceful picket we sat in the road singing.

Two of the Doncaster

women found us and we were really pleased to find that other miners' wives groups had come. We decided to do a closer inspection of the plant and were quite surprised to find that we were free to wander and peer through the fence although the rolls of barbed wire were there. Again the frustration of knowing there was no way to get near the scabs to put our case. We could only shout from a distance. Even so the police horses appeared lined up behind the police lines — a situation we knew would not last long. Unfortunately we had to leave at 11.15pm with one casualty — Aggie had her nose punched by a reasonably friendly copper — knowing the police would probably move in when only a few pickets were left, knowing the trucks had been delayed for a little while, and knowing full well we would be back there next week.

The following Saturday we

saw the police horses in action. It made us wonder where some of the trades unions and labour movement had been during the last two years. Being forced through 'circumstances' to become 'professional pickets' it was obvious to us that the police horses were going to charge into the crowd. Up we went onto a wall holding onto the railings. A man standing at the side of us just looked blank. We told him to get onto the wall with us as the horses were about to charge. "They won't do that," he said confidently, "there are women and children here."

The horses charged. People tried to defend their children by putting barriers in the road. The man next to us moved quicker than any of them and joined us on the wall. All I could say was 'where have you been the last two years? Haven't you listened to anything we've been telling you?'



8th March

Saturday, 44th day. Residents met at various places in Wapping. Included coachload of miners too. Haphazard, informal. Picket across Wapping High St just east of Thomas More, opposite the China Ship pub. Came along Wapping High St to Dundee where police formed a road block. Then pickets went up Scandrett St to Green Bank. Police formed solid line across Green Bank. There were 50-100 pickets. Everyone rushed around and then through Watts St to get to Wapping Lane next to church. Picket across Wapping, moving about. Couple arrests but didn't give much opportunity to make arrests. Police blocked north of Wapping Lane with horses and lines. Held picket for 1-1½ hours, then broke up.



Wapping High St



Wapping Lane

from Black Flag 10th March

TWELVE MONTH PLANNING FOR TNT SCAB FLEET

We can reveal that Thomson Nationwide Transport, the scab haulage company that is aiding the print barons in their anti-union crusade, has colluded in the pre-planning for News International's move to Fortress Wapping in the twelve months prior to the move. There is strong evidence that TNT undertook contingency measures and was party to the scheme to sack the 5,500 print workers.

Details of TNT's involvement was leaked via the pages of the trade magazine, *Commercial Motor* where an article, entitled 'TNT's "Secret" Fleet', describes

how the several hundred plain white trucks specially bought by TNT for the News International exercise were 'gathered over the past year'. The article goes on to say that the fleet is 'part of a new TNT newspaper section, code named Division 800, and that drivers all over the country are being recruited to drive them'. TNT's UK manager, Alan Jones, told *Commercial Motor* that TNT also hopes to recruit another 2,000 drivers to take on work for the other newspaper barons. The fleet itself consists of mainly C-registration Volkswagen LT45 vans. A list of TNT main depots follows.

TNT began putting the fleet together for Division 800 around the beginning of 1985, the fleet was developed secretly as the year progressed, and as Murdoch moved closer to his 'D' day.

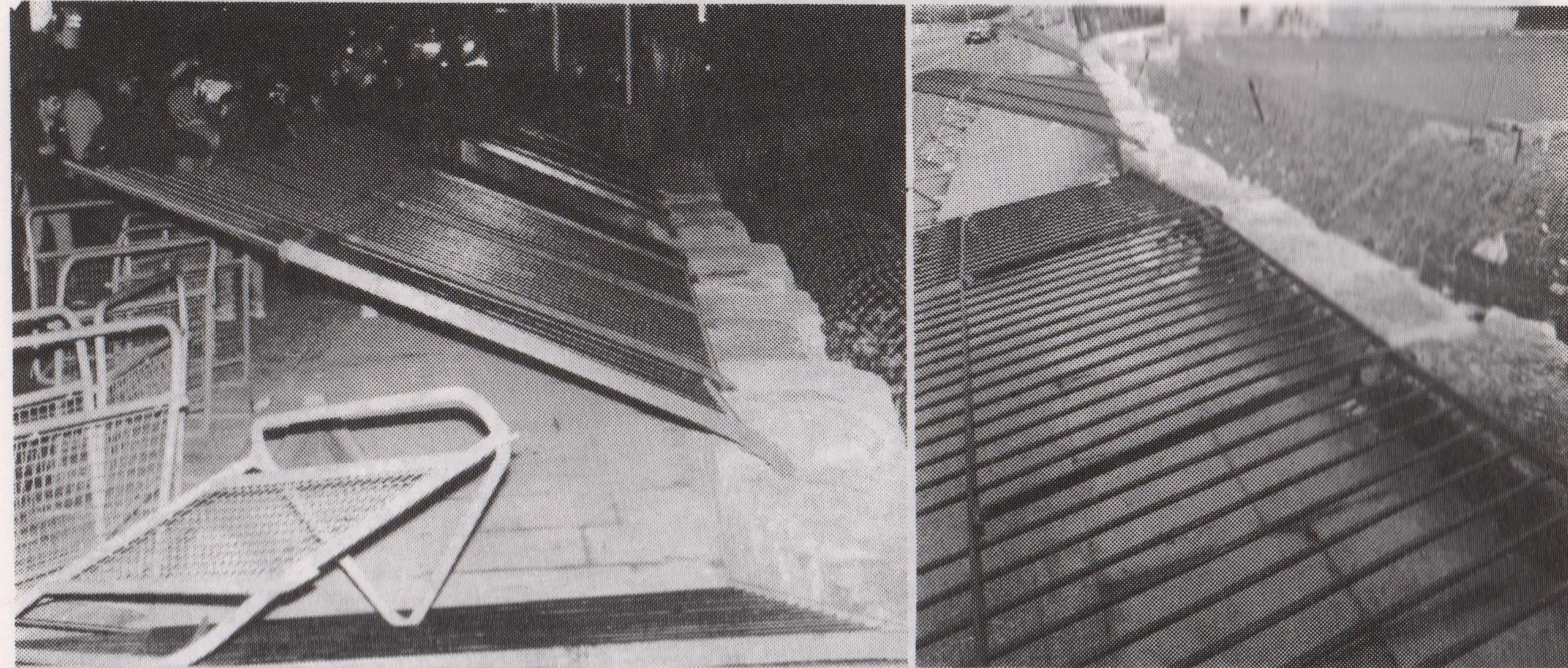
TNT — THE MAFIA CONNECTION

The TNT conglomerate has tried often unsuccessfully, to steer a course away from political intrigue. TNT's chairman, Australian magnate Sir Peter Abeles, has gone to great pains to cultivate friendships with those on both the right and left of Australia's political spectrum. TNT now has business interests in virtually every part of the globe (see below), but despite its attempts to keep a low profile, its dealings with unions has not always had a smooth ride. In the USA, TNT's launch was very nearly a fiasco when it was met with a campaign of arson attacks bombings and violence. TNT was able to survive this campaign because of the links it cultivated not with the political mafia, but with the criminal mafia (no doubt they interconnect though!).

The violence ceased as soon as TNT paid the handsome sum of \$250,000 as a first installment to mobster Venero 'benny Eggs' Mangano and Lawrence

'Buddy' Garaventi. This was not a simple case of 'protection' money but payments made, according to TNT (USA), for the 'services which the management of this group believe were in the interests of the group and were worth the monies paid for them'. The services alluded to were in reality a deal struck with mafia and officials of the right-wing and corrupt Teamsters Union to 'keep things cool'. In other words no wildcat strikes, no more violence (stage-managed by the mafia - controlled Teamsters), etc. Nor was the TNT-mafia connection simply a local one. Abeles himself was an acquaintance, for example, of Jimmy 'The Weasel' Fratianno, a member of the West Coast mafioso. Fratianno's link-man in the Teamsters was Rudy Tham, a Teamsters vice-president and close friend of TNT executive Peter Thomson. Tham was later jailed for embezzlement of Teamsters money. TNT's financing of the mafia has continued.

15th March



26th March

Wednesday, 62nd day. "Pickets laid seige to a newspaper distribution depot in Snodland early yesterday in an effort to stop Rupert Murdoch's blacked titles getting out. About 75 pickets turned up at 3am outside TNT's Depot ... Shortly after the pickets arrived Police from many parts of Kent were sent to counter the demonstrators. A police spokesman said there were no arrests and no violence on the picket line. The protestors called off the picket at about 5.30am and it is believed that distribution of the two papers was delayed". (KM, 27th March)

28th March

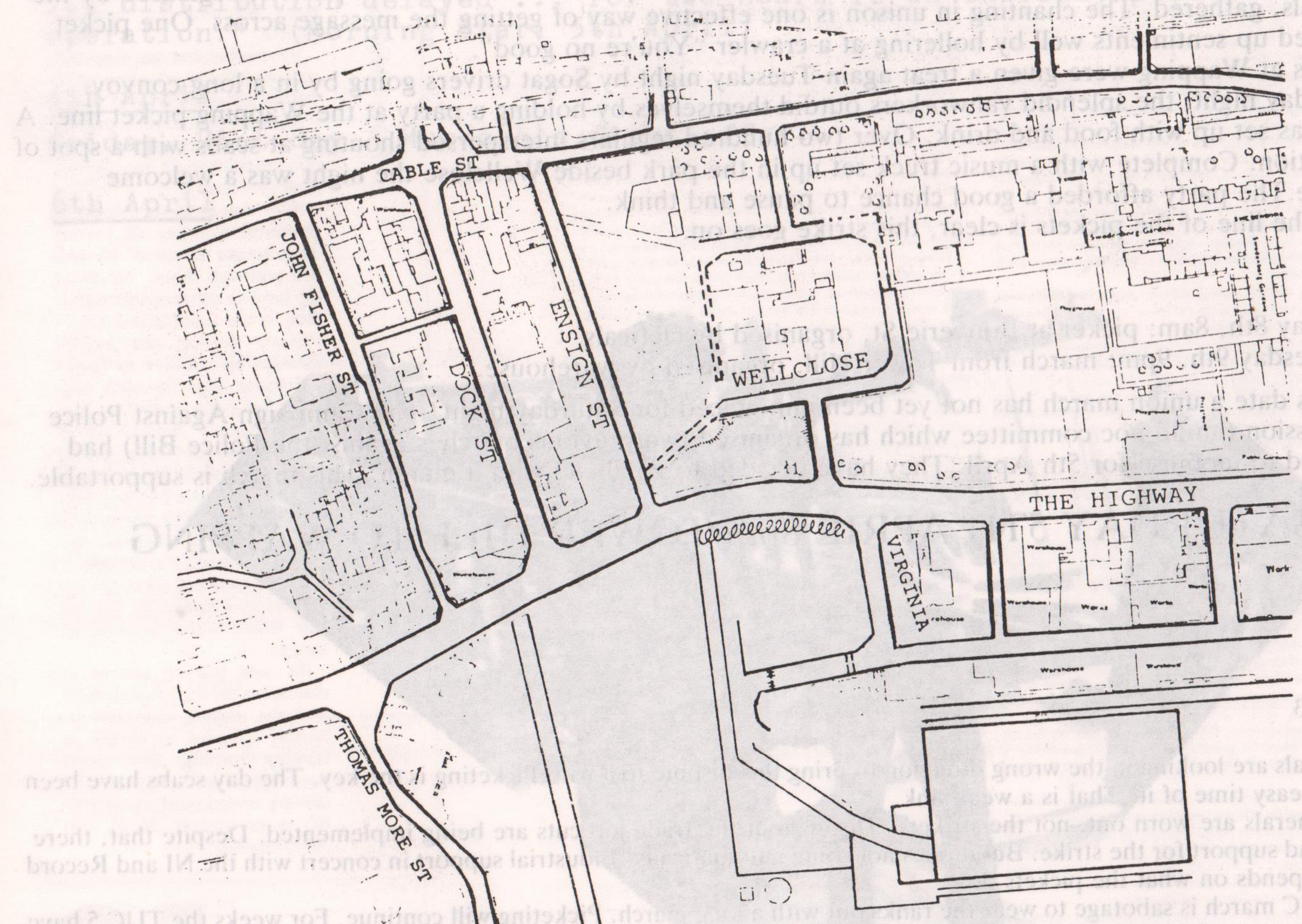
Friday, 64th day. "A successful attack was carried out on a TNT lorry parked at the Hornsey Depot. It's windows were smashed and anti-scab graffiti was sprayed." (Black Flag, 28th April)



Picket

no.5

Thursday 3 April 1986



65th DAY OF THE PICKET

Rain and cold did not deter 3000 pickets in a jointly-sponsored Sogat/NGA march from Tower Hill to Wapping. There were AUEW and NUJ strikers, a contingent from the London Press Branch EPTU and many fine youthful supporters who have been won to the cause of the striking workers (despite what some may think about trade unionism). Many of these people remained late into the night, long after the hordes of paper-sellers with their hypocritical advice had gone.

The evening march proceeded along the Highway to Virginia Street, where once again a good number of pickets gathered. This was broken up by some stewards.

Several hundred pickets stayed at Virginia St and Thomas More, plus the same number went out to Glamis Road. Smaller numbers were at Cannon St Road and King David, and about 1000 roving.

As the clocks were turned forward during the night, it was after two when the bustle of police made it clear the strikebreakers were moving into action to do their filthy task. At 2:40am twenty-two lorries left through Virginia, left on the Highway and up Dock Street.

By this time there were perhaps a thousand pickets left strung out in different spots.

Police strikebreakers prepared for the scab run by putting a line of horses into The Highway just East of Virginia Street. Pickets moved to Dock Street. Two arrests were made during the move, and forty of the bosses' thugs swarmed in to prevent the crowd freeing the pickets, one of them screaming for her life.

Ten mounted strikebreakers, and more on foot, moved in to form a barrier just east of Thomas More and pickets at Dock Street were cut off. Despite an open exit through John Fisher Street no one left. The strikebreakers in uniform complete with horses and more riot squads (some quite young) formed a path from Virginia Street to Dock Street. The convoy left to shouts from the sixty or so pickets penned in at Dock Street. Another group of pickets were at the top of Dock Street. Riot squads cleared a way with truncheons.

Divide and rule is the way of the bourgeoisie and its slimy lackeys. While workers are fighting each other for jobs the profiteers slash pay and conditions.

NOTES

- Last week flying pickets arrived unannounced in Kent. Strikebreakers were caught by surprise. It then took some time for a swarm of police protection to be brought in. Meanwhile the scab lorries could not get into the depot till late.
- Tuesday morning an anti-scab rally was held at Gray's Inn Road. A few hundred pickets, organised by the clericals, gathered. The chanting in unison is one effective way of getting the message across. One picket summed up sentiments well by hollering at a crawler "You're no good".
- Pickets at Wapping were given a treat again Tuesday night by Sogat drivers going by in a long convoy.
- Thursday night, the splendid vanworkers outdid themselves by holding a party at the Wapping picket line. A tent was set up with food and drink. Over two hundred regulars interspersed shouting at scabs with a spot of relaxation. Complete with a music truck set up in the park beside Wellclose the night was a welcome change. The party afforded a good chance to pause and think.
The line of the pickets is clear, this strike goes on.

- Tuesday 8th, 8am: picket at Bouverie St, organised by clericals.
- Wednesday 9th, 9pm: march from Tower Hill, organised by warehouse.
- At this date a union march has not yet been announced for Saturday night. The Campaign Against Police Repression (an ad hoc committee which has organised two previous marches against the Police Bill) had planned to mobilise for 5th April. They have decided to go ahead with a march. This march is supportable.

SATURDAY 5TH APRIL 8pm TOWER HILL TO WAPPING

ROUND 3

The generals are looking in the wrong direction to bring this dispute to a win. Picketing is the key. The day scabs have been having an easy time of it. That is a weak link.

The generals are worn out, not the strikers. Throughout the trade job cuts are being implemented. Despite that, there is still broad support for the strike. But it does not come automatically. Industrial support in concert with the NI and Record strikers depends on what the pickets do.

The TUC march is sabotage to wear the ranks out with a long march. Picketing will continue. For weeks the TUC 5 have tried to restart the folders in Gray's Inn Road. It is time for the pickets to think and plan the next move. By acting as a body the regular pickets can bring out reinforcements. Organisation, no matter how rudimentary, is the key. Otherwise individuals are picked off.

LETTER FROM A YORKSHIRE MINER

"The struggle that the print workers and the residents of Wapping are now involved in is not a lonely or pointless one. The curtains of 'them' versus 'us' must be pushed back if the common people are to retain or expand their standard of living in the increasing times of pressure from the ruling class. People like Murdoch (and I use the term 'people' very loosely) are nothing compared to the will and wishes of the residents of Wapping and the printers. I urge you to continue in your long struggle and don't think you are alone, even though the media choose not to tell the people of this country the truth about you. The majority of us know the truth and support you to the full. The scabs at the moment have the money and their police friends. But that is nothing compared to the esteem in which you are held in the eyes of the real people. If scabbing is the price to pay for such luxuries then my money is on you good people. SCABS WILL NOT RULE O.K."

Fred
(Armthorpe)

Picket note: Armthorpe was the last Yorkshire pit to be forced back to work. This marvellous village held out in the hopes of stopping the return to work. Armthorpe returned on the Friday as a number of pits, one by one, went back after the general return on the Tuesday.

Address: Picket, c/o 628 Tottenham High Road, London N17
It is intended to publish the next issue in two weeks' time.
Written, printed and paid for by machine sections members.

3rd April

Thursday, 70th day. "Fifty carloads containing 160 members ... arrived outside the West Horndon TNT depot in Essex in the early hours ... distribution delayed ... for two hours in an entirely peaceful operation." (Morning Star, 5th April)

4th April

Friday, 71st day. Murdoch's first offer.

6th April



I ARRIVED at the roundabout near the warehouse at about midnight, together with three other mates in the car. We were by one of the warehouses so that we wouldn't be seen by the security guard.

I asked him how many people would be there and what time did he expect the lorries to arrive. He told me we could expect the lorries at any time after 12.30 a.m., depending on how they had been delayed at Wapping. He hoped there would be at least a hundred people on the picket.

I had already been on four other picket lines in the last three weeks but only at Smiths and Menzies depots. Tonight we were at TNT depot and hoped to stop delivery if possible.

I parked the car in the side road. There were about eight or nine other cars and three mini buses already there; it looked as if there was going to be a decent turnout after all. We got out of the car and it was cold, the wind was bitter and it was freezing. I hoped it wouldn't be too long before those lorries came.

We walked down towards the minibuses, where the crowd was gathering. I recognised some of the people. There seemed to be a good crowd from Swindon again and the usual boys from Gloucester. A lot of them I didn't know — they looked like students or young socialists.

I asked why we were waiting and was told that they didn't want the security guard ringing up the police yet, we still hoped to surprise them. A car was down near the motorway and he would come back and tell us in plenty of time when the lorries were coming. We were to go and block the road leading to the warehouse.

Someone said that that could be dangerous as he had seen the lorries leaving Wapping at speed. He was told that the lorries had to slow down and turn the corner to get to the warehouse. I hoped what he said was true.

It was trying to snow and my feet were getting cold, no sign of our runners yet. Another car came up and we could see it was a police car — not much chance of a surprise now. The car drove past us, there were jeers from the crowd, the car drove on, turned and went back.

No point in waiting here now, we all moved to the warehouse to have a look. The chap was right, there was a right angle turn into the road leading to the warehouse and the lorries would have to slow down.

The warehouse and the compound, which was well lit, stretched from the corner up to the actual gate which was about a hundred yards along. There were about twenty or so new, white, Mercedes vans parked in there as well as a few older and bigger vans. There was a small building by the gate with one security guard in it. We were not too bad, by now. There were about 120 of us so we might have a chance.

It is twenty past one now, still no sign of our runner, my feet are like ice. Here come the police in their vans and patrol cars. I counted them, 38 in all. That's alright, we still outnumber them three to one.

The superintendent talks to the officials for about five minutes, they break up and the officials moved among us, telling us that the police want us all to move back to the sides of the road except the official picket, which will be six people.

He says to ignore it, when the lorries come, keep the road blocked. If the lorries pass us, get around to the back of the crowd so we keep between the lorries and the gate.

We stay where we are. The police do nothing they wait by the side of the road. Our runner appears and says that the lorries are about five minutes away. We all line up blocking the road, all the women go to the front and link arms, behind the official picket. That's a good idea, perhaps the lorry drivers will stop when they see the women. We link arms in readiness and we wait.

The lorry arrives and is stopped by a policeman some 30 yards up the road. I can see that it is a 60-foot articulated lorry, white again.

The official picket moves to talk to the driver. No good, the lorry moves off slowly, the official picket runs back. The lorry pulls up about ten yards from us, half turned, ready to come around the

corner. The police superintendent orders us to move. No one moves and we brace ourselves.

The lorry inches forward, on the right hand side of the road, and the police try to move the women in the front. They fail and the lorry reverses back. We've done it, we've stopped them at last, superintendent. We will still outnumber them by about four to one, so we might have a chance.

We chat amongst ourselves, expressing our disappointment about the case that the first lorry got through, but resolving that the next one won't get through so easily.

The second lorry appears at the end of the road, sees the police and the pickets and stops. The official picket goes up to talk to them, shouts of 'scab' come from the crowd. The driver won't even open his window. His mate is using a walkie talkie.

The lorry starts to move forward, there is a shout and we all surge forward into the road, taking the police by surprise, blocking the road completely. The lorry slows and continues to inch forward, people are climbing up the front of the cab, the police are dragging them off and hurling them to the side. Others take their place, the people who are hurled away race to the back and form a line.

I come to the front, a policeman grabs me round the neck, I resist, I can smell the burning of the clutch of the lorry as it inches forward. A knee hits me in the groin and I am hurled to the side, I pick myself up and rush with the others to the back. We're going to stop him, we are not letting him through this time.

Suddenly, police are everywhere they are hurling us back and holding us, the lorry inches remorselessly to the gates. There is a roar of triumph from the crowd.

The lorry stops about 15 yards away. We are watching, all eyes on the lorry, full of jubilation. The superintendent walks to the lorry and talks to the driver and turns towards us. All of a sudden we are being pushed from the left hand side, people are shouting and stumbling over one another.

I get pushed against the fence, I struggle and turn to see the police pushing us all to the one side, the gap is widening, the lorry revs up and charges through the gap on the left hand side, up the road, through the opening gate and into the compound. He has beaten us after all.

Everyone is milling about in disappointment. The officials move among us, telling us that there is another lorry coming soon. The plan this time is to stand on the side and get the police in the middle of the road. When the lorry comes we push into the middle and trap the police and the lorry, again move around to the back, if possible and get between the lorry and the gate. I hope it will be a better plan this time. My shoulder aches from the bump against the fence, my feet are now numb with the cold.

We take up our positions on either side of the road. The police form two single lines on either side of the road, facing in towards us. The road is now empty except for the official pickets and the gap and the lorry speeds up and races the last 25 yards into the compound. We have failed to stop them again. There is a crescendo of sound, chanting, 'scab, scab, scab'. That is all we can do in our frustration.

The police have doubled their number, and more vans are driving up all the time. They push us all to one side of the road. The superintendent shouts that unless we control ourselves he will bring out the dogs. The crowd quietsens.

We stand together, nursing our bruises, I am not cold now. We watch the lorries unloading into smaller vans. We will try to stop them going out.

The police are now in three ranks, completely holding us against the side of the road. The vans start to come out in one long convoy. We surge forward but, the police hold us back, we watch helplessly as the vans drive past as fast as they dare.

It is ten past three and it is over for tonight. We have failed to stop them again. We have the consolation of knowing that we have delayed them by over two and half hours. Let's hope that they will lose a lot of their early morning sales.

We all went our ways to our own individual transport. I am tired but not defeated. I will try again until we get an honourable settlement for our fellow members.

Monochrome, May 1986

A REGULAR Monochrome reader tells us he recently met and had the chance to question one of the TNT drivers who drive the juggernauts full of Murdoch's papers out of Fortress Wapping on Saturday nights.

He recalled that one one occasion 'a picket knocked my wing mirror off with his face'. Asked if this bothered him, he replied 'I didn't feel bad after having two bricks through my cab window previously.

Why does he do it? I've got 19 grand debts to pay off, I work long hours, no social life and live with my mum.' He didn't say how he accumulated such a debt in the first place.

Since getting the bricks through his window he hangs polythene over the side windows 'for extra protection. The front window doesn't worry me, it's laminated'. He says they need a phone in every van to contact the police because they get followed—they try to lose them but they don't always succeed. He blames the drivers of the first vans out who rile the pickets and disappear, leaving the other vans behind as targets.

He was full of stories of disrespect for the printworkers and the pickets, and said he looked forward especially to Sunday mornings after they'd done the run when all the drivers would meet up at TNT HQ to get stoned, drunk and swap stories.

from Print (NGA Journal) May and June

DAY-BY-DAY DIARY OF THE DISPUTE ...

MONDAY, MARCH 24: Transport and General Workers' Union executive committee decides to again urge members at TNT, who are breaking the picket lines, to help Murdoch's distribution operation, to reconsider their position.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28: The Bishop of Stepney, James Thompson, denounces the use of force at Wapping and of lorries there to frighten people, in his Good Friday television message.

His comment on the pickets was: 'The crowds at Wapping are not different from us—they are just ordinary people, but they feel their cause is just.' **TUESDAY, APRIL 1:** At a major Press conference in London, Tony Dobbin, and Labour's Shadow Employment Secretary, John Prescott, pour out their attacks on the pickets, saying the work force of the newspapers at Grays Inn Road and Boulevard Street, Mr Murdoch has effectively passed the costs of redundancy onto the taxpayer.

The cost was estimated to be around £30 million in a full year by Mr Prescott, Mr Dobbin said, that the midweek costs to the taxpayer, for unemployment pay alone, would come to £200,000 a week.

The Association of Liberal Trade Unionists announces that it supports the negotiating position of the print unions.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4: Mr Murdoch offers the unions part of the old presses at Grays Inn Road to avoid facing his responsibilities for getting rid of his work force. This offer, instead of recognition and reinstatement, is greeted with scepticism by the print unions. Murdoch's offer of the Grays Inn Road printing presses on the table has emphasised that, while it can figure in the negotiations, it is not a substitute for recognition.

TNT shop stewards at a London meeting with TGWU General Secretary Ron Todd picket unanimously to fight

harder to get the union's instruction to block Murdoch at Wapping and Kinning Park implemented.

Participants in the printworkers' March for Jobs from Glasgow to London meet, travel to Glasgow and picket Kinning Park on the eve of setting out for London, to arrive in the capital on May 3. Major Scotty, demonstration and rally to support for the sacked News International workers.

SAUNDERS, APRIL 5: National rally in Trafalgar Square shows breadth of support in the trade union movement for our members at News International. Rally is followed by march to Wapping and meetings there.

MONDAY, APRIL 7: National Council of Civil Liberties brings out report in which it says that the police behaviour and road blockades around Wapping 'is wrong in principle, and probably unlawful'. It attacks the police for creating effective 'no-go areas' to assist Mr Murdoch's strikebreaking operation.

London printworkers offer to clear a major point of entry and exit from the residential area in Wapping, for residents to pass through, as long as the road is not used by NI.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8: Scotland Yard turns down previous day's offer by printworkers to let the old presses at Grays Inn Road to avoid facing his responsibilities for getting rid of his work force.

This offer, instead of recognition and reinstatement, is greeted with scepticism by the print unions. Murdoch's offer of the Grays Inn Road printing presses on the table has emphasised that, while it can figure in the negotiations, it is not a substitute for recognition.

pickets outside the Sun's Boulevard Street premises off Fleet Street. Five are arrested as picket organisers charge the police with 'intimidation'.

Thursday, May 1 NEWS of the pledge not to handle NI news by Republic of Ireland workers at Dublin Airport is brought back by a joint delegation of London print union leaders.

That night police viciously attack the May Day march to Wapping with riot police and cavalry, causing many injuries.

Saturday, May 3 NATIONAL printworkers' demonstration to Wapping at the end of the national march for jobs from Scotland and the North East is savaged in unprecedented police violence at Wapping.

Sunday, May 4 PRINT unions call for a public inquiry into police brutality at Wapping, which led to 250 injured that weekend.

Tuesday, May 6 SOGAT executive decides to purge its contempt with the court, to end sequestration.

More police violence at Wapping. At Leicester, Warrington and Brighton successful picketing delays distribution of NI titles.

Monday, May 12 RIOT police greet London printworkers when they arrive in Scarborough for a peaceful lobby of delegates to the EETPU's internal conference.

Wednesday, May 14 GATESHEAD council waste disposal workers strike for several hours in protest against management not allowing representatives of printworkers who have been sacked by Rupert Murdoch's NI to attend them on the premises.

Thursday, May 15 NEWS International extends the deadline for the unions to reply to the offer of the Grays Inn Road site and £15 million compensation for sackings to May 30.

Wednesday, April 30 MOUNTED police greet

SWEEPSTAKE SUCCESS



SOGAT JOURNAL MAY 1986

INSIDE
Wages ballots
Focus on the
North West
SOGAT Women
Sport/Letters

Picket

No.6

Tuesday 8th April 1986

Organise, Organise

At chapel meetings of both Times nights and Sunday Times machine room chapels, both reaffirmed their commitment to their brothers and sisters in the Sun and News of the World that they would not do any deal in Grays Inn Road until everybody was reinstated and those brothers and sisters were in their rightful place at Wapping.

Wednesday

The Wapping picket lines were brought up to a strength of 500 by striking Sogat warehouse, who made their way from Tower Hill to demonstrate their determination. A series of warehouse marches (all pickets welcome) is planned.

Wednesday 9 April 9pm Tower Hill to Wapping

Thursday night

600 largely NGA pickets swelled the ranks on Thursday evening at Wapping. Also included were ten supporters from London Greenpeace. The increased frequency of mass pickets is a mark of the development of the picketing. In evidence was the determination of the strikers to keep on until there is a breakthrough.

Friday morning

100 cleaners and clericals rallied to confront daytime scabs at Wapping. High in confidence about the justness of this strike, and nurtured by years of exploitation at the hands of a greedy employer, the pickets—confident that union entry belongs to them by right of labour—denounced the strikebreakers who peered out from the windows of their coaches.

The Wapping building was built on the backs of the Sun/Times workers labour. It is a product of the workers' exploitation.

Old friendships were renewed when over 100 Sogat machine pickets lobbied the TGWU offices at Smith Square, SW1. The picket left a corridor for TNT shop stewards at the entrance. Ron Todd came out and addressed the lobby before the meeting and again afterwards. He also issued a written statement but on Friday night they are still crossing the picket lines. So much for the brotherhood of the TUC.

Friday night

A flying picket of almost 30 was organised to Armthorpe. Leafletting was done in Doncaster. A successful party was held at a TNT depot with miners from the area in the early hours of the morning.

Saturday night

Over 2000 pickets gathered at Wapping during the evening, anticipating the regular Saturday night march and picket. Because of the TUC diversion on Sunday afternoon, News International's Sunday titles had their least delay (if any) in many weeks. The Saturday march and picket is ground gained and ground worth defending.

In the event a small march did take place. As one of the printers who marched in the road, a Sunday Times (machine) striker remarked, 'I came here to go on a march, and I bloody well went on a march'.

This was organised by the Campaign Against Police Repression (CAPR) who had come along to take part in the regular Saturday march. At Tower Hill there was confusion as pickets either thought no march would happen, or else were put off by an unofficial one. But around 8.30 groups of marchers moved into the road by Tower Bridge, led reluctantly by the CAPR banner. Another 200 print pickets went along cautiously, staying mostly on the pavement, half in and half out of the march.

At Wellclose well over one thousand pickets applauded as the small march arrived at Virginia Street. At this point a vanload of police screeched up and hustled them off the road.

The thousands of pickets who were arriving at all different times, quickly melted away.

Sunday

Maybe fifteen or twenty thousand marched in a TUC-sponsored demo. The picket was alright despite the fact that the march was deliberately held to kill off Saturday night and was held in the afternoon, so as to be too early to affect scab production which went out on schedule at 9.30. It was still the largest Sunday picket ever and it did

afford the pickets a chance to pause and think.

The march took place under the effects of drenching rain and speeches. Willis was jeered when he wanted to give 'serious consideration' to Murdoch's offer of a toy paper as a bribe to break up the picketing. The pickets are not interested in trading-off moral gestures. Full entry into Wapping. Scabs out. It is the pickets who lead not the self-important 'leaders'. The heart and soul of the strike is the essential twenty-four hour pickets at Wapping, Grays Inn Road, Bouverie Street and Kinning Park.

The march finally reached Wapping well early in the evening. As it passed the corrugated iron fence before Virginia Street, pickets began to tear it down to open up a way to the scab plant, and a gaping hole appeared much to everyone's delight except for a small contingent of police strikebreakers behind the fence in New Road, who moved up very hesitantly to try to guard it.

Once again the cowardice and bankruptcy of the left wing groups was demonstrated. It is the workers who are the revolutionaries, not the paper-selling gauntlet.

By 9:30pm when the first of the scab lorries began their run from the main gate, through Pennington Street and up Wapping Lane, there were only about 1000 pickets. As the lorries came out of the main gate, pickets ran east down the Highway and met them at the top of Wapping Lane. A large number of mounted strikebreakers made a space for the lorries. After the scab run a number of riot squads and snatch squads descended on the crowd of pickets between Wapping Lane and Cannon Street Road, beating pickets with truncheons. One brave picket walked out into the road in front of the line of mounted police and denounced them for beating a small girl, shouting 'this is what you're about!'. Numerous arrests were made as repeated police charges sought to break up the picket in their vicious hatred of the working class.

Shortly after this a reinforced crowd of pickets were pushed out of the Highway at Virginia Street.

Thursday 10 April 8pm Tower Hill to Wapping

organised by NGA, Sogat, AUEW strikers

The letter below is reprinted from the March/April issue of *Pitwatch*. It deserves printers attention.

You have all heard about the attacks the NCB are making on our union and its members, and the continuing poverty and worry about bills that the miners are still enduring one year after the end of the strike. I would like to try to tell you about what it is like to be a miner in prison.

In my mining community our doors are open to anybody in need and we would never see one of our comrades without. This attitude was the one I brought into prison with me and I shared whatever I had with whoever needed it. But these people in here are not the same as us and certainly do not have the same outlook on life. It was some months before I realized that I had been persistently robbed, by both word and deed, of nearly all I possessed. With my eyes open I started to see clearly the environment I was in and become more selective in the company I kept.

Since making that decision I have had a succession of four 'friends'. All have taken advantage of my friendship and called me 'a mug' behind my back. Now I shun anybody who tries to be friendly and gain my trust. Friendship means nothing in here, it's treated with contempt and is seen as a weakness. I live in a world of continual

lies and mistrust which, because of my isolation from people of my own kind, is starting to manifest itself in myself. To survive I have had to become selfish and deceitful and I hate myself for it. I've found myself doubting even what my wife and friends tell me at times.

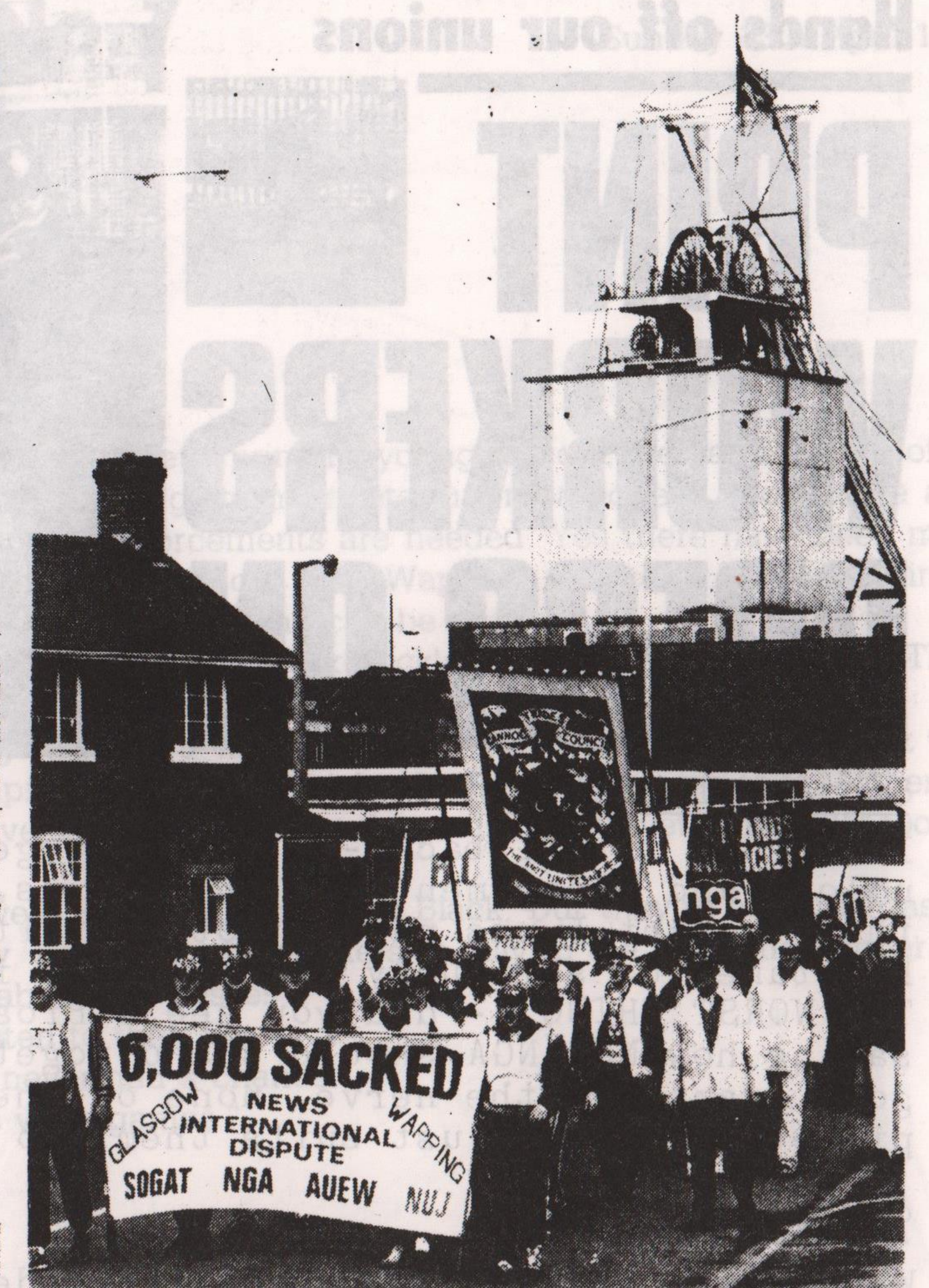
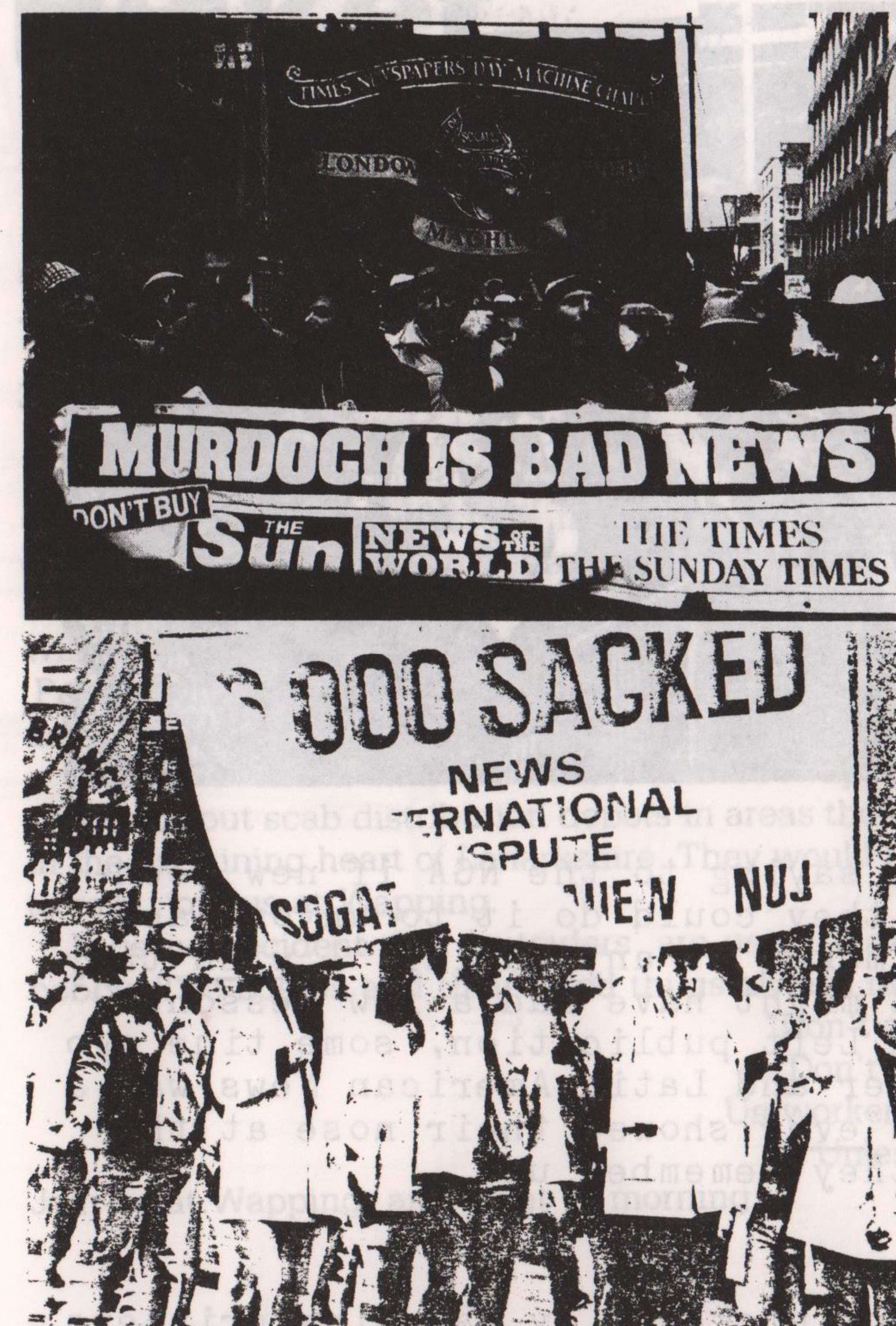
The physical hardships are nothing compared with what I've just described. The dirt, the stench, the cockroaches crawling on your bed, the rats running in the dining hall, pissing and shitting in a bucket, listening to the rattle of keys on the other side of a locked iron door, trips to the local hospital in handcuffs — all this I can contend with. But to attempt to destroy the trust I have in my fellow man is something I will never forgive them for.

As far as the staff are concerned, I'm treated with a great deal of mistrust and suspicion. This stems from my four and a half month stay at Wandsworth prison where they caught me smuggling letters out to my wife. For this heinous crime I lost ten days remission and spent three days in the punishment cells. When I tell you that I was given one letter a week and one 30 minute visit per month I hope you will understand why I did it. Unfortunately the

authorities have never been able to comprehend just how much I love my wife and have labelled me as a subversive for daring to write to her more than the regulations allow. Working at the pit for twenty years taught me that you only obey sensible, worthwhile rules. That is the way I have led my life, and that is the way I intend to continue leading it.

Yes, it's hard being a miner in prison. We don't seem to fit into the regime on either side of the fence and our isolation is all the more pronounced. But every so often I get a letter from a child thanking me for fighting for a future for them, and then it all becomes worthwhile and I know they can't beat me. The governor here thinks I'm stand-offish, what he doesn't realise is that it is contempt I'm showing for him and his staff. I am a miner, a productive worker, and that puts me and my comrades head and shoulders above them all. My message to all British miners is simply this: *Fight or perish, the choice is yours.*

T.S. French
Maidstone Prison
9th February 1986



Hands off our unions

PRINT WORKERS PRESS ON



The Worker, 7 April

8th April, letter

It brings it all back - I can't forget saying to the NGA if new technology and management did that to us, they could do it to anyone and they thought I was nuts. Not that it makes it any easier, I wish they had taken us seriously at the time, it might have had a few lessons. The WORST THING - did you see a Broad Left publication, some time ago saying how NUJ/NGA should stand together and Latin American News was a good example - the nerve, none of them ever showed their nose at the picket line. It just suits them, so they remember us.

9th April

Wednesday, 76th day. TNT Carlisle depot picketed by marching printers.

10th April

Thursday, 77th day. March to Wapping cancelled due to funeral. 300 pickets gather at Hellaby, Rotherham TNT depot. Delay Sun and Times two hours. North East printers march for jobs joined by hundreds, including two NUJ coaches.

11th April

Friday, 78th day. "Southend TNT distribution depot smashed up, with typewriters and furniture being wrecked by 40 or so printworkers. Also several lorries smashed. SOGAT and NGA threaten to discipline these pickets for not following their picketing guidelines". (Wapping Diary)



Picket

No.7

Sunday 13th April 1986

Full entry to Wapping, scabs out

Calling all good working-class people

Your support is needed at Wapping - any night or morning.

Good news, for eighty-two days now thousands of brave pickets; printers, young and old, men and women of the working class have withstood freezing cold, no money coming in, near total unpreparedness and charge after charge from the police strikebreakers, and fought back. Reinforcements are needed. Yes there have been many defeats, but also a few victories. We are strong, we are confident, join us at Wapping. Whatever happens printers will fight because there is no alternative, and together the class enemy can be beaten.

Printers and supporters have staked out the banner at Wapping. In this ex-docklands area support is strong. There are no neutrals. You're either with the workers or a thug or apologist for Murdoch. Join us at Wapping.

It is no accident that the bosses choose Wapping to stage a worker-bashing drive. Nor accidental that they choose to put scab distribution depots in areas the capitalists have blighted—the Rotherham area or at Motherwell in the ex-mining heart of Lanarkshire. They would have one in Maerdy but the pit isn't shut yet. It is never too late to rally, join us at Wapping.

It us no accident that 'outsiders' are used; Maxwell, Shah, Murdoch and Black. But they're as British as the bobby. The bosses and their hired thugs always rally. It is up to the workers to rally to the Wapping banner.

"Don't scab for the bosses,

Don't listen to their lies.

Us workers never had a chance

Unless we organise."

Join us at Wapping, any night or morning.

Tuesday morning

The skeleton staff of scabs at Bouverie Street were given a warm reception by 300 tightly-grouped pickets who took up the pavement fifty yards either side of the main entrance. A number of soft white objects flew at the scabs across the street to supplement the crawlers' breakfast.

The heart of the picket was fifty or so women who arrived early, took up position right across from the main doors, and greeted scabs with loud chants and songs about what we were going to do with Rupert Murdoch "early in the morning". Scabs peering out from high windows were invited to join us in the street, but told to be careful which side of the road they landed. The strikebreaking clones in blue were clearly surprised by the strength of the picket and called up reinforcements, afraid perhaps that the strikers would walk into the building.

Byfleet depot halted

Congratulations to the 200 printers and fifty local supporters, who felt proud to be part of the Brookbank Park picket on Tuesday night, so organised and so successful. Police strikebreakers were made fools of and kept dancing all night. They were begging for mercy, even trying to exchange prisoners for vans. When the vans tried to move out police were trapped on the bonnet as the pickets surged forward. The dozens of white vans were kept in the depot all night.

An attempt was made to have an 'agreement' with the police. But you can't make deals with the strikebreakers who right away broke it in any case and pickets sealed up the depot tight.

This determined picket meant nothing moved and a great number of TNT staff were turned away. More of the same would soon end the dispute.

Wednesday night warehouse march

Some fifteen hundred Sogat Central Branch plus supporters marched from Tower Hill to Virginia Street. Police horses were lined up. The picket, though not successful in hampering distribution, showed the deepening mood of militancy amongst printers in the last three months. The class fibre of warehouse comes out more and more as pickets chanted "And the coppers are the biggest scabs of all" to the tune of I'd rather be a picket than a scab. Pickets displayed their rejection of any 'deals' with the police.

About 11:30 pickets decided to retreat from the road to Wellclose. The filth tried to nick a picket but he was rescued by the timely action of other pickets who moved in quickly. The police were met with a solid wall and knew they had a fight on their hands if they pursued. Maybe the strikebreakers in uniform would have won the fight, maybe not, at any rate the pickets were ready for them and the police retreated due to the action of the pickets to look after one of their own.



Thursday night

About 100 gathered in unusually cold April weather for a picket outside Pentonville prison. At the gates printers chanted "Maggie in" and "Larry and Ronnie out" in reference to two printers being held inside for a week. Protesters showed their support for the men being held as hostages by the capitalist jailers.

As one demonstration of the ranks increasingly taking the strike into their own hands, one picket climbed up to place a strike poster over the entrance sign. A screw who tried to grab the printer's leg had to give up.

As the strike enters its twelfth week the endurance through a very harsh winter is being transformed into the boldness of the strikers in hopes of better weather.



"Newspaper distribution was stopped in Canvey Island, Essex ... Central London printers turned up at Menzies depot at Southend. Although one large van did manage to get into the depot, nothing left by 9:15am. Picketing by the workers had started at 2 o'clock that morning.

"The pickets charged the police, who were caught on the hop, with startling violence when a sergeant allegedly 'went berserk' and started lashing out at the workers.

Trouble flared as police went in for arrests and punch-ups which led to injuries to police, scabs and pickets. Strikebreakers' cars were damaged."

(Morning Star 12/4/86)

Friday morning

Lewisham printers' support group and Sogat members picketed the wharf of newspaper supplier 'Convoy'. Contact was made with drivers. The T&G stewards obstructed the picket and actively encouraged scabbing. There will be regular Friday pickets at 6:30am, New Kings St, Deptford.

Scabs caught by surprise

What a shock two journalists must have had one morning when they thought they were protected by the boys in blue. They threw copies of the Sun at pickets and gave them the two finger treatment. They did not realize there were more pickets roaming around. The look on their faces when they went down under a hail of fists!

79th Day of the picket

Saturday night some three thousand pickets moved into the Wapping area. A march of thousands was held from Tower Hill. Pickets stationed themselves at all the exit roads, with the largest concentrations at Glamis Road and Thomas More. Just after midnight riot police and horses moved in to block off sections of the picket from moving. A line of scab lorries came out through Artichoke Hill and up Cannon Street Road, protected by lines of police. The scab drivers think they are clever in their thievery, as one said to a picket at the gate, "I'm not stealing printers' jobs, I'm stealing railworkers' jobs."

Letter

Dear Picket, being an NGA member present on Sunday 6th April and most Saturdays previously, I must say that I strongly disagree with your account of the picketing for that evening. The violence on this occasion was the heaviest I've seen so far. But far from coming from the police, the trouble was started by the 400-500 extremely angry pickets that were still around after the first scab convoy came out. The police put up with 10 minutes of concentrated stone- and bottle-throwing (the local pub was cleared of them) and in response to this they used horses and riot police. On this occasion they got some back. As far as I am concerned this is only to be applauded.

A load of ballots

Thousands of printers who have picketed Wapping are confronted with an offer of £6.29 and an extra day's holiday (Newspaper Society). The price members will pay? "A new technology clause and a new disputes procedure to cover all issues including disputes over new technology". And no prizes for guessing who gets the biggest screw from these 'new procedures'.

These ballots are connected with efforts to wind down the picketing at Wapping.

Notes

- Correction: Picket 6 reported 2000 pickets on the night of Saturday 5/4/86. This was an exaggeration.
- When Samantha Fox's video was put on in the pub pickets booed and chanted scab until it was stopped.
- RIRMA strikers solved their DHSS problems by going to the offices in groups.

Diary

- **Monday morning 7:30am Gray's Inn Road.**
Mass picket organised by clericals.
- **Wednesday evening 9pm Tower Hill to Wapping.**
March organised by Sogat London Central Branch. All welcome.
- Thursday evening, mass picket Wapping.
- Friday evening, unemployed/unwaged night at Wapping
- **Saturday night, 8:30pm Tower Hill.**
Organised by Sogat/NGA/AUEW.

Income: Times RIRMA collection £2; minders 20p, 20p, £5, £5, 50p; Sogat machine member £5; misc. £1.40; bookshop sales of Picket 3 (4-pager) £9.95; 'a worker' 50p.

Published by Sogat/NGA pickets not connected to any group or party.

Address: Picket, c/o 628 Tottenham High Road, London N17

At Wapping Lane



Friday morning



16th April

Wednesday, 83rd day. "When a large number of pickets, bored by hanging around the main gates at Wapping, walk off down a side street, they come across a TNT lorry out on a limb, with the cops unprepared. The windscreen is smashed and the few cops around get a good battering." (Wapping Diary)
Convoy of 20 Sogat drivers from Manchester Evening News vans form convoy for printers march for jobs.
News International puts three week limit on offer.

17th April

Thursday, 84th day. Three coachloads of London printworkers travel to Liverpool because strikebreaking is going on at Bemrose's which produces News of the World supplements. Baallot going on ...

DOCK: STOP MURDOCH: STOP MURDOCH
PICKET CONVOYS WHARF

Convoys supply newsprint to News International. They are blocked by the rest of Fleet Street. Show your support for the sacked printers. Assemble at the entrance at 6.30am. Called by Lewisham Print Support Group.

Friday 18 April 6.30am

19th April

Saturday, 86th day. Printers, miners, Silentnight strikers and locals picketed a WH Smith wholesaler in Newport, Gwent.

from Wapping Post
no. 4, 12th July

DAVE GARBUTT, Sogat branch rep for the Swindon area, had a late night on Saturday, April 19. He was at Wapping until three o'clock the next morning and did not return home

until 5.30 am.

An hour and a half later the police were knocking at his front door — and Dave was under arrest for conspiracy to cause criminal damage at Chipping Sodbury TNT

depot.

The police wanted to search his home and he said they had to have a search warrant.

They replied that under the new Criminal Evidence Act they didn't need a search warrant and proceeded to turn his home upside down.

His children, aged four and eighteen months, were roused from their beds. The police

searched even through his wife's underwear. When asked what they were looking for they replied: "A bus ticket."

Dave told them he would not deny he had hired a bus to take pickets to Chipping Sodbury but since he had not yet received a bill he didn't have any "ticket."

The police removed some of his Sogat union paraphernalia and then took him to Swindon

police station where he was held in cells for four hours until plain-clothed detectives took him by car to Chipping Sodbury police station.

He was given police bail at 7pm that evening (South and West Wales of Sogat 82 having provided him with a solicitor), and was told to return on Monday June 2.

On Friday May 30, he received a letter from the police saying all charges had been dropped.

Garbutt said last week: "I felt that the object of the exercise was to intimidate my colleagues and me from peaceful picketing."

It worked. They haven't been picketing locally. But they still come to Wapping on Saturday nights.

• FOOTNOTE: Twelve people in Dave Garbutt's Swindon area have been arrested in connection with the News International dispute.

Picket

no.8

Sunday 20th April 1986

All written contributions welcomed

It is horrifying that the National Executive Council is even discussing whether to purge its contempt in a futile attempt to end the sequestration order. Feelings are running high in striking chapels that an order to end the blacking on titles would be a stab in the back. Pressure from provincial branches to end the blacking order is very heavy. It is necessary to assail the officials to make them do what you want them to do.

Sunday 13th April

Departed from London at midnight. Arrived at Bemrose in Liverpool which is producing colour supplements. Fifty pickets Sogat (RIRMA and machine branches) saw Tony Mulhearn (leader of Liverpool City Council) who works at Bemrose. Also the Sogat FoC was very much in evidence. These were critical of the lobby/picket because the plant was having a scab ballot. The picket decided to go ahead. A clear majority of scab bastards at the plant were not prepared to walk out (both Sogat and NGA). Excuses of unemployment and recession in Liverpool. 3pm shift lobbied too with the same results. 4.30pm visited the printers marching for jobs in Preston, which was much more uplifting.

Monday morning

Forty pickets lobbied in Watford at printworks early in the morning. Met a mixed reaction from blacklegs doing supplements for Murdoch. Odham's/Sun printers is owned by Maxwell. Pickets find comments like "You never supported us." Whatever the case, there is no excuse for scabbing.

Three to four hundred actively picketed the old Times printworks in Gray's Inn Rd. A number of scabs operate out of this building. Pickets stretched out police lines up and down road, repeatedly surging into the road at the entrance when scabs appeared. Again the pickets showed a marked development of experience and confidence coming out of past strikes. Groups also stationed themselves on the entrance side of the road at each corner so that as scabs passed they would have to go through the contempt of their former workmates.

Wednesday night, 83rd day of picket

Sogat Central Branch (distribution/warehouse) showed clearly why no ballot was needed here to give unstinting support to the strike. About 1500 in all turned out on the night. Also present were banners of AUEW strikers and it was good to see the ever-present London Press Branch EPTU.

A march was held from Tower Hill to Wapping. En route a TNT despatch rider tried to ride through, but was surrounded and fled on foot. One picket was arrested, but other attempts to nick people were repulsed as the pickets closed ranks. A banner was rescued.

The picket stayed in the road at the Virginia St entrance till later when police strikebreakers began to try to clear the road. Immediately a march of several hundred was organised behind the warehouse banners. This march went down The Highway chanting and singing way past Glamis Road (the most easterly scab exit route). Contingents of police strikebreakers blocked every road south from The Highway. Perhaps 700-800 police were present, including reserves and patrolling vans.

As the procession passed Wapping Lane, about halfway on its route, a scab TNT lorry approached. It was surrounded for a while as pickets sought to express their wrath for these thieves. There was at least one arrest here as lines became intermixed and individuals momentarily isolated. But again many arrests were prevented by the quick reaction of the picket as a whole. This went on for a while.

A delighted march then proceeded. Essential experience is being gained on the streets at Wapping. On the return journey pickets sang lullabies to local residents, but also stopped at each junction to wake up vanloads of sleeping police and tell them what they thought of their scabby efforts.

Thursday night

Thursday's picket of the Luton TNT depot was the most successful to date. Local TU members plus 150 Sogat and NGA pickets blocked the main entrance from midnight till 6am. 35 vans were trapped inside and no newspapers were distributed. At 3am the scab drivers asked to go home. The managers at the depot refused the drivers' request -- if the men left early then they wouldn't get paid for the night. The TNT drivers had meetings through the night and watched amazed as the police attempted to push back the pickets. The line held all night. There was plenty of pushing and shoving, but no violence. At 5am the scabs left the depot to go home

and were given a police escort. 20 pickets stayed on to check there wouldn't even be minimal distribution. An interesting aside -- the TNT scabs talked of organising their own day of action. It's a bit late -- about 3 months too late.

Friday morning

About 60 printers and Lewisham Support Group picketed Convoy's wharf at Kings St, Deptford. There was some contact with drivers but not much, due to the hostility of T&G stewards. Some delay was caused. Again next week, 6.30am.

Friday night

There were 30 unemployed people from groups in London, Birmingham, Plymouth and Sheffield who came to support your picket tonight (150 all told?). A dozen of us stayed all night (10 hours), sustained by the marvellous vanworkers. Thanks! We shared experiences and ideas.

The cops began to gang up nearby and then grabbed one of us -- about 20 people dived in and another bloke was nicked. This only made us more determined to stay. Later a local resident, angry at being refused entry into Wellclose Square in his car, slagged off the cops who chased him up the road. They smashed all his windows, dragged him out and beat him up, till pickets approached. The cops then tried to refuse entry to a food van but gave in after a barrage of insults. What a bunch of mindless fascists!

Scabs are being recruited from the desperate unemployed at suburban job centres -- our movement aims to make people think before taking any job (wages, conditions, alternatives etc.) and to fight for our basic needs. We support you. Waged/unwaged -- solidarity! (Tottenham Claimant)

Saturday night

About 3,000 pickets marched down to Wapping from Tower Hill on a miserable wet night. They included warehouse, comps, clericals, machine etc. plus a welcome contingent from the Lesbian & Gay printworkers support group who picket regularly. Large groups stayed at the top of Thomas More and Glamis Road while smaller ones blocked Cannon Street Rd and King David Lane at its north end. Large numbers of pickets roamed around the area, sensing perhaps that moving groups of pickets are harder to police than stationary ones.

The rain increased steadily through the late evening, and the first lot of four or five artics came out of Glamis Road around 11pm after a fight during which some of them were bricked. Pickets from Thomas More came up, but the police brought in reinforcements including horses and riot squads, and cleared the road. Pickets then returned in large numbers to Cannon Street Rd, where a scab car was mobbed and arrests were resisted physically. Another larger convoy left the scab plant around 1.30am. Saturday night picketing is still recovering from TUC5 sabotage by having a Sunday afternoon thing two weeks ago.

--Additional notes on Saturday night, 12th April: Later in the night we were confronted by about 200 scab-lovers in blue led by 30 or 40 on horseback spread across The Highway. They ushered everybody back to Cannon Street Rd, men, women and children regardless. We jumped over the railings. The horses came right up and we were met with a barrage of abuse. The cops arrested a picket on the pavement but he was grabbed back from the police, a short tug-of-war with fists and feet flying; we won. The poor chap was hurt, but it was a victory. When the scab convoy came out it was brought to a standstill at Cannon Street Road and had to sit there for several minutes with the crowd round about. It must have given them a lot of confidence in these escorts. Two lorries returned shortly after for windscreen repairs. The sooner all pickets realise that under the shield and the vizor there is a yellow coward, only brave in numbers, the better for beating him to it by increasing our numbers. Later, the police strikebreakers held parades of horses and vans up and down The Highway, revelling in their strikebreaking role. But no-one should say we were beaten on Saturday. The mere fact that the police have to adopt these tactics makes a victory for us.

- Wednesday 23rd April 8.30pm march, Tower Hill to Wapping organised by Sogat London Central
- Saturday 26th April 8.30pm march, Tower Hill to Wapping organised by NGA/Sogat/AUEW strikers
- Thursday 1st May 8pm march, Tower Hill to Wapping organised by SERTUC
- Saturday, 3rd May 7.30pm Printworkers march for Jobs arrives. March from Embankment, organised by Sogat/NGA/AUEW strikers.

--News of the World NGA scabs:

- E. Garrod, 6 Virginia Close, South Benfleet, Essex. 03745-51653
- M. Attewell, 89b Longlands Rd, Sidcup, Kent. 300-3219
- B. Smith, 68 Lullingstone Avenue, Swanley, Kent. 0322-69422
- B. Warner, 36 Hawkhurst Way, West Wickham, Kent. 777-2487
- D. Pettitt, 2 Middle Boy, Abridge, Essex. 849-2492

from NCCL's "No Way in Wapping"

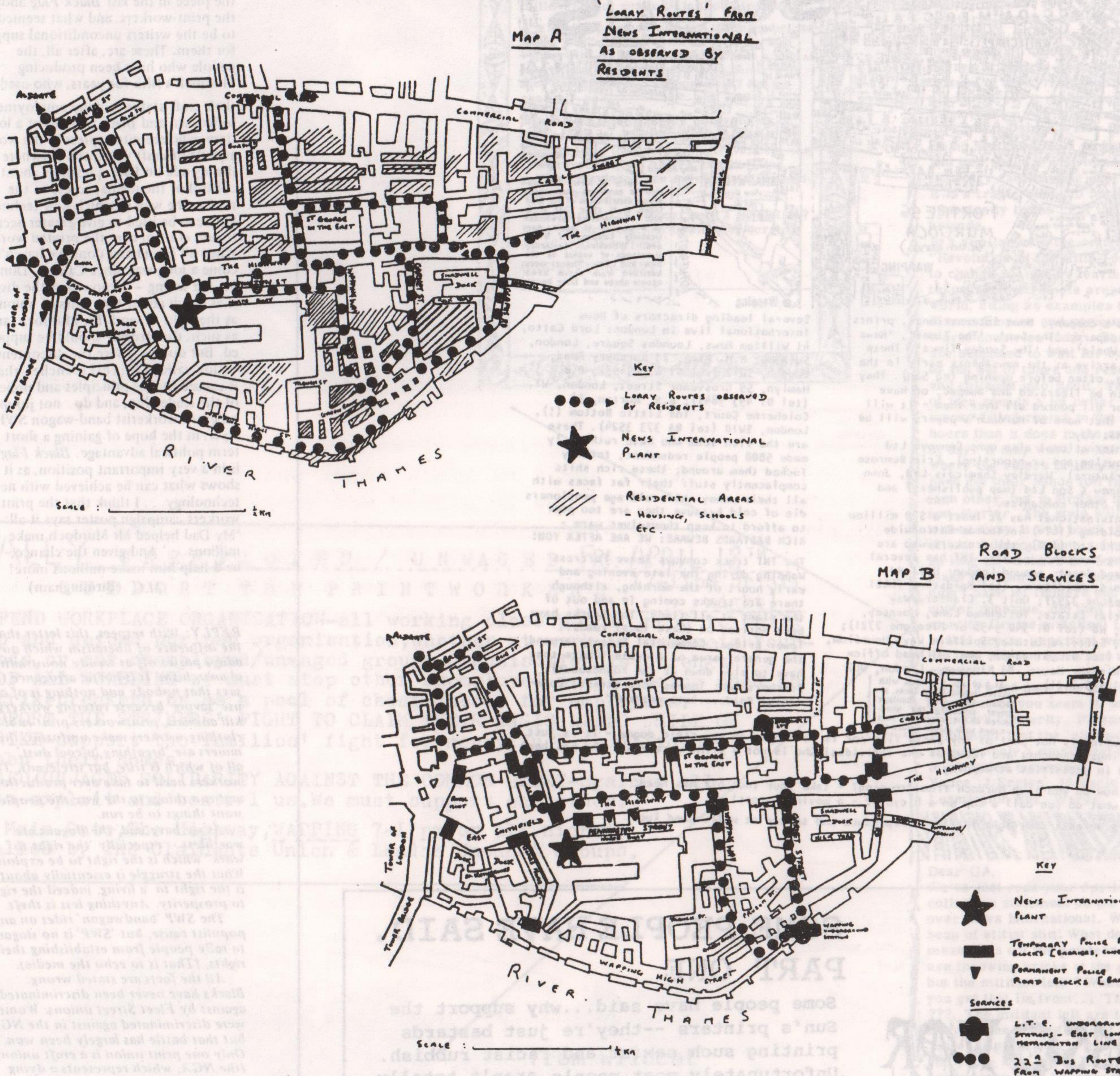
Profile of Wapping

1.5 Wapping is an isolated riverside hamlet. In effect it is an island which is cut off from the rest of the old borough of Stepney by the London dock. Its southern boundary is the River Thames, to the west is St Katharine's Dock, to the east is the King Edward Memorial Park, and to the north is The Highway.

1.6 The population of Wapping is estimated to be approximately 3,500. About 75% of the population is white, of which 25% are pensioners. The black and ethnic minority population is mainly of Bangladeshi and Afro-Caribbean origin. In 1983, a London Borough of Tower Hamlets survey concluded that 15.1% of the population was unemployed, while a 1984 survey conducted for the London Docklands Development

Corporation found that 20.2% were out of work. Of those who live in Wapping and have jobs, approximately 9 out of 10 have to leave the area to go to work.

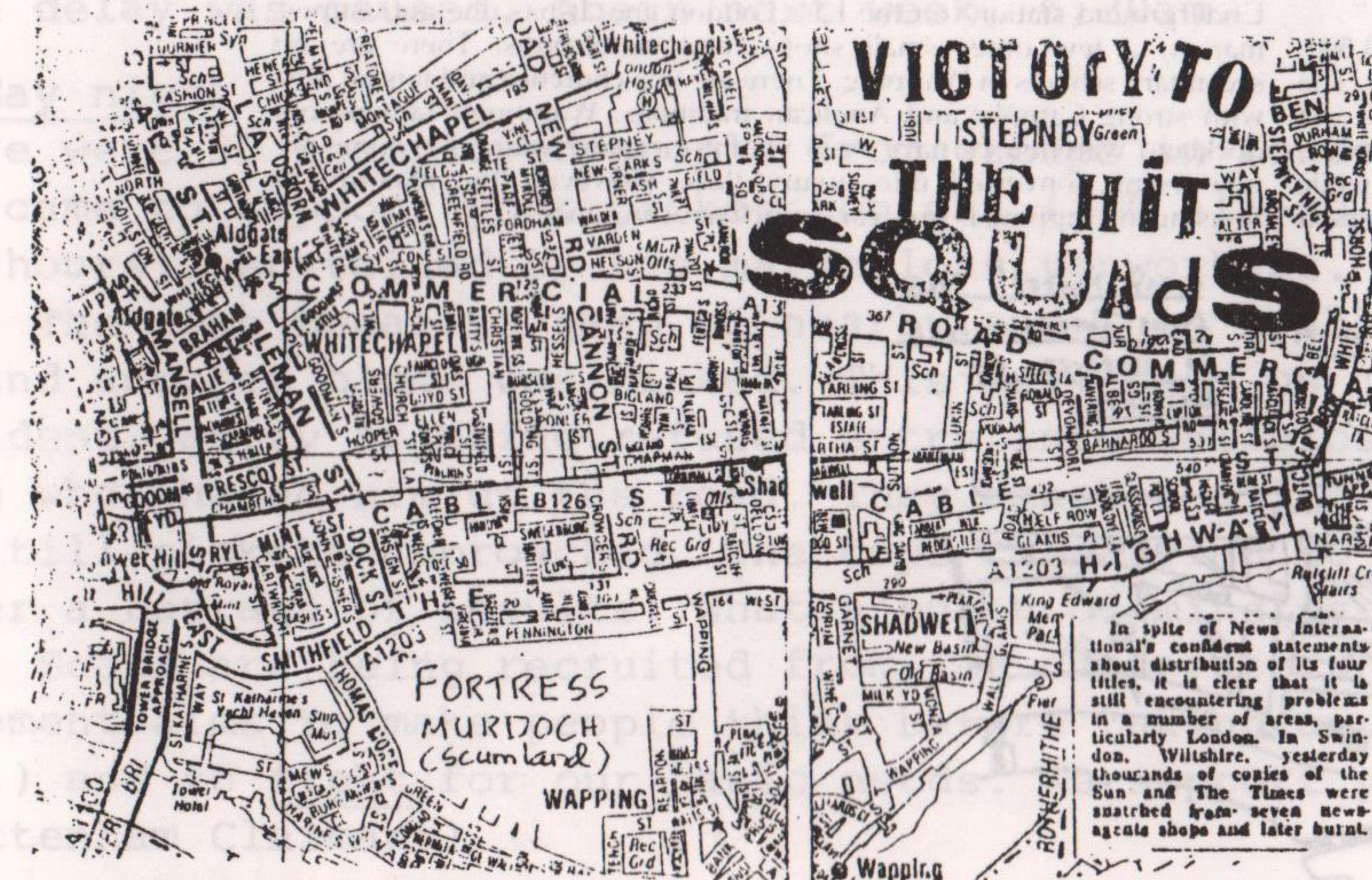
1.7 Wapping is served by only one bus route, the 22a, and one Underground station, on the East London line. It has one mini supermarket, a few other small shops and eight pubs. There are no secondary schools in Wapping. There are two churches and it is an area with strong Catholic and Anglican traditions. Wapping's famous old dockland warehouses have been vacant for many years, but some are now being converted into luxury flats. However, the majority of housing in Wapping is pre-war council housing stock.



from government pamphlet

- 1.7 The history and character of Wapping are bound up closely with London's role as a port but the difficulty experienced by early settlers in draining this part of the alluvial plain of the Thames meant that the area was built up comparatively late in history. The Highway east from the City was built by the Romans, but it was not until the Middle Ages that construction of a river wall and draining of the area were undertaken in earnest. By the end of the fifteenth century a thin line of shipyards, docks, wharves, houses and taverns stretched along the north bank of the river as far as Limehouse. This development was served by a road - Wapping High Street - running inland just behind the warehouses and other later buildings.
- 1.8 In the eighteenth century, as the trade of the Port of London grew, the traditional method of unloading ships in mid-stream on to lighters to transfer the goods to riverside wharves became increasingly difficult. The river was becoming more congested and there were tremendous problems of theft. To overcome these problems and protect the future of the port enclosed docks were introduced. The London Docks were opened in 1805 and St Katharine Docks in 1828. High brick walls, a striking feature in the present Wapping scene, were built to protect the valuable cargoes which included tobacco, wine, brandy, wool, tea, ivory and rubber. These were stored in massive warehouses with deep vaults which extended under the quays.
- 1.9 The St Katharine and London Docks were the first closures in the late 1960s. Now most of the Port of London's traffic has moved downstream to make use of the modern container and roll-on-roll-off facilities at Tilbury. As the Docks shut, local industries and businesses closely associated with the port have disappeared and people too have left in search of new jobs and homes. While many of the old warehouses have vanished, either as a result of war damage or to make way for redevelopment, substantial lengths of dock wall and some warehouses, especially along the river, remain.
- 1.10 Much has already been achieved in Wapping. The Borough Council has secured the reclamation for development of Western Dock. The Council has built attractive new housing around the former Eastern Dock and has, with assistance from the Government's Urban Programme, provided much needed amenities including open spaces, a sports centre and a health centre. The private sector too has shown interest in Wapping as seen at St Katharine's, and along the riverfront. These schemes are a valuable start but a major task of regeneration remains.

selections from anarchist publications



Murdoch's company, News International, prints the main papers: 'The Sun', 'The Times', 'News of the World' and 'The Sunday Times'. These papers arrive at the newsagents early in the morning, often before opening (eg 5am). They can then be liberated and dumped, or have water or oil poured all over them - it will ensure that none of Murdoch's papers will be sold that day.

News International also owns Convoys Ltd (warehousing and transporting), Eric Benrose Ltd (printers), Wardley Chemicals Ltd, John Bartholomew & Son Ltd (map publishers) and several other companies.

News International has at least a \$20 million shareholding (16%) in Thomas Nationwide Transport Ltd (TNT), the truckers who are carrying Murdoch's papers. TNT has several bases and depots around London: Hall Rd, Aylesford, Maidstone, (tel Maidstone 76601 or Freefone 3292); Unit 3, Cranford Way Industrial Estate, Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, London, N8 (tel 01 340 9496 or Freefone 2721); Unit 6, Spitfire Estate, Spitfire Way, Hounslow, London (tel 01 561 2345); the TNT head office is at Windsor House, 83 Kingsway, London, WC2 (tel 01 405 8621).

At 5.40 am, five men with saws, found their faces at a trucked one TNT haulage driver, smashing the wind screen of his lorry. The man escaped with minor injuries.

This leaflet is not part of any party line nor is it linked to any rigid dogma - it is just the feelings, thoughts and ideas of one individual who is not a print worker but who has been involved in activities at Wapping.

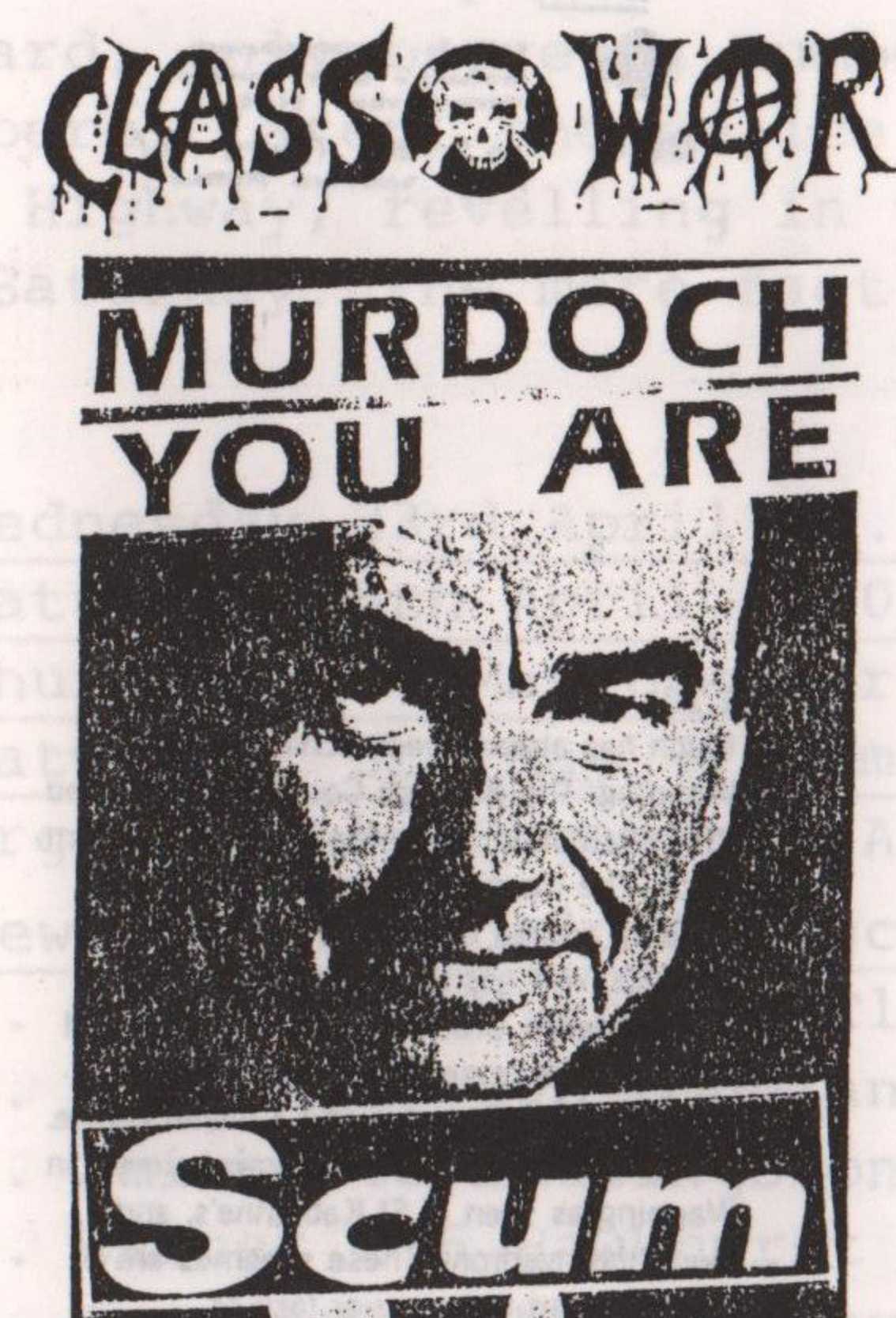
A joke: how do you stop Murdoch from drowning? - take your foot off his head!
..... what do you call a cop on a bicycle? - a moving target!
* this is an anti-copyright leaflet - reproduce and spread at will. Good luck!

SOME PEOPLE HAVE SAID. PART ONE

Some people have said...why support the Sun's printers --they're just bastards printing such sexist and racist rubbish. Unfortunately most people aren't totally 'right-on' and need to eat like you and me. Print workers do a job like anyone, boring and with no control over what they do. During the NHS and the miners strikes the printers were in the forefront of giving both financial and industrial support. It's only through struggle that anything will ever change.

PART TWO

Some people have said..(part2)..why support the printers, they all earn about £40000 a year. Bullshit! Maybe 50 out of 50000 earnt £40000 - after 25 years of skill learning. Why criticise those who forced a good wage out of their boss. Good luck to them!



Dear friends,

I was a bit concerned when I read the piece in the last *Black Flag* about the print-workers, and what seemed to be the writers unconditional support for them. These are, after all, the people who have been producing Murdoch's filth for years, who used

their craft status to deny employment to women and Black people for a long time, who seem to represent the worst aspects of craft unionism. Nowhere on the agenda do I see questions about control of the media, access to the media, the way in which new technology can be used to give greater access to and control over the printed word. When all is said and done we haven't come a long way since Caxton. Don't get me wrong - I know that the dispute is as much about the rights of unionists as the right to work for Murdoch, and as such, the struggle should be supported. But do not ignore the discontent within various EETPU branches, that is caused by the principles and policies of the leadership; and do not jump on every workerist band-wagon SWP style, in the hope of gaining a short term political advantage. *Black Flag* is in a very important position, as it shows what can be achieved with new technology. ... I think that the print-workers campaign poster says it all: 'My Dad helped Mr Murdoch make millions. ... And given the chance, he'd help him make millions more!'

M.C. (Birmingham)

REPLY: With respect, this letter shows the influence of liberalism which nowadays passes off as trendy non-traditional anarchism. It is liberal arrogance that says that nobody and nothing is of any use 'saving' because catering workers kill animals, printworkers print rubbish clothing workers make uniforms, the miners are 'breathing in coal dust' - all of which is true, but irrelevant. The workers need to take over production and run things in the way the people want things to be run.

As we have said, the slogans are worthless - especially 'the right to work' which is the right to be exploited. What the struggle is essentially about is the right to a living, indeed the right to prosperity. Anything less is theft.

The SWP 'bandwagon' rides on any populist cause, but 'SWP' is no slogan to rally people from establishing their rights. (That is to echo the media).

All the facts are stated wrong: Blacks have never been discriminated against by Fleet Street unions. Women were discriminated against in the NGA but that battle has largely been won.

Only one print union is a craft union (the NGA, which represents a dying craft). People thrown out without redundancy, on a financial trick by advice of a crooked lawyer, are not in a position to battle for control of the media. Only with social revolution would they be in such a position. The campaigns for 'access to media' etc. mean by journalists, who are writing in the press now and are responsible for it, not the printers.

This 'anti-work' attitude poses the question: What is the acceptable way of earning one's living under capitalism? State grant? Private means? What?

WE DO NOT SUPPORT THE PRINTERS

We do not weep buckets of crocodile tears because the printworkers have lost their cushy, over-paid jobs. Join the club!

We do not give unquestioning support to all industrial workers, at the expense of 800 million hungry peasants in the Third World.

It's not the printers who are throwing bricks at the police but the militant left. So why support the militant left? Who wants a socialist tyranny? If we support their demo, will they come back and support ours? Not a chance!

Green Anarchist strategy is revolution on the periphery. For this we should look for support from the convoy, the travellers, the new travellers, the bikers, the ALF, the young unemployed, the survivalists, the radical greens.

Will the printers support such a revolution? If we scratch their back, will they scratch ours? Will they, fuck!

GREEN ANARCHIST.

RALLY UNEMPLOYED / UNWAGED FRI APRIL 18TH

SUPPORT THE PRINTWORKERS (7-11pm or all night)

DEFEND WORKPLACE ORGANISATION-all working class people need to build up and defend our own organisation, whether at work, in our neighbourhoods, or our unemployed/unwaged groups. Organisation is strength! STOP ALL SCABBING-we must stop other unemployed people being used as strikebreakers, or as a pool of cheap labour for employers. SUPPORT THE STRIKERS' FIGHT TO CLAIM THEIR BASIC NEEDS WHILE ON STRIKE-support the families' fight for money, fuel, food etc, and to keep their homes.

WAGED/UNWAGED SOLIDARITY AGAINST THE COMMON ENEMY-against all who exploit and control us. We must support each other.

-at Main Gate, The Highway, WAPPING 7-11pm (or all night).
Called by The Claimants Union & London Unwaged Groups.

from Wildcat

The Bold Face of Print

Wapping looks like the end of an era for newspaper workers in Britain. The fact that British print is about ten years behind the rest of the world in technological development bears testimony to the bitterly fought struggles of print workers in recent years.

The traditional strong position of print workers has relied on the dependence of the bosses on highly skilled labour and a production process which is very easily disrupted. This has meant that printers have been able to win concessions from their bosses by means of small-scale section by section strikes (with perhaps some 'sympathetic' blacking by other printers), which are perfectly compatible with the structures of trade unionism and the maintenance of craft divisions.

This has always been the form that struggles have taken on Fleet Street, and Fleet Street workers are probably the most trade unionist section of workers in the world. The only time there has been united action was when they were

picketed out by the miners during the 1974 strike. It took three days!

Now, though, it's different. Sectional struggles cannot defeat major technological restructuring. Craft manual workers like compositors and proof-readers, whose key skills put them in such a strong bargaining position can now be got rid of completely by 'single key-stroke' - the editing and composing of text for printing by a single operator (usually a journalist). The production of large-circulation papers and magazines can now be divided between several different locations, making it easier for bosses to limit the damage done by strikes in one plant.

We see nothing in the present struggle so far which suggests that the printers are overcoming their past limitations but this doesn't mean they inevitably won't. To the thousands of printers who've already been sacked, it must be more and more obvious that the old methods of struggle are a dead end.

Dear GA,
Here we go again! In a valiant last ditch stand against relevance; GA warns against consorting with the likes of printers, tainted as they are with money. Sod the workers, it seems, the revolution will come from the travellers, the ALF, the greens and the young unemployed. This is pure fantasy. The world is undeniably a richer place for these groups, but to imagine that they alone can transform society is absurd. It is no good dismissing workers simply because they work. The printers' strike, however limited in its aims, represents an attempt by a group of workers to take a degree of control over the central feature of their lives, their workplace. Surely it makes sense to support them, while at the same time talking about wider issues. Being beaten up on a picket line and lied about in court and media is a very radicalising experience. It is a tragic waste to leave this opportunity to the 'Eat the rich' brigade.

In a similar vein the article, 'Revolution in the Hills' urges us to change society by leaving it and taking for the remote areas of the world, citing as examples the Roman Empire and various Third World countries today. There, we are supposed to wait for capitalism to run out of taxes and resources and collapse into itself. This sort of idea sounds a lot better in smoke-filled rooms in the early hours than it does in the cold light of day. It may work in Kurdistan, where the rulers of Iran and Iraq have got their hands full fighting each other, but in Britain it's a non-starter. The state will not wither away; it will bomb the rebellious hillpeople into submission, as long as workers are willing to make the bombs. The Romans didn't have jet fighters and helicopter gunships, did they? (Not to mention Cruise missiles) Land squats are an important weapon, but they are not sufficient in themselves.

GA is a good paper by and large, but at times you seem to delight in your own obscurity. Please try to remember that the 'alternative' scene is only a small part of a much wider movement.

Yours, J. Eccles. 16 Eagle St. Leamington Spa. Warks.

Dear GA,
We've just read your April-May collective statement on the fight over News International. What a heap of elitist shit! What do you mean 'it's not the printers who are throwing bricks at the police but the militant left'? Where did you get that lie from... 'The Sun' ??? The militant left are too busy flogging their rags to fight the State (like you?). It's the printers and young kids and miners and anarchists who have been involved in most of the battles. We're not supporting the militant left - we're supporting the fight against the bosses and their State. We're part of that fight; it's not someone else's struggle. And you at GA reckon you'll only support someone if they'll support you back - just like Militant and Socialist Worker; 'I'll buy your paper if you'll buy mine.' SHIT! Well, we'll leave you new age puritans to look for support from head-banging bikers (so they're not macho and racist?) and neo-fascist survivalist meatheads. Us, we'll go out and try to fight alongside ordinary people against the shit that's coming down. And when the revolution happens, we'll drop a line to your middle class hideout in the hills to let you know...

So long suckers! Anarchy and Anger, Dave Estate and Libby Rate, Leicester.

PS. At least one of us used to like GA....

21st April

Monday, 88th
day of strike
TUC lobby.
622 arrests at
Wapping so far.



Picket

no.9

Monday 28th April 1986

Monday morning lobby, 21st April

Three hundred sacked printworkers held a successful lobby in fine style outside the TUC. It always seems to rain on these occasions and quite a few were still distinctly damp from the previous Saturday's Wapping picket.

The 300 were lobbying Sogat's leaders meeting to discuss withdrawing the blacking order on Murdoch's titles and thereby freeing the union's assets from the sequestrators. Feelings were running high that this was not the way forward and shouts of "No sellout" and "No surrender" greeted NEC members as they arrived. It was felt that the only purging at the TUC should be of Eric Hammond and his scabs not Sogat's High Court contempt. Brenda Dean disappointed the lobby by telling them to picket Wapping instead of TUC headquarters and by her refusal to meet a delegation of FOCs representing the sacked printworkers.

The meeting went on all day with no word from inside, and after several hours most of the demo filtered away. At 4.25pm a spokesman emerged from the building with a short statement that the situation was under review but that no decision had been made on the purging of contempt. The union was in a difficult position nationally. It was a short statement from what was obviously a very long meeting. Brenda Dean left later by a side exit.

Tuesday/Wednesday Cannock Chase picket, 22/23rd April

Left London at 2pm. Arrived early evening at the TNT depot at Wimblebury in drenching rain. Started picketing immediately in a small road to the gate. Soon an artic came tearing out right through the middle of 400-500 greatly angered pickets who beat on the lorry's sides. Police strikebreakers who were all continually bringing in reinforcements tried unsuccessfully to clear the road for the scab lorries. Two lorries coming in were slowed down and acquainted with the ire of the staunch pickets. Arrests were made and there were tussles over prisoners. The next lorry to drive up thought better of it and turned away and almost all the police then withdrew.

Shortly after that the Printers March for Jobs arrived to great cheering. The marchers are our pride, decked out in smart yellow coats for protection. Along with them were small contingents of miners from North and South Staffs, a miners wives group, a Labour Party branch plus other workers and the unemployed. In all there were about 600 or so. Leaving some pickets on the gate most went off to Cannock social club where all had a good time. Miners and marchers sang the marchers' song and the Scargill song.

Later the body of pickets marched to another depot near Cannock where a number of scab white vans were parked. Large rubbish skips were pulled into the laneway. By 3am, not really knowing where we were, the entrance securely barricaded, 100 pickets wandered back to the nearby main road. Amazingly, at intervals, two TNT lorries (presumably en route to another depot) passed by and regretted it.

Work finished, the pickets marched back impressively to the miners welfare club. When it was realised that one picket was still held prisoner a march began to the police station to chants of "Let him go, let him go." However, the march fell apart, and when the coaches arrived at 4.30am all piled on exhausted and soaked. A few stayed behind to ensure the prisoner's well-being.

Wednesday residents meeting, 23rd April

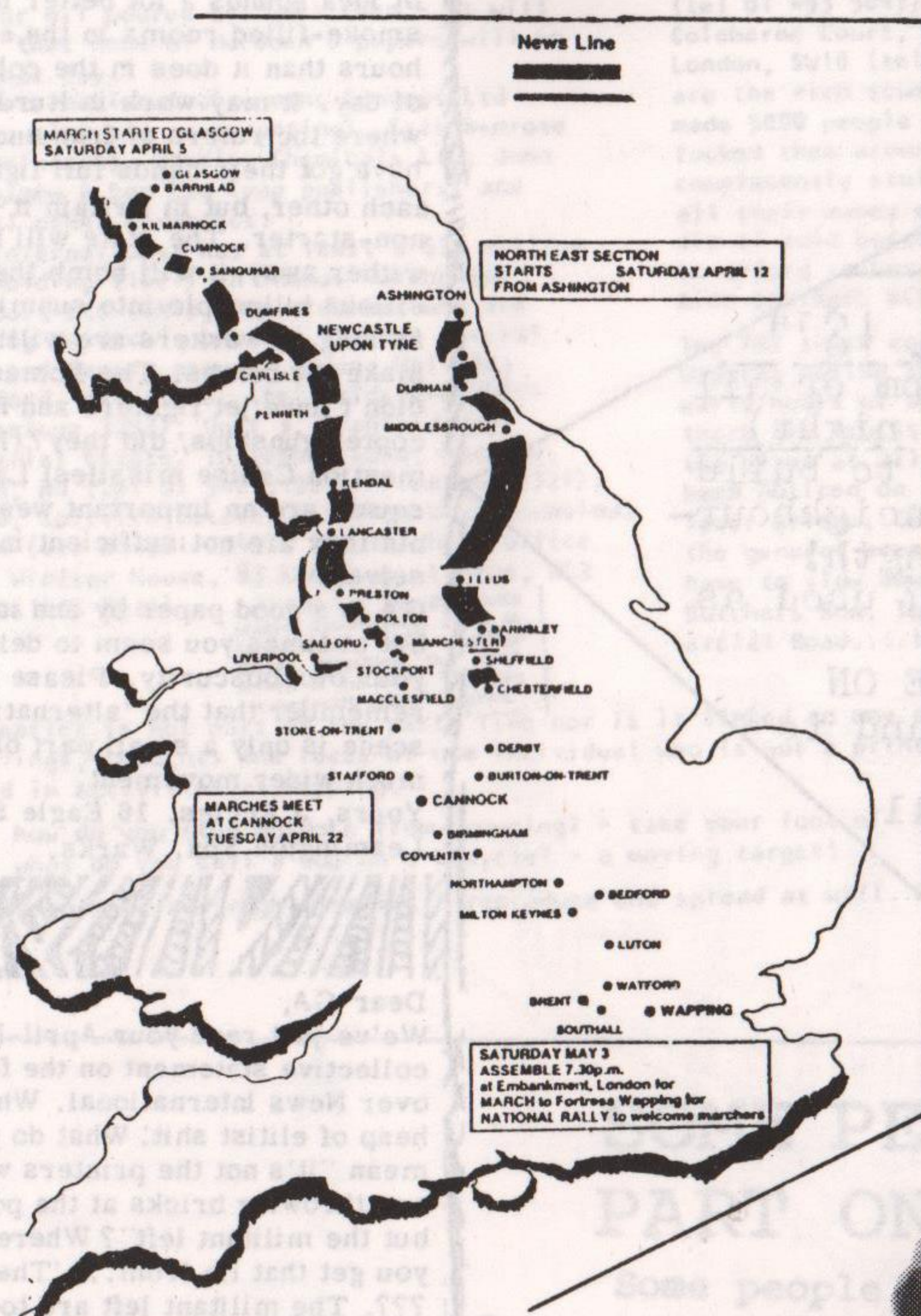
Yet another local residents meeting was very supportive. A local Printworkers Support Group held their meeting (about 60 people) almost on-site at The Highway Club, Dellow Street. The residents were obviously thinking more deeply about the dispute and the reasons behind the failure to secure major successes and victories.

One of the local residents asked before the meeting why miners had been asked to speak. The answer was soon given. The Kent miner spoke of the effects on communities as being the same in each dispute - of being under siege. Police tactics and harassment here in Wapping are nothing new. And miners too had the same problems with other unions and their lack of support. They were isolated by union leaders who were blinkered to major situations and issues. There has been picketing from Kent and every Kent miner is

Thursday 1st May 8pm march from Tower Hill

24th April

Thursday, 91st day. Sogat branches have assets ordered returned from sequestration in move by courts to isolate branches. News of one-day walkout in Murdoch's Perth, Australia plant after management refuses to allow two visiting Sogat officials to enter premises.



Cannock Chase



levied to help the printworkers (even though Sogat nationally has no levy). Even in Kent Tory heartlands many outside the dispute were radicalized by the experience of the strike. And it has heightened people's awareness of what is happening around them.

There were many practical suggestions to step up the picket. A march was mooted. There hasn't been a residents' march for five weeks now. Support groups are not doing their job if mid-week meetings are not closing with a trek to the picket line. The only effective way to support picketing is to picket. The next meeting is at 7pm on Tuesday, 29th April at 196 Cable Street. All are welcome.

Wednesday night, 23rd April

About 1,500 set off from Tower Hill for Wapping behind the Sogat London Central Branch banner to the strains of jolly music. Just before 10pm the marchers came face-to-face with two lines of police strikebreakers in chorus-line formation along The Highway, just west of the top of Wapping Lane. Ten yards behind them was a row of scabs on horseback. In an act of double confusion the chief steward urged the pickets to turn their banners round and march back the way they had come, while the chief policeman urged the 1,000-strong crowd to disperse or face arrest. The lorries were coming out of Wapping Lane and turning east into The Highway. The mood of the pickets was to stay put. It took about 15 minutes of official hectoring to wear down their resistance. The march returned to Virginia Street where police began hustling them off the road.

At about 10.45 the Grand Old Duke of York marched several hundred back towards Wapping Lane, accompanied by the oompah music. Within a hundred yards of a single line of foot-police he did a U-turn around a traffic island. Most people followed him back.

The pickets were told that they had made their point. The pickets are making their point 24-hours a day at Wapping, Gray's Inn Road and Bouverie Street, when they do not have the numbers to do more. The stewards treated Wednesday night like some sort of keep-fit exercise. Many pickets were disgruntled with the stewarding. It was a testimony to the pickets' tolerance of those who openly patronise and humiliate them in front of cops and scabs. It was a depressing evening but the spirit of the pickets should mean a quick recovery.

Thursday night, 24th April

The police outnumber the pickets all evening. They go by in vans and cars every few minutes. But there's a good crowd of stalwarts opposite the main gate - vocal as usual. Pickets shout "Scab, scab, scab", "Sca-ab", or just plain "Scab" depending on mood. Five NUR members from Liverpool Street Station have seen the May Day and 3rd May march and rally posters and are making their first visit to Wapping. They'll be back with more friends and colleagues, and spreading the word. The 24-hour pickets at all three sites are very important.

Friday morning, 25th April: Pickets hold the main gate for 30 minutes

From 6.30am numbers at Wellclose Street opposite the Wapping main gate started to increase. Word had got round that the scab journalists were to meet inside the plant later in the day. By 8am there were 500-600 pickets assembled behind the barriers - led by striking Sogat women. At 9.05 there was the realization in part of the crowd that the main gate was vulnerable. The cops were outnumbered. And there was a spontaneous surge across the road to the main gate. People were prepared to take risks. Marching past surprised police, the pickets blocked the entrance. Many of the pickets behind the barriers watched in amazement as the surge happened. Then their expressions changed to delight, and they too moved. Two-thirds of the pickets went forward to the gate. If only those who had stayed behind the barriers had taken the initiative like the Sogat women the gate could have been held for much longer. Nothing could enter or leave.

An armoured coach arrived bringing in scabs. It was unable to enter and had to turn away. Police and their scab friends in the coach could do nothing for a while as the crowd surrounded it - beating the sides and hurling abuse. It soon moved off down Pennington St. Fred Zimmerman, Murdoch's lapdog photographer, took photos from behind the razor wire.

For 30 minutes the gate was held. Rupert Murdoch's paper boys cleared a corridor at

**Saturday 3rd May 7.30pm Printers march for jobs arrives
march from Embankment**

the side for a couple of scabs to crawl in. Then cop reinforcements arrived and an orderly retreat began. There was much pushing and shoving and a couple of punches were thrown but only three arrests. The cops punched one of our pickets in the back of the neck while two were holding his arms. The builders on the adjacent site cheered and clapped and it was a great feeling. An hour later the police were reduced to petty vengeance. A passing driver tooted. He was stopped and arrested - unnecessary sounding of a car horn is an offence.

Friday morning 25th April

From 6.30am the Lewisham support group picketed Convoys Deptford wharf. A constructive picket of 25 was held. Again next Friday.

Saturday 26th April

Another Saturday picket at Wapping continued the long struggle for victory. After the usual march from Tower Hill, the police solidly blocked any advance past Wapping Lane with a thick blue line and horses. And the cops' hostility was palpable. There seemed because of this enforced halt to be a great deal of confusion about what to do next. People could not get to Glamis Road. There were 4,000 on the march itself, but after the aggravation at Wapping Lane many drifted away early. The march proceeded to go up Cannon Street Road to the north. A small line of police blocking the road was pushed out of the way. Arrests were made and one young lad was bloodied badly. Confusion reigned as to whether to go north or stay so that there was a split for a while until the march was brought together in The Highway again. Artics came and left without interference at Wapping Lane. After midnight, spontaneous marches began (e.g., one behind the Times Graphical Chapel banner). About 35 pickets walked up Dock Street, turned right at Cable Street, on through the back streets attempting to get to Glamis Road. Police in force again blocked our heroes when they tried to get past Wapping Lane. This good-natured march was brought to a halt by double this number of cops. And this was a pity as our accompanying music on a cassette player (thanks ladies) was improving. It was surrealistic. We started on a dreadful low with Andy Williams and graduated on to the Beach Boys.

There was no delay to distribution. By 1am almost a thousand pickets were confined in the Wellclose Street area across the road from the main gate.

Letter from unemployed Sogat member (21.4.86)

Why are you so critical of the union leaders in this dispute? They need all our support and are doing their best. You are all Socialist Workers with your own axe to grind. Where does the money for Picket come from? And who are you anyway?

Picket reply: We criticise union leaders because their best is not good enough. The authors of Picket are not Socialist Workers Party members and have little sympathy with that group. As bona fide strikers and printworkers the few SWP supporters were among a number of people invited to contribute to Picket early in the dispute - but in fact they declined. See overleaf for finances. Picket is published by Sogat and NGA members.

Letter from an active striker

Being a little more actively involved in this dispute, I have come across a number of union officials outside the dispute who have taken offence at words written within these pages, which have attacked our union's leadership through this dispute and in the run up to this long and bitter dispute.

As one who has found out the hard way in more than one industrial action, no one person regardless of years of experience or

★SOGAT★NGA★AUEW★NUJ★

NEWS INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE



SATURDAY DEMONSTRATIONS

**EACH SATURDAY EVENING THERE WILL
BE A MAJOR DEMONSTRATION AT
WAPPING IN SUPPORT OF THE
PRINTWORKERS DISMISSED BY**

RUPERT MURDOCH.

**ALL TRADE UNIONISTS AND SUPPORTERS
ARE ASKED TO GIVE MAXIMUM SUPPORT.**

MARCHES BEGIN AT 8-30^{PM} AT TOWER HILL
PLEASE BE THERE EVERY WEEK

rank can ever get this or any other industrial action right. But at last the membership, the real union, is beginning to get their acts together better. As with the Union Leadership's actions, the membership's actions will result in damage, but the majority are no longer going to sit back and suffer in the name of any one union or political party.

Not forgetting that this publication is the only newssheet that has regularly appeared through this dispute, keeping all those involved in this dispute regardless of which union or section we belonged to, informed of what is happening on the front line against our leaderships' secret meetings between each other and our employer.

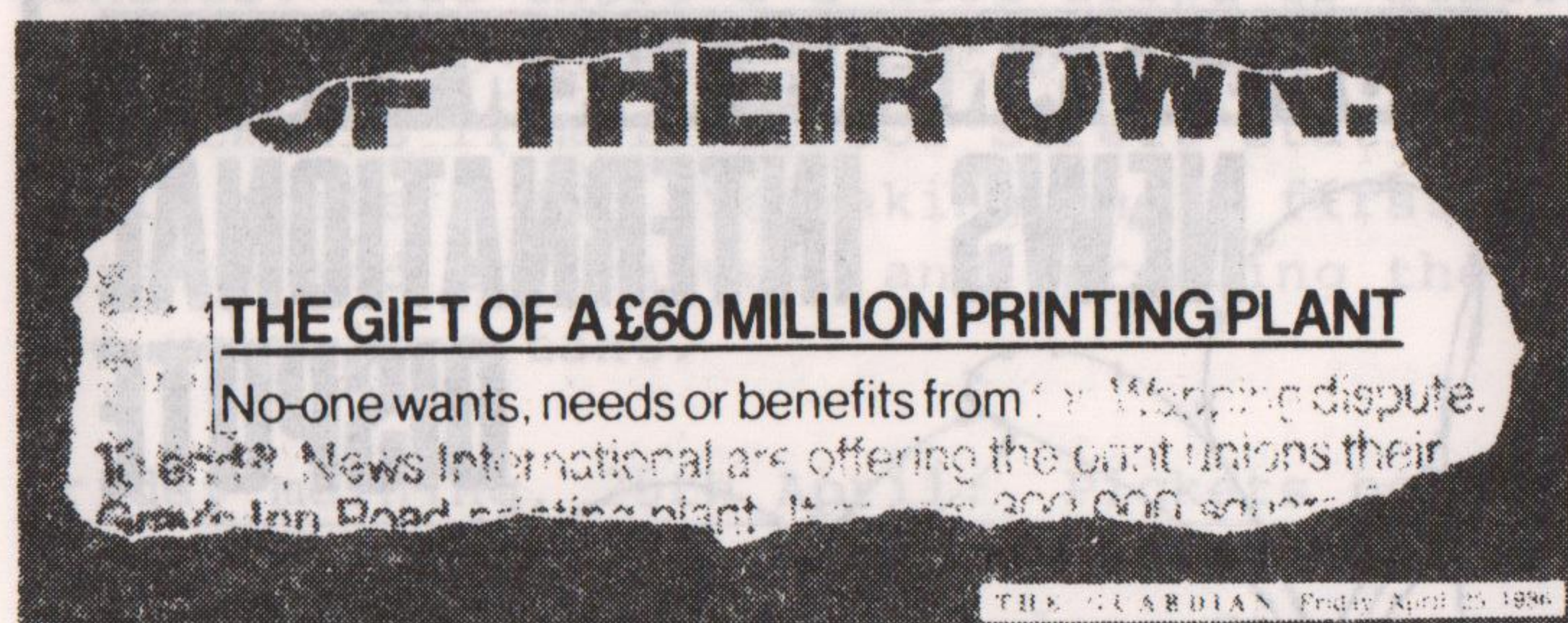
Income: Sogat machine section member £1; Sogat RIRMA strikers collections £6.50; NGA machine section members 60p, £1, £5, £7.50, 20p, £10; Sogat warehouse member £1; more sacked NGA/Sogat printers £4.20, 50p; Telegraph Sogat members £2; picketing friends £5, £5.10; Times Sogat RIRMA £20; NGA clerk £1; Times/S.T. GAS, engineers and cleaners £20; another Times RIRMA chapel £5.

Southampton

Mick Scanlon, the scab Branch Secretary of Southampton EETPU, lives at 244 Bridge Road, Burlesdon, Southampton and has three sons at Wapping. Bill Luffman, Deputy Secretary, has two scab sons inside. Scanlon's secretary (Vivian Seaman) has had her son employed there as Personnel Officer. Steve Seaman likes to drink at the Bedford, Bedford Place, just round the corner from the EETPU office. This EETPU office is in Henstead Road (0703 333178/223655).

There are some splendid scab pubs in Southampton. The Jolly Farmer, Fleet End Road, Warsash has a Sun polymer plate from Wapping featuring Samantha Fox proudly displayed in the bar. The Old Ship Inn, Bridge Road, Swanwick is opposite Mick Scanlon's house and is a convenient scab meeting place. Ask for Squeak. The Village Inn, Botley Road, Swanwick is very popular with scabs on Sunday lunchtimes. The Elm Tree on Swanwick Lane and the Talisman at the junction of Botley and Bridge Roads are conveniently located nearby and also popular with scab locals. Also the Silver Fern at Warsash where scab Andrew Beavers likes a tipple. He's fed up drinking there on his tod.

The Southampton scabs have three coach companies. There's Coliseum at Botley Road Garage in the West End (0703 472377) whose coaches are green. Their garage is a scab pick-up point. There's Marchwood at 200 Salisbury Road, Totton (0703 869033) whose coaches are red and cream. Finally there's Angela Coaches, 1 Oaktree Cottage, Lowford, Burlesdon (042121 3170/3866).



Times NGA scabs

K. Davenport, 99 Haynes Road, Ardleigh Green, Hornchurch, Essex, 49 55125
R. Algar, Little Mascotte, Beach Drive, Kingswood, Surrey, 0737 2597
D. Pigg, 19Sunderland Way, Manor Park, E12, 01-989 9857
B. Service, 67 Weardale Avenue, Dartford, Kent, 0322 70208
M. Gotts, 16 Abercomb Gardens, Chadwell Heath, Romford, 01-590 3786

The hard cold facts

It is impossible to ignore the printing of Murdoch's full-page advertisements in the Mail, Mirror and Guardian this week. This is not support. Working members - who are supporting the strike - are being eased into the opposite by a systematic newspaper/TV campaign to ignore, censor and lie about the strike. The ads are a breach in the line but the battle is never won or lost until one side surrenders. The strike goes on.

What is exposed in these circumstances is the "Right of Reply" fraud. The only right here is to say No - to refuse to print the strikebreaking ad and to refuse to handle Murdoch's material. So what if there is a poxy letter buried somewhere in the next day's paper? Actually the letter is excellent but it is the ad which should be buried dead. Union leaders won't organise the ranks, the strikers will have to do it themselves. Through picketing the ranks gain confidence in their own powers.

Pickets are risking their lives, their income and their freedom. There is no shortage of courage at Wapping. Every picket has tales of heroism to tell. And these tales are true.

This newssheet is for the ordinary worker. Trod on, stomped on, left in the breach to print lies. Once awakened through picketing there is no greater power. For here there is welled up a loathing and contempt for the bosses and their hirelings and helpers that knows no bounds. Here there is the power to overthrow the bosses.

Address: Picket, c/o 628 Tottenham High Rd, N17.



Morning Star, 26th April

Wapping pickets repel scab buses

26th April

Saturday, 93rd day. "Half-hour punch up with cops at Wapping, with injuries on both sides, though the worst was one guy badly truncheoned on the head, needing 5 stitches. No delay to distribution on that night, as the cops had blocked off any advance." (Wapping Diary)

27th April

Sunday, 94th day. "Startled East End radio listeners were blasted with a brand new sound on Sunday - Radio Wapping! The pirate station invaded both Capitol Radio and LBC programmes to broadcast messages of support for the 6000 printworkers sacked by Rupert Murdoch. Confused listeners ... treated to a rendition of 'What shall we do with a drunken Thatcher?' during news bulletins. The illegal broadcasts heard across the large section of East and North London." (East London Advertiser, 2 May)



By ISOLDA McNEILL
SACKED printworkers surprised the police guard on Fortress Wapping yesterday morning when they mounted a mass picket on the scab printing plant's front gate.
Over 200 members of print union SOGAT clerical branch marched on the main gate at 9am forcing coaches carrying scabs to work to turn away.
Pickets have been prevented from reaching the main gate since Mr. Murdoch started the bitter dispute by sacking 6,000
Fleet Street workers and moving his operation to Wapping, in East London.
Police reinforcements were hastily summoned and waded into the peaceful pickets, many of whom were women.
Several arrests were made and some of the pickets hurt before they regrouped and marched away, having maintained their stand at the main gate for over an hour.
SOGAT member John Lang said the pickets were in high spirits and elated at the success of their action.



from Today magazine

and police roadblocks every time she goes out with her two young daughters on a Saturday evening.

Miss Emily Grundy, 28, a computer worker who also lives on the largely pro-strikers' estate, said: "The police take up their shields right outside my window. It isn't real. You have to show your rent book to get through police blockades."

The 107-day dispute has become a test of nerves as much for local residents as for police and pickets.

"I am sure more tenants will be arrested in frustration and annoyance," said Miss Grundy.

This week there were conciliatory tones when

had been a breakdown in communication between pickets and police. That had contributed to a huge toll since the start of the dispute on January 24.

More than 660 people have been charged, mostly for public order offences. Nearly 400,000 police man-hours have been worked at Wapping.

No mood for moderation

Official statistics reveal 310 officers have been treated in hospital for injuries. But Scotland Yard does not have a total for civilian injuries, although last weekend alone, 90 demonstrators were hurt.

The financial cost of po-

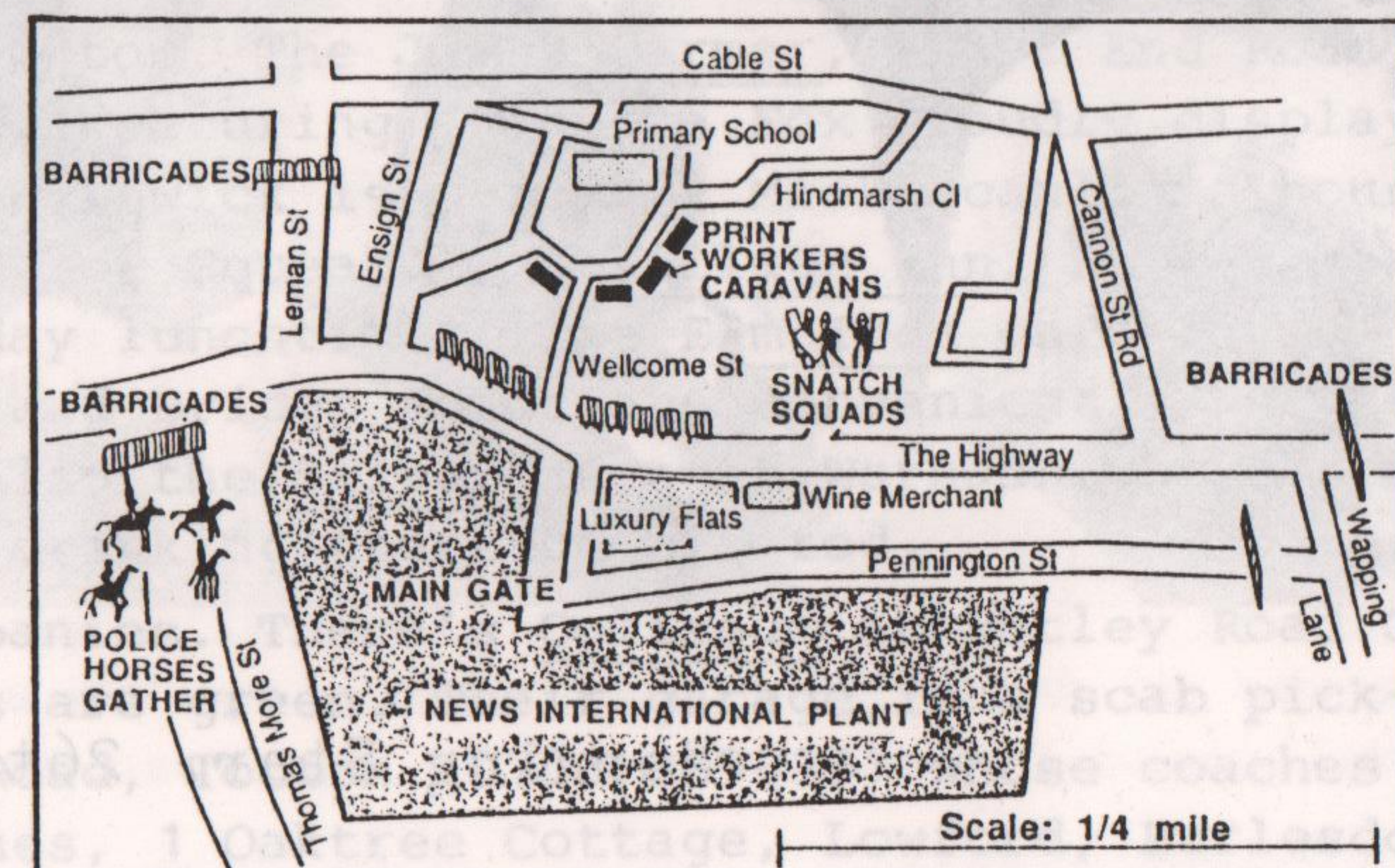
High Court on Thursday.

Strikers are not in a mood to heed what union leaders say about reducing violence.

Reporting on last Saturday's riot, the strikers' news-sheet Picket says: "Practical questions must be considered: are bare fists and rubble adequate weapons to the task we face? After three months, printers and supporters are Public Enemy Number One and proud of it."

Although the printing of names and addresses of "scabs" in the news-sheet is not against the law, Mrs Marilyn Street, whose husband Michael is a printer at the Wapping plant, has received dozens of abusive

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENS AND HOW THE POLICE HAVE STARTED TO DEPLOY THEMSELVES FOR THE SATURDAY NIGHT CONFRONTATIONS



29th April

Tuesday, 96th day. Marchers join picket at TNT depot in Luton.

30th April

Wednesday, 90th day. Rally for marchers at Watford Technical College. Tony Benn was first speaker, hall was packed. He unfortunately showed ignorance to the nature of this dispute, his reference to the new technology showed his susceptibility to the Murdoch propaganda that all those directly involved can see through. Also his reference to press bigotry and so called freedom whilst correct in imprecation, was inappropriate to the dispute. Whatever influence we had to editorial content was minimal if non-existent, what we have now is about equal to what we had before.

"No attempt at humour could improve this little gem. So here it is, unaltered: Brenda Dean's speech to the Industrial Participation Association. "I believe there is a coming together of management and employees. This aspect was brought home to me when Wiggins Teape paper mill, which had a 200-year history of paper making, was closing. Four hundred and fifty people were to be made redundant. The announcement meeting had been sad, the manager broke down in tears, no one was talking, everyone was sad. The best I had been able to do was to negotiate a redundancy deal, so at the end of the meeting I tried to change the subject. There were 40 ducks on a pond by the security hut (ducks make good guards). I asked: 'What's going to happen to the ducks?' and the management said: 'They'll end up on somebody's table.' You can't do that I said. No way! I'm telling you they're under the protection of SOGAT." (Socialist Worker)

Picket no. 10

Sunday 4th May 1986

Sunday 20th April, Southampton

At the Chilworth roundabout, Bassett, at 5.30pm, a group of Wapping scabs are happily boarding a Coliseum Co coach for their fun-filled and lucrative journey 70 miles north. Fifty are already seated, most having joined the coach at other points; most of them enjoying the chance to settle back and relax. But on to the end of the slowly-moving queue is tagging one of our number, who gently enquires of the driver: "This one all right for Wapping mate?" in his best south-London accent. The driver smiled from behind his sunglasses and replied: "Right." Still no suspicions are raised, as banter and greetings are exchanged by Southampton's finest. Then it happened; the unthinkable spectacle of the face-to-face address by a picket to Murdoch's mercenaries. They sat in stunned silence for nearly five minutes, the coach driver now ashen-faced and rooted to his seat, as the picket rained down home truths and insults upon his captive audience. At the rear two youngsters, probably fresh off Maggie's YOP scheme, tried to start the coachload chanting "Get off the coach, you bum". Nobody picked this up, and the chant died out in a welter of obvious embarrassment. Weakly, a big ginger-haired man of about 35 asked our picket if he would mind leaving the coach as they were late, please. Smiling broadly, our picket happily agreed now that there could be no doubt that the message had got across. Having the last word, he finally turned to the coach driver and quipped: "I bet you are glad I am not the PLO or worse!". The coach pulled out on to the A33, and the sighs of relief that there weren't more of us around could be heard for miles....

Friday 25th April, Wapping

Our first encounter with the police came in Lemman Street when 12 pickets were confronted by a contingent from the local nick. They looked as though they had just got out of bed. A loudmouthed sergeant told us that it was his law that we could not walk in Lemman Street and if we broke his law then he would see to us. His tone suggested he was more interested in kicking than nicking. We later found out that this was the spot where scabs board the coaches. Our second encounter came at the main gate which we had taken over quite peacefully. Reinforcements were brought in from all over. They immediately waded into us and seemed to enjoy pulling the women by their hair. Perhaps that's what turns them on. We held our ground for 30 minutes, until, on the sensible advice of our leader, we slowly advanced to Wellclose. This was only through lack of numbers, otherwise we could have held it all day. But after all these weeks this was our best victory to date. Now that we know that the main gate at Wapping can be taken let's do it again and again.

Saturday 26th April, Wapping

It was proved that marching up and down The Highway with banners could be a very effective weapon if only it was taken up by more people. If, instead of lounging on the railings and guarding the tea wagons and shouting encouragement from the sidelines, the majority of so-called demonstrators had in fact demonstrated then the three white vans taken by surprise would not have got away so easily. It may not stop the presses, but at least it got the brave boys in blue out of their coaches and caused Inspector Brown (or Jones or Smith) or whatever his name to definitely lose his cool by punching and arresting a 16-year-old who allegedly hit the inspector while holding the banner with both hands.

Perhaps this would all come about more easily if an organiser could be found who could organise the organisers.

Monday 28th April, Milton Keynes

Two coaches of pickets arrived at MK Central Station and the Coach Station to greet our marchers and to barrack scab coaches. The opposition decided not to play, and were not seen at the scab pick-up point. There was a combined trek to the local Trades Council Hall where the marchers were fed and a meeting was held. The debate was interesting - with the speakers from outside the print well-informed. The meeting was marred by the arrest of four of our young marchers who, frustrated with the goings-on, were provoked into conflict by some local teenagers abusing the dispute.

Tuesday 29th April, TNT depots Byfleet/Snodland

First hit was Byfleet, Surrey at midnight. Of the 80 pickets some who arrived early formed a gauntlet as TNT were obviously warned. The depot was promptly evacuated just before midnight. Good conversations were held with one artic and a number of the line of white vans racing out. In fact, the artic enjoyed the conversation that much that he returned for a second helping a few minutes later. As the horse had bolted most of the blockade was lifted at 1.45am

The next hit was Snodland, Kent at 3am. Some managed to have a bit of conversation with some vans, but most of the trucks were hiding in the area, approaching then shooting away. This was followed by a withdrawal to Wrotham roundabout chasing TNT vans out of their pre-arranged meet. Then pickets chased back to Snodland. There was one arrest - which could perhaps have been prevented if pickets had moved in quickly.

One lesson from this picket was to organise a pre-arranged meet to control the simultaneous arrival of the pickets.

Wednesday morning, 30th April, Bouverie Street

We arrived at Bouverie Street at 7.30am to find that our pickets had already been told to move off. Six pickets on each door we were told, the rest were to get out of Fleet Street and Blackfriars. After Saturday night at Wapping we weren't going to give in without a fight, so we walked up and down Bouverie Street, continuously moving, for we knew only too well that if we stopped moving we would be whisked away by the boys in blue. We outsmarted them. Instead of breaking up and leaving the area we stayed together and became even more determined to do our job. Murdoch's muppets seemed somewhat frustrated as we walked up and down Bouverie Street, sarcastically grinning as we passed by. They watched our every move. They stopped many of the pickets from entering Bouverie Street and made a few arrests but we kept marching on. Pickets were keeping an eye on a WPC nicknamed "Big Bertha". She was definitely out for a nick.

The sun was shining and we were in high spirits. We sang:-

The Sun is losing readers

Every single day.

The Sun is losing readers

And that's how it's gonna stay.

We continued to march up and around Fleet Street singing and clapping:-

Maggie Thatcher's got one.

Rupert Murdoch is one.

La la la la. La la la la.

Someone caught sight of a scab in the Sun building: "Scab at the window". The pickets shouted "Jump! Jump!". But he took no notice. So in full voice we sang:-

How much is that scabbie in the window,

The one who is ugly and pale?

How much is that scabbie in the window?

A scabbie is always for sale.

That got rid of him! We continued and did another lap of Fleet Street with another verse ... "What shall we do with Rupert Murdoch early in the morning?" The pickets were all of the same opinion that Murdoch has a lot to answer for. He will go down before we will and he'll stay down. However long it takes we will fight to the end and we'll win.

For this picket of The Sun building and Fleet House the City cops took charge. New tactics were used to keep the road clear of large numbers of pickets. This was new to Fleet Street and many passers-by had their eyes opened. The lady cleaners were out in force and an inspiration. Their simple strategy paid off. They ignored the police and their singing was a joy. Five police horses arrived at 9.45am with more reinforcements. Of the 500 or so pickets many remained at the top of Fleet Street. The horses had one good effect - many of the scabs heading for The Sun took one look and fled.



A single Support Group has produced seven badges

Calendar

Tuesday, 6th May, 10am, lobby Sogat executive meeting at the TUC, Great Russell Street, WC1.

Wednesday, 7th May, 8.30pm, Tower Hill, march to Wapping.

Saturday, 10th May, 9pm, Tower Hill, march to Wapping.

May Day, Wapping

Thursday evening 1st May was fine. A large and high-spirited crowd gathered at Tower Hill and descended into Wapping after 9pm. The brilliant red flags of the Turkish contingents made a pretty picture, but they quickly vanished.

At Virginia St the pickets dragged away the barriers, and again at Breezers Hill. The adrenalin flowed as pickets saw there was just one line of ordinary strikebreakers between them and Pennington St, but they knew what might be waiting for them at the bottom, and hesitated. The cops were shaking, but nobody would go through first. Flying Vs had not been organised to do the business. After ten minutes a riot squad reinforced their line and the chance had been lost.

At Glamis Road, horses charged and were not able to go forward due to a solid line of pickets.

By 11.30 the remaining 2,000 pickets had converged on Virginia St. It was covered by 20 horses with riot squads behind. Pickets threw barriers around to build a defence. The Highway was cleared against strong opposition. At the height there were 40 horses with 10 behind in Virginia Street, large numbers of woodentops holding the line and snatch-squads in riot uniform diving in to make arrests. But after twenty minutes of this they had still not stopped the hail of missiles so the riot squads charged repeatedly up Wellclose Street to try and soften up the crowd. They did not feel safe to bring out the papers until 12.50, when 27 transports followed by scab cars and coaches came out of Virginia Street, turning left and then up Dock Street. By now the opposition was less concrete than verbal.

As the pickets began to disperse, the riot squads charged up to the tea vans and beyond. Cavalry charges cleared pickets. When this started, most remained and responded by stoning, fighting and kicking.

It was the most effective midweek Wapping picket so far. It has reached the stage where pickets are escalating the fight by thinking and acting for themselves. Our hatred becomes harder, quicker, better aimed. Scabs and their defenders will burn in the heat of that anger.

Saturday 3rd May, Wapping - the 100th day of the dispute

Two Saturday marches, the biggest yet, left the Embankment and Butcher Row converging on Virginia Street at 9.45pm. An attempt was made to force through the massive concentration of police and horses and get down to the main gate. Everywhere were cops, horses, pickets, clouds of smoke, barriers dragged all over the road or thrown and pushed into the police. The assault failed as horses and foot-cops charged repeatedly into the crowds between Dock Street and Artichoke Hill. They were bitterly resisted by every means; one mounted strike-breaker fell off his horse in eagerness to trample down workers. The rider became entangled in a mess of barricades. Two mounties who came to his rescue got caught together and ended up trampling the fallen rider. In the early charges anyone who fell or wasn't quick to move was snatched.

For three hours there was constant violence as riot squads, horses and ordinary cops charged the pickets again and again, to the east, west and north of Virginia Street. Pickets counter-charged using bricks, scaffolding and anything to hand. Wives of print-workers again were in the thick of the action. Eventually the situation stabilised with large crowds of pickets by Thomas More Street, Dock Street, Wellclose Square and Artichoke Hill, with the police occupying The Highway and Wellclose Street, the parks and open spaces, forming strategic lines to seal off the whole area. There were about 80 horses, 200 riot cops and hundreds of others deployed in the Virginia Street area alone. Perspex riot shields were visible everywhere.

Soon after the first assault, speeches by two lefty MPs and union high-ups had begun from a platform in the open space by Wellclose. It was an ear-splitting continuous stream

of incoherent babble. It had a significant effect in disorientating and pacifying pickets whose frustration did not go as far as pulling the plug. As the police smashed into the pickets Brenda Dean was begging her members not to lobby her and her executive colleagues. All this, and the plight of the marcher who suffered a heart attack, was used to draw attention away from the main battle and to drown out the discussions and organising needed. to respond effectively to what was happening nearby.

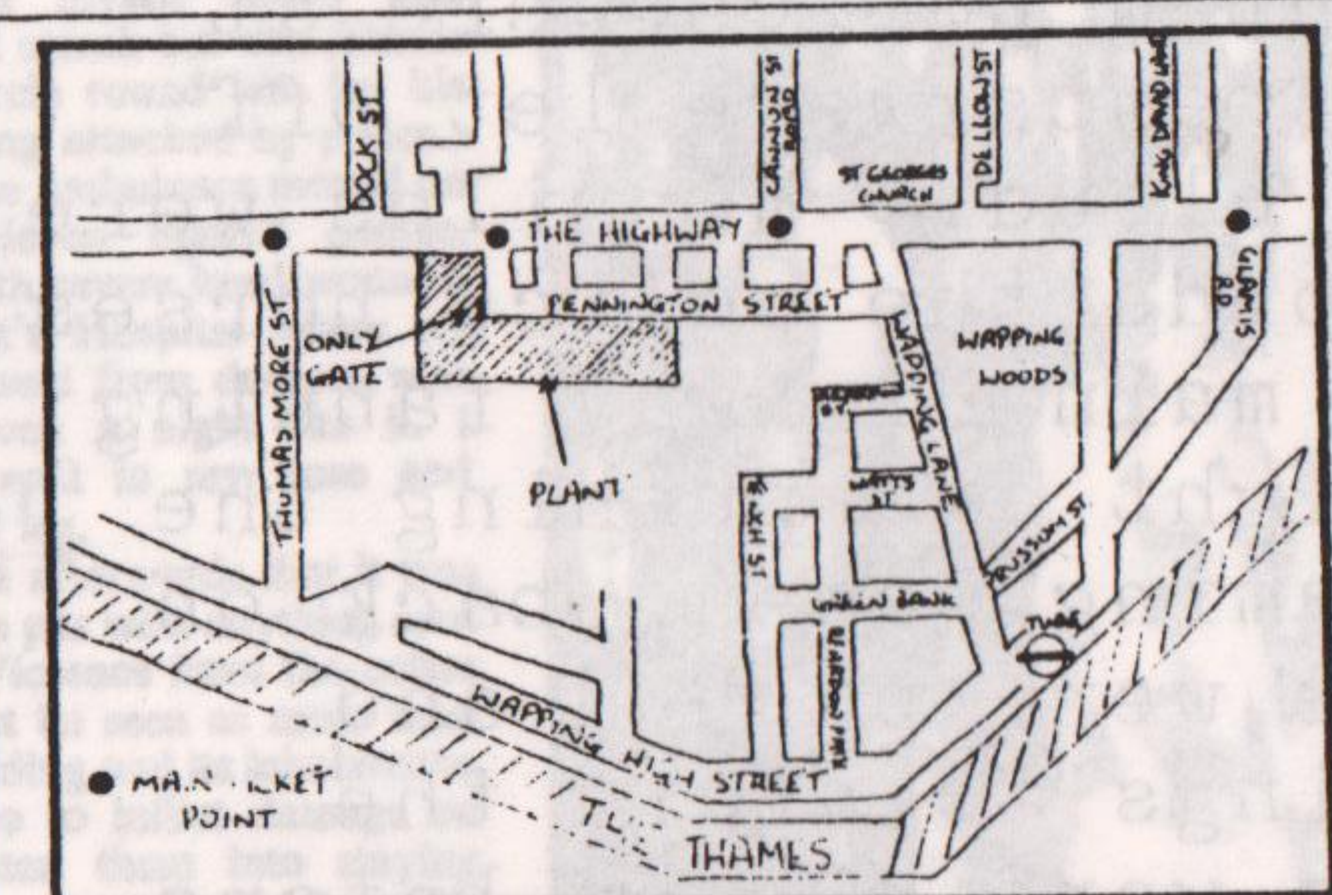
At 12.20am 12 artics left the plant via Pennington Street and Glamis Road. Another eight left at 1.30. At 2am three artics and 16 white vans drove in. And at 2.17 four artics and ten private scab cars left the plant by Wapping Lane. The Highway opened to traffic at 2.25.

Practical questions must be considered: are bare fists and rubble adequate weapons to the task we face? Why are the marches split up? What exactly is the role of the stewards? What kind of organisation do we need? Thursday and Saturday together were a watershed in this fight.

Notes:

- It has been said by a few that the trip to picket the Cannock depot was a bit flat. But there was plenty to do if pickets looked for it. Some did and had a very successful night - ask any TNT driver in the area that night.
- Additional Southampton scab coach companies are:-
Hedge End Hire, 24 Botley Road, Hedge End (tel.: Botley 6448 for the owner's private telephone, or 87863 for the yard).
Amigo Coaches, 16 Obelisk Road, Woolston (tel.: 0703 444929).
Contact Coaches, (B Brown Ltd), 24 Harbourne Gardens, West End (tel.: 0703 474907).
- Additional Southampton scab pubs are:-
The Fox and Hounds, Pound Street, Bitterne (tel.: 0703 449140).
The Hinkler, Hinkler Road (unlisted telephone).
- Some Southampton scabs: There are now scab reps inside Wapping. Bill Cruise (formerly of Foster Wheeler) and Tony Hunt (formerly Vosper shiprepairers) have been elected.
Five useful scab names and addresses:
W T Allen, 25 Cambrian Close, Bursledon Green (tel.: Bursledon 5621)
M E Street, 42 Gordon Avenue, Portswood (tel.: 0703 552437)
T R Tracey, 11 Northolt Gardens, Lordshill (tel.: 0703 737978)
B Moth, 493 Hinkler Road, Thornhill (tel.: 0703 441989)
V G Booth, 31 Bluebell Road, Bassett (tel.: 0703 760851).
- Two more scab NGAs from The Sun:-
Dave Blake, 48 Stonyshotts, Waltham Abbey, Essex (tel.: Lea Valley 712081).
A E Scicluna, "Sunnymead", Tueslay Lane, Godalming, Surrey (tel.: 04868 21485).
George Dighton, Times scab, is a Tory candidate in the council election in Basildon. He lives at 4 Brookside Close, Billericay (tel.: 02774 4858).
- Four Bemrose, Liverpool scabs have been reported peddling their excuses with socialist groups.
- Two errors crept in last week:
Bursledon - the Southampton suburb - was spelt incorrectly.
The Old Ship Inn, Bridge Road (opposite Mick Scanlon's house and a convenient scab meeting place) is in Bursledon, not Swanwick.
- Why do some Sogat officials think after four months of Wapping that the police are people we can negotiate with? Why was a member of the Observer Sogat clerical chapel punched in the eye by a steward last Thursday night for suggesting the police were not on our side?
- Pickets will remember vividly a 20-year-old who was blooded by a police truncheon on Saturday, 26th April. This lad, who required several stitches to his head, is okay now and came back to picket last Thursday night.
- Income: NOW Stereo Chapel collection £56.30; local resident 20p; Times RIRMA £1, 50p; misc. £1, £4.93; Sogat RIRMA chapel £5; Telegraph Sogat Day Machine Chapel £5; Sogat clericals £1, 20p, 20p; Caxton House clericals £2.
- Happy Birthday, Betty. One of our greatest supporters, Mrs Betty Primrose, is 60 on Tuesday, 6th May. Hard-working Betty is always seen at Tower Hill and on the marches. Many happy returns.
- After three months printers and supporters are Public Enemy No. 1 and proud of it.
- Picket: c/o 628 Tottenham High Road, London N17. Picket is published by NGA/Sogat members.

**SOUTH EAST REGION TUC IN COOPERATION
★ WITH THE JOINT MAY DAY COMMITTEE ★
Announce a major march and
★ DEMONSTRATION ★
★ AT WAPPING ★
MAY DAY
Thursday May 1st 1986
Assemble Tower Hill from 8-pm**



FOR A SUCCESSFUL picket it is normally necessary to control the Highway from Thomas More Street to Glamis Road. In past weeks when the number of pickets fell the police smashed into those remaining and made a path through for the scab lorries. Last week they blocked the Highway. We can stop them this Saturday if we stay firm all night.



Dear friends and colleagues,
Arrangements for May-Day 1986 - the 100th May-Day
I am writing to give you details of the arrangements for this years May-Day March and Rally to be held on Thursday May 1st.
Please note that the Joint May-Day Committee has now cancelled the previous arrangements (circulated in March) and there will not now be an assembly at Clerkenwell Green from 1.00pm in the afternoon followed by a March. Instead the 100th Anniversary March and Rally will be held every year on May 1st has been combined with a demonstration going to the head INTERNATIONAL plant in Wapping where our Cousins and Sisters from the Maritime Trade Unions have now been locked in a vitally important dispute for three months.
All Working Class organisations, International Solidarity Groups and other friends and supporters of our Movement are asked to support this years May-Day demonstration in this 100th anniversary year of May-Day. The arrangements are as follows and have been worked out in conjunction with the Printing Trade Union:
ASSEMBLY: From 7.00pm in Trinity Square, Tower Hill (opposite Tower Hill tube)
MARCH OFF: 8.20pm go up to Wapping via the following route:
May-Day Committee and Banner, Speakers and guests, Marching Band,
Printing Trade Unions as follows:
SOGAT LGA and LCB (to break off for Glamis Road picket)
SOGAT (LEAPERS) (King David's Lane)
SOGAT PMA and SIME (Cannon Street Road)
National Union of Journalists (Dock Street)
National Graphical Association (Thomas More Street)
Non-Printing Trade Unions and Trades Councils,
Labour Parties,
Co-operative Societies,
International Groups,
Other Parties and Organisations.
RALLY: 9.15pm in Wapping Square where all participants except those print Union who have gone to their designated picket areas (as above) are asked to congregate (this site is still adjacent to the plant).



3rd May

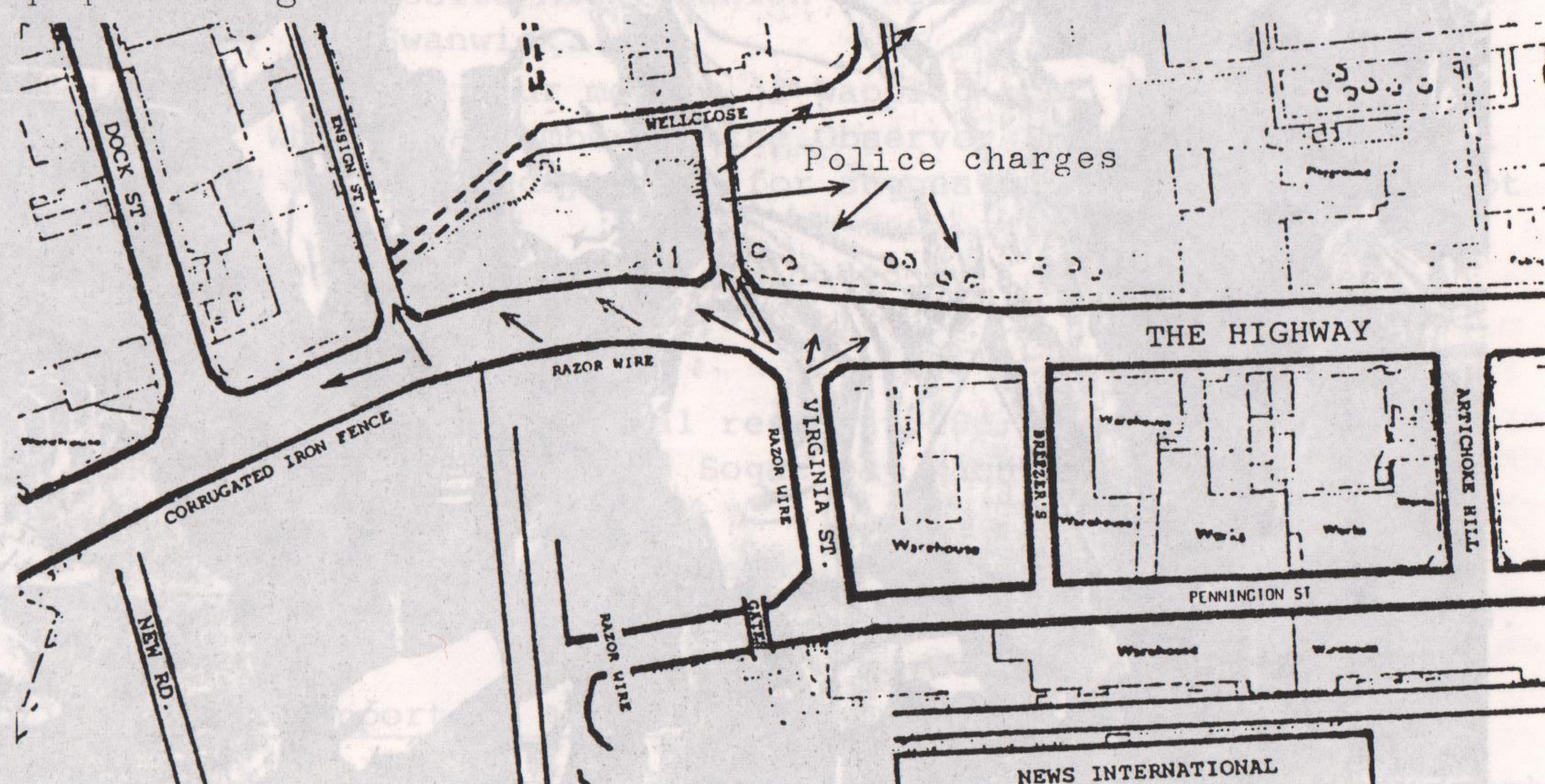
Saturday, 100th day. At least 90 pickets injured, 39 requiring hospital. 180 police claim injury. 1750 police present?

As at Orgreave when the horses came out (from Virginia St) the pickets were not prepared for it. Some pickets retained the metal barriers as defence while some pushed them back at the coppers.

This is Benn's more or less accurate account in the Guardian:

"The violence started just before 10 on Saturday night when two marches converged on the Highway by the short road leading to the plant entrance started to pull back the crash barriers behind which uniformed officers and about 20 mounted police were at the ready. Two smoke bombs were let off sending off an orange cloud. Missiles were thrown and within seconds the police horses charged out on to the main Highway fanning out to the left and right and pushing the crowd, including screaming women, back on to the pavement. Some were pushed and squeezed against railings to avoid the horses hooves. Others were hit by batons.

The road had been cleared and the crowd calmed down by around 10.20 when the march organisers started speeches from their platform in Wellclose Square, a small park opposite the plant, regarded during the dispute as a safe haven for women, children and tea vans. As the first speaker ... began, police on horses and snatch squads poured up the short and narrow road leading north from the Highway into the entrance of the park ... One charge took place while Mr. Tony Benn was addressing the crowd from the platform. He gave a running commentary over the Tannoy: 'We are seeing the police attack innocent people. They are coming in with their truncheons. They are hitting innocent people. There's a man having a heart attack below! There's an ambulance over there! I hope the police will get back.' Mr Benn was speaking after 50 riot police poured across out of the dark from the other side of the park, truncheons drawn and surrounding the speakers' platform ... A nurse shouted from behind the police lines to be let through to the prostrate man. A policeman swore at her from behind his visor ... While the worst of the violence was over just after 11 o'clock there were later clashes at the Glamis Road exit to the plant, where lorries loaded with newspapers began to leave."



SOGAT · NGA · AUEW · NUJ · SERTUC PRINTWORKERS MARCH FOR JOBS GLASGOW/NEWCASTLE TO WAPPING

JOIN US ON
**SATURDAY 3RD MAY
IN LONDON AT 7-30
ON THE EMBANKMENT
FOR A MARCH TO WAPPING & A MASSIVE
NATIONAL RALLY OPPOSITE
'FORTRESS WAPPING'
AT 9.00. pm.**

WE CALL UPON YOU FOR YOUR FULL SUPPORT ON
SAT. 3RD MAY. WHEN WE MARCH INTO WAPPING.
BRING YOUR BANNERS AND YOUR FAMILIES. LET US
SHOW THE MURDOCHS AND THATCHERS OF THIS
WORLD THAT BRITISH PEOPLE ARE NOT UP FOR
SALE ON THEIR MONOPOLY BOARD



UNITED WE CAN WIN

VERNON Robson, Assistant Branch Secretary of the South East Anglia branch, gives his account of what happened on the night of May 3.

"The march from the Embankment in London started in a jovial mood. The attendance was good. We had been told that if enough people were outside Murdoch's premises that night, then to avoid any trouble, the police would not allow the lorries to come out. The march was led by the sacked printers who had walked from Glasgow/Newcastle to London highlighting the dispute to the public and persuade them not to buy the Sun, News of the World Times and Sunday Times.

"As we approached Wapping, with deep ranks of uniformed police blocking roads and entrances, the mood changed from joviality to tenseness with shouts directed at the people inside 'Fortress Wapping'.

"A steward was attempting to organise NGA members to go to another exit. I was about to push my way through when I saw orange smoke rise near the exit guarded by foot and mounted riot police.

"We then saw police knocking back people from near the exit and assumed they were after whoever dropped, what we later learned was, a smoke bomb. People were trying to move away from the area and a crush was developing in front of me. I saw the crush was caused by the police charging down the road towards us pushing and hitting anyone standing in the road.

"Some barriers were pushed over in an attempt to slow the police and allow people time to get out of the road. I turned to hurry back up the road but tripped up. I managed to stay on my feet and glanced to see if the police had

stopped coming towards us.

"A riot policeman charged at me and hit me in the face with a truncheon. I remember my glasses spinning up the road and I fell over. Police boots seemed to be everywhere. I decided to stay down with discretion being the better part of valour. I heard a voice shout 'kick the bastard out of the way' and a boot landed in my stomach and another stamped on my leg. When they had passed I realised blood was spurting from the side of my face and down my nose. People helped me on to the path as mounted police were charging down the road, kicking and striking out at anyone within their reach.

"Eventually an ambulance arrived for me but police refused to clear a way for it to move to another street.

"Ambulancemen and myself heard that someone had had a heart attack but that friends who were forming a circle round him for his protection were also being attacked by police.

"After half an hour the ambulance moved on to pick up another eleven injured people, including two women with severe head wounds, and took us to St Bart's Hospital where we received excellent treatment from doctors who said they had never seen a night like it. I received stitches in a split in my nose and bruises to my chest and leg.

"I was of the opinion afterwards that it was a night of police riot on a par with anything seen in the miners' dispute. Violence from the police on ordinary people must be seen as more than mere protection of a building and its inhabitants. I felt it was an exercise to inflict damage on demonstrators to frighten them into staying away and allowing scabs to go to and from the building without having to face the people whose jobs they have stolen."

AT THE end of the march the Norwich and District Branch banner was tied to the railings of the public garden on the Highway just past the junction of Dove Street.

After the police cleared the Highway at about 10.45 it was impossible to retrieve the banner from that road. We entered the garden to undo the banner from the railings from behind. It was being dismantled when the Special Patrol Group arrived with batons, clearing the garden of

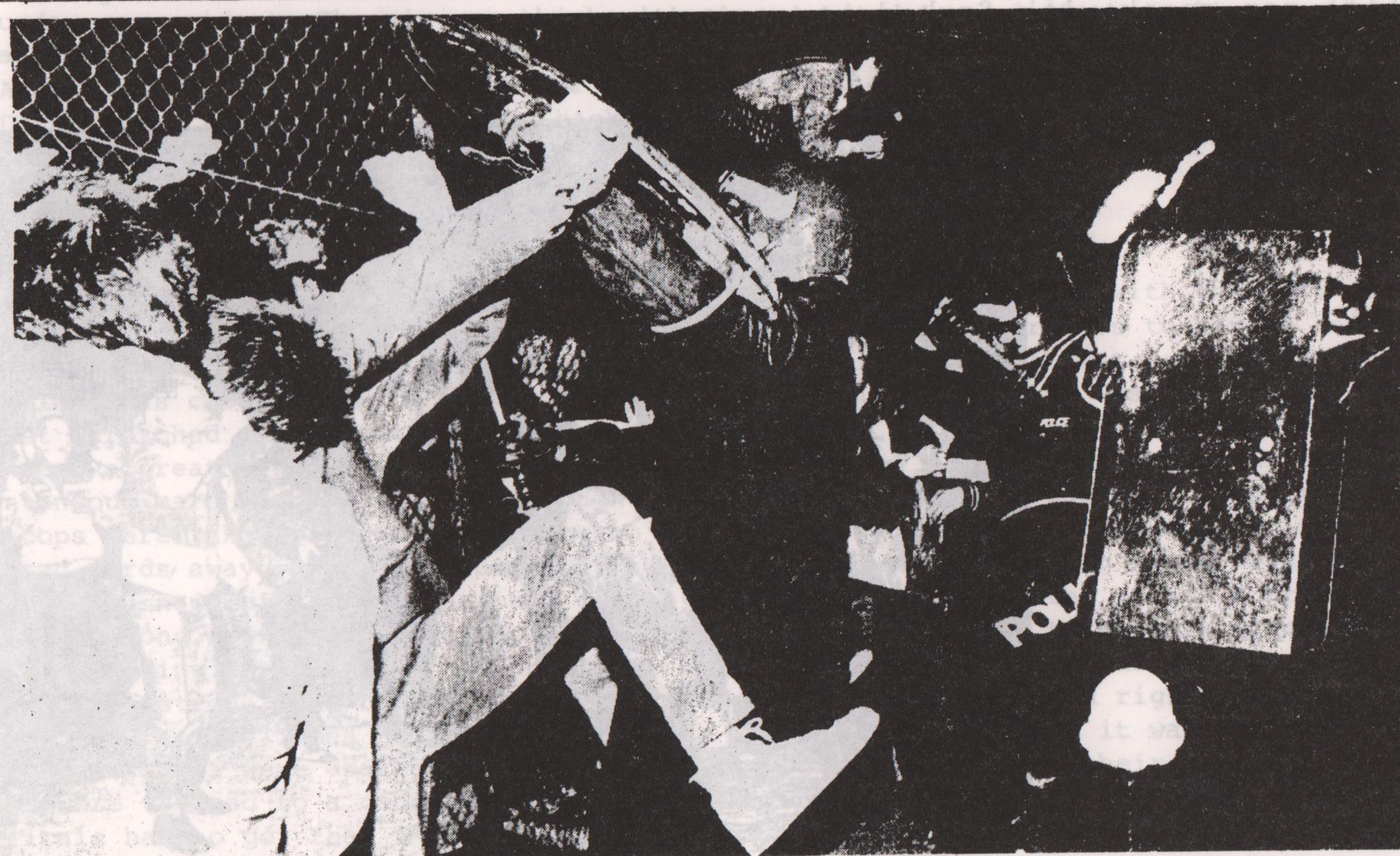
stone-throwers, and they appeared some 15 paces away.

For the first time in my life — including National Service in Cyprus rioting — I, with two other Branch members, former SLADE colleague Ed Barker and Peter Crisp, ran away. At the exit of the garden the police were also waiting with batons and set about all those in sight. The force of attack was sufficient to colour the skin and raise an egg-size lump on the point of my shoulder, in spite of this being

the padded area and wearing a light jacket and raincoat, plus a small lump on the head. Ed, who is 5ft 5in was put to the ground and rolled away with police tunic buttons in his hand. We retrieved the banner.

This was very minor in comparison with some of the incidents which looked like a battlefield aftermath.

**Dave Gladwell
Norwich and District
Assistant Branch
Secretary**



The official
journal of the
National
Graphical
Association
(1982)
Volume 23
Number 6
June 1986

5th May

Monday, 102nd day. "Brenda Dean spoke to News Line last week on the eve of purging ... Yes, we've been clear from the begining. The basis of trade unionism is solidarity." (from full page interview in News Line, 12th May)

6th May

Tuesday, 103rd day. Sogat decides to purge contempt. "Ms Dean however said firmly after the executive meeting: 'We are stepping up our campaign'". (Morning Star, 7th May)

8th May

Thursday, 105th day. Sogat crawls in court while members fight on.

10th May

Saturday, 107th day. 41 arrested. "the mood changed when about 400 protesters near the main entrance reacted indignantly to the first deployment of police on horseback. More than 30 mounted officers, wearing protective visors but without drawing batons, cleared the main roadway. With dozens of foot officers, they created a formidable cordon sealing off the protestors and enabling a convoy of newspaper lorries to trundle unimpeded into the night. Each subsequent movement of horses, including at least one attempt to withdraw, produced a furious response ... After a lull of nearly an hour further missile-throwing and the placing of barriers in the path of police inspired a police charge, at 1.15am with officers wielding truncheons and riot shields. ... Horses and riot police were withdrawn after a 30-minute stand off ... The next meeting between police and print union picket organisers takes place tomorrow." (Telegraph, 12th May)

"Mike Hicks ... 'The pact the police made with us, to let us know in advance about any problems so that the demonstration could proceed peacefully, was torn up by them'". (Morning Star, 12th May)

"Mr Michael Britton ... 'It would appear certain officers had no control over what they were doing ... The agreement does not seem to have filtered down to the policeman on the line.'". (Guardian, 12th May)

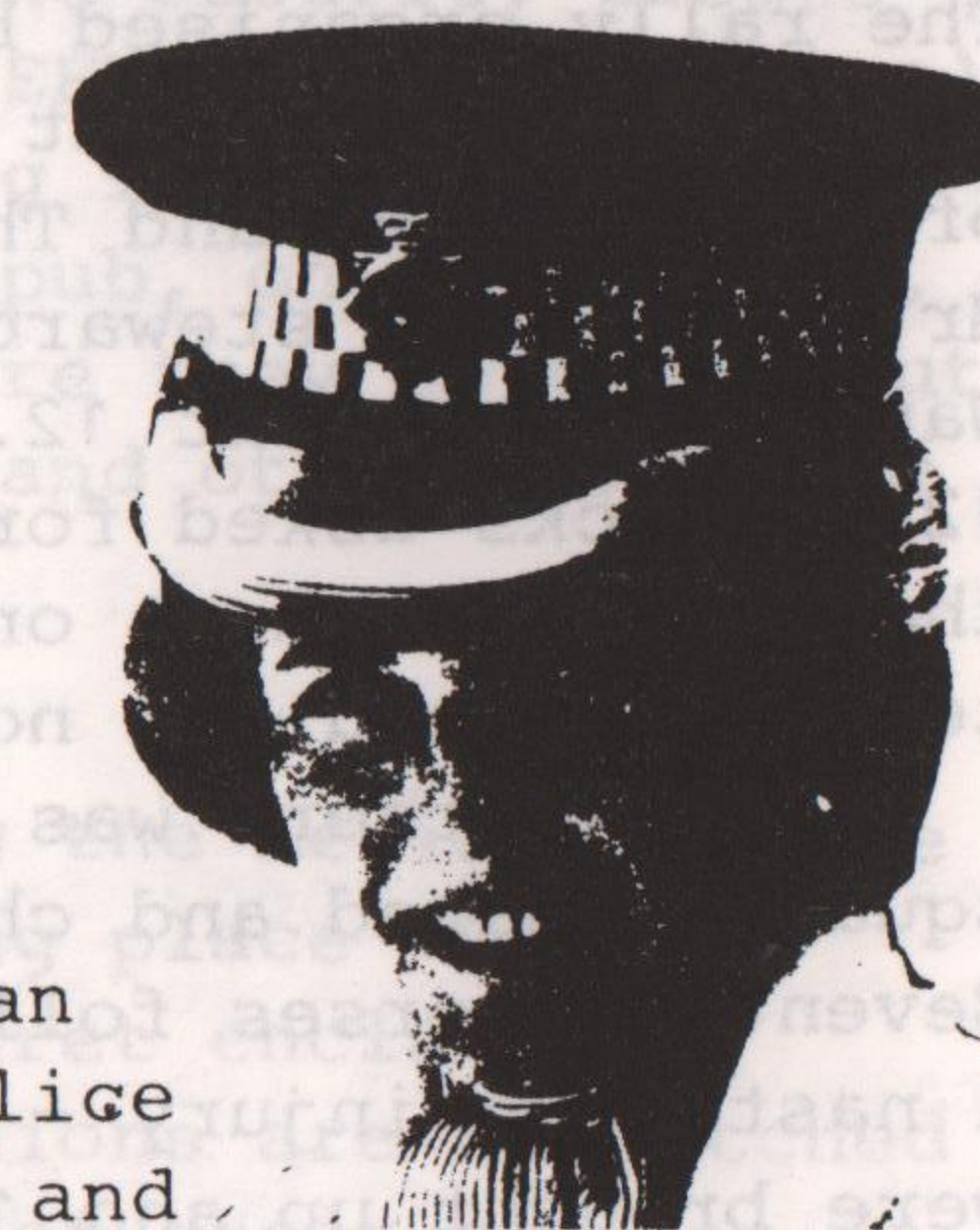
White man speak with forked tongue.

"With the dispute in its fourth month, the prospects of victory are looking increasingly remote." (Socialist Worker leaflet)



Picket No. II

Sunday 11th May 1986



Tuesday 6th May, TUC lobby: pickets resolve to continue and regroup

Brenda Dean arrived long before the 10am meeting and before members had arrived for the lobby. Word was out that Hadleigh's secretive Friday meeting had already decided to purge Sogat's contempt. But the truth about Friday's meeting had been suppressed. The lobby gradually built up and it was quiet and peaceful. Hundreds came for an hour or two and drifted away. No news came out of the meeting. The police were in usual form, outnumbering the lobby in the very early morning, and later hassling people off the pavement and forecourt, erecting yet more barriers. There must be millions of these barriers in London now. Police announced that the TUC had informed them that the forecourt was private property and that even the group of marchers from Glasgow were to keep it clear. The news, when it came, was brief and to the point - Sogat had caved in. Down on the picket line at Wapping the news was greeted with anger and disbelief. There were many pickets at Wapping that night who had lobbied the TUC all day long. Most had thought that Saturday's police assault, witnessed by Dean, would have kept Sogat firm. The London distributors and NUR members who have blacked the Murdoch titles are now in the front line. Many strikers thought we would be sending the wrong signals out to Murdoch and especially the scab journalists in the plant. There was one picket who was particularly disgruntled. His family was at home glued to "Juliet Bravo" on the box. After seeing the police behaviour last Saturday he couldn't bear to watch this police soap opera and he came down to the picket line to remind himself "what it's like in the real world".

Wednesday 7th May, Wapping

The march of about 1,000 printworkers and supporters left Tower Hill at 9pm and met lines of police blocking The Highway at the top of Virginia Street. The march was organised by Sogat London Central Branch and is the carry-on of regular Wednesday marches. These marches centre on the continued support of London distribution members for the strike. It was a powerful rebuff to the Sogat NEC, which openly joins hands with Murdoch and the courts in front of the very eyes of pickets.

Ten horses were stationed half way up Virginia Street but there were no riot cops in sight. The crowd milled around and blocked The Highway till 10.40 when the police advanced and cleared the road. There were no arrests, but the tension after last Thursday and Saturday was evident. The air was thick with the pickets' hatred of the police strike-breakers. Some knew this truth from childhood and others came to it through the strike.

A small crowd left the main body of the pickets and marched up to Thomas More Street, up Dock Street to Ensign Street and back again. Scores of cops were in tow. This was a good tactic. It kept the police guessing and cheered up the pickets. The articles left by way of Wapping Lane.

Friday 9th May, Bouverie Street

A brilliant victory! Another early-morning picket started at 7.30am with the City police less threatening than last week. There were no indiscriminate arrests to harass and disperse the pickets. The pavement in Bouverie Street, across the street from the Sun building, was crowded, and whenever a scab walked through the noise was deafening. The picket stretched up and into Fleet Street. Sogat women were again out in force and could be heard a great distance away. At 9.50am a Fleet Street AUEW banner was unfurled and a spontaneous march began. Pickets thought it would be to Fleet House just round the corner. The cops were taken off guard. The march surged down Fleet Street to Ludgate Circus, a few hundred yards away, and then, surprise, surprise - instead of turning right towards Fleet House it turned left. Even the back of the march was surprised: the police nonplussed. The 400-strong crowd carried on up St Bride Street and Shoe Lane to Holborn Circus by the Mirror building. All traffic stopped. Three cops tried in vain to halt the march here. The delay lasted all of five seconds. Then it was along Holborn and right into Gray's Inn Road and on to the Times building. The march arrived at 10.10, yet it wasn't until 10.35 that 15 Met cops were drafted in and the City cops could retire to their own patch. Times scabs were treated to a good deal of verbal abuse. And it was only at 11.15, when the clericals had to go, that the rally began to break up. Everyone was on a high. Pickets had again organised themselves, thought, and taken advantage.

Saturday 10th May, Wapping

The rally organised behind the banners at 8.50pm and 5,000 marched to Wapping. It was quiet until midnight when ten horses charged unannounced through the crowd to the corner of Dock Street and The Highway. Ten minutes later another five horses galloped through. Mr Hicks, our steward with the megaphone, said the artics had left the plant and were at Wapping Lane. At 12.20am ten artics and a coach left by way of Thomas More Street. At 12.22 Hicks asked for the mounted cops' numbers. These weren't forthcoming. He announced that the agreement on policing with Brenda Dean and the police hadn't lasted long (about ten hours) and was now ended. At 12.30 the horses withdrew and there were two arrests.

At 1.10 there was an attempt on Virginia Street by a section of the crowd. The riot squad appeared and charged up to Dock Street and Wellclose Square towards the tea caravans. Seventeen horses followed through. There were injuries - a woman with a broken leg and a nasty eye injury - and a number of arrests. The gloves were off again. Thirty horses were brought up and 100 riot squad. Local skirmishes continued until 2am. At 2.20 two artics and many scab cars left the plant. The Highway was opened to traffic at 2.30am.

The night was notable for the increased hostility of the police. The mobility of the pickets showed up the weakness of the police organisation and showed the strength of support from many young people who stayed until the early hours. The picket reaffirmed that Saturday night is still on.

Further Southampton scab information

Bubbling to the surface for the first time comes Kenny Mathers, who lives with his dear old mum in a ducky little cottage called 'Oakdene', which can be found in Bridge Road, Lower Swanwick. Our Kenny was an art student, and says he loves his job as a paste-up artist at Wapping. Kenny loves to chat about his job, so perhaps you might like to give him a ring on Locks Heath (048 95) 2196. Another happy scab is Maurice ("nasty old Moe") Dryer, who lives right next door to Scabby Scanlon and family, at 242 Bridge Road, Bursledon. Moe is a trifle sensitive about his occupation in the Publishing Room. He has a business brain, though, despite working for Murdoch. So he has a nice little sideline on the go, which can be found at Unit 15, on the Segensworth Industrial Estate, just off the M27 at Locks Heath. Ring before you visit, on Locks Heath 82182. Visitors to the ever-popular Watercress Steam Railway may like to know that another Wapping colleague resides in beautiful Alresford, at 8 Shepherd's Down, which is just off Jacklyns Lane. Or perhaps you could telephone M. Hone on Alresford 4331. Incidentally, we are pleased to be able to report that Mike Scanlon's daughter has been taken on to the Wapping payroll, making four Scanlons in receipt of Murdoch's big shilling. 244 Bridge Road is brimful of scabs, whilst a late wire from next door at 242 ("Old Moe's drum") tells us that Dryer has given sanctuary to yet another Wapping scab. This means that there are now six in a cluster!

Shocked trades unionists attending a recent meeting of Eastleigh Trades Council, at which two sacked News International workers were due to speak, couldn't believe their eyes when the EETPU's scab branch officer Bill ("Two Sons at Wapping") Luffman strode into the room to take the chair...and that clearly wasn't the only thing he was taking, either. Both our lads delivered their orations, scaring Luffman witless when they told the audience that every scab's address and Wapping occupation was known and listed. Luffman has now been pictured in the local Press leaving the EETPU office with a minder in tow, and was seen recently being driven away from Henstead Road in Scanlon's official car. Steven ("Mummy got me the job at Wapping") Seaman was at the wheel. Steven's sister Tanya has recently got a nice Wapping job.

Attention all Wapping machine-room scabs: As you start your shifts, have a good look round and see if you can spot two of your number with severe conscience troubles...and

Calendar

Picket Wapping - 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And don't forget Gray's Inn Road and Bouverie Street.

Wednesday 14th May, 8.30pm Tower Hill, march to Wapping.

Saturday 17th May, 8.30pm Tower Hill, march to Wapping.

possibly money troubles, as well. Which two lads flogged copies of the security passes number-list and a Southampton personnel list (leaked from your local EETPU branch office) to a visiting journalist? Here are two clues. They were seen getting into a Ford Cortina car with an FTR registration plate, parked near The Cowherds pub, on the Common, and were then followed to a council house about two miles west of where they sold you out. We believe the traitors may be related, and received £2,000 for this and other sensitive information about Wapping personnel.

Matthews

While Murdoch's representative-on-earth, Bruce Matthews, was regaling the media with the latest facet of Wapping, a meeting of a very different kind was taking place 70 miles away in Bursledon. Almost 50 Wapping scab EETPU recruits were in secret enclave, discussing their industrial tactics for the period after the print unions are dispatched (defeated) and the way is clear for them to establish a new monopoly of their own.

For lurking among the carefully-vetted goody two-shoes scabs that Matthews holds in such esteem are sleepers, or industrial trouble-makers, who have contributed to much of the decline on Southampton's waterfront. They are merely biding their time, carefully mugging-up on the old agreements previously held by the print unions, noting in particular the hours, holidays and wages achieved by the NGA and Sogat.

Some of those present are delighted with their £340-a-week; like the man who has all of four weeks' service at Wapping after relinquishing his £120 post with Meatpak Ltd, Eastleigh. But all are agreed that they can force Murdoch (who they see as a mug, high on his own hype) into stumping up for their "loyalty" all through these troubled times.

From the well-known wet fish salesman through to the ex-underpants salesman, feelings of newly-acquired power coursed through their veins as they avariciously calculated just how much News International could be soon screwed for.



Wapping Songs

Sung to the tune of "Oh Mr Porter":-

Oh Rupert Murdoch

What shall we do?

We wanted to go to Wapping

But you took old Pol Carew.

You took your Judas journalists

And scabbie labour too.

Oh Rupert Murdoch

You are rotten through and through.

Sung to the tune of "Hello Dolly":-

Hello Murdoch

This is Sogat, Murdoch

And we're going to send you back where you belong

With all your lies Murdoch

You'll be surprised Murdoch

We're still going, and we're glowing and growing strong.

With all your scab labour

And your strike-breaker

You thought we'd fall apart out on the street.

But we are tough Murdoch

Sogat can take the rough Murdoch

Murdoch you ain't never going to win.

Sung to the tune of "Two lovely black eyes":-

We're only doing our job

We're only doing our job

Even if we have to cosh one or two

We're only doing our job.



Letter from a regular picket

Uniforms and hard hats for the pickets would be a good start.

Letter from the wife of a sacked printworker

I went on both the Women's Marches along with my three children, and I was proud to follow Brenda Dean along the road in the belief that I was doing something to help my husband's fight for a job. But ever since that last march I have become disillusioned with Brenda Dean and the union in general. Why doesn't anyone let us know what is going on? If it

wasn't for my husband telling me what little he has heard, and "Picket" I, like the general public, wouldn't even know there was a dispute going on.

I know the union has a difficult job to do, but I think it would find it a lot easier with the full support of its members. But they cannot get this support unless they tell the members what is going on. They tell our husbands to stand strong all night in the freezing cold, but I don't hear of the union leaders being there giving their support. It is about time the leaders of this union became united with their members in this fight, then everyone would be willing and able to fight on harder.

I don't suppose you will even read this letter, but I feel a lot better now.

Letter (shortened) from a General Trade Printer

My observations so far have been that not enough people in the print realise what is at stake here. I liken them to an ostrich with his head in the ground hoping it will all go away. What we have here in Murdoch is a thug who is trying, with government help, anti-trade union laws to break the printing unions. In this he has the help of the scum in blue. We must not forget that it is our jobs in the general trade that are under threat as well.

How come some people haven't been to Wapping yet? My anger is at its peak when I see Wapping pickets talking to the scum in blue who look at themselves as great soldiers of the struggle. In a copper you have the lowest of the low; no real word can describe the shit.

Letter (shortened) from a Sun driver

With regard to Lacey's Coaches, Barking Road, East Ham, E6, in my local paper recently the local council was reported as saying that they were not happy with Lacey's for transporting the police to Wapping. The principle was wrong and the council was looking at its contracts with the company. On May Day there was a Lacey coach parked behind police lines at Wapping. It was full of police. To add insult to injury the driver had a big grin on his face when the police made a charge on the pickets. Lacey's, by the way, carries all the West Ham supporters to away matches.

Picket

This newssheet gives voice to the will, the confidence and the experience of the pickets. It does not issue slogans, which has come to be the method of hypocrisy. The pickets acting as a collective are able to decide the next move. Picket is one small hand on the wheel, and initiative. It is the simple written record of ordinary workers on picket duty. These are a thousand times more revolutionary than anything else.

This newssheet was conceived in the miners' strike, where the genius of the everyday pickets was that it was the only body that could be trusted. By the second half of the miners' strike the bosses' press/TV had come more and more to play an important role in the strikebreaking. To our (I, you, we) detriment we worked on during the strike and produced strikebreaking propaganda. One of the miners' responses was a whole number of pit village newsletters, a beginning for workers to have their say in print.

The printers' strike is a direct continuation of the miners'. Printers and supporters have picketed and picketed and picketed. It's a good job.

Behind the visor stands a yellow coward

The police are demoralised rubbish. Some of them are bought cheap, others want to believe they are only dealing with Libyans in disguise. A cop is a cop is a cop.

At Virginia Street on Saturday, 3rd May the police carried out scab orders in a vicious but disciplined way. To the west, by Dock Street, away from the glare of TV lights, things were heavier. But playing at moral outrage is a game workers always lose. It was a straight fight and we lost.

The pickets have never stopped a night's scab papers yet. More and more workers will be drawn to Wapping, not by playing on shocked public opinion, but by meaning to win.

Notes:

Two Communist Party scabs (NUJ) at Wapping are Chris Nawrat and Stanley Levinson.

Knights pub in Walton-on-Thames is popular with certain white-van drivers from Byfleet.

Income: £1.50 Sogat RIRMA; £2.35 Times clerical; £4 International Thomson Publishing Chapel; £3 Times RIRMA, £1 Sun clerical; £1 a striker; 40p NGA striker; £10 NGA minder.

Address: Picket, c/o 628 Tottenham High Road, N17. Published by Sogat/NGA pickets.

THE GUARDIAN Monday May 12 1986

Pickets attack new targets in Murdoch dispute

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Correspondent

Print union pickets smashed the windscreens of two lorries taking copies of Mr Rupert Murdoch's News of the World from a non-union print works in Worthing, Sussex, early yesterday.

About 300 pickets had gathered outside Portobello Web Offset where southern editions of the newspaper have been printed for nearly two months.

Two picket leaders talked to the lorry drivers, employed by the TNT company, for 25 minutes, after which the vehicles were escorted out of the works by police. One arrest was made.

After 2 a.m., the pickets, travelling in private cars, then went to Surridge and Dawson Wholesalers in Brighton where they attempted to stop regional distribution of News International titles. A mobile compressor was placed across the entrance, and the pickets rejected a request from local police to limit their numbers on the gate to six.

The picketing is likely to be seen as open defiance by London branches of the print union, Sogat, of an undertaking to the High Court on Thursday that the union would not intimidate wholesale distributors of News International newspapers.

Mr Bill Freeman, the print unions' national picket co-ordinator, said yesterday: "We are stepping up our picketing

activity in line with the Sogat executive decision last week to escalate the dispute. There will be further pickets of wholesale distributors around the country."

Names, telephone numbers, and addresses of printers and coach companies operating at Mr Murdoch's plant in Wapping, East London, are regularly published in bulletins produced by members of Sogat and the National Graphical Association.

The bulletins, printed from an address in Tottenham High Road, North London, claims: "It has reached the stage where pickets are escalating the fight by thinking and acting for themselves. Our hatred becomes harder, quicker and better aimed. Scabs and their defenders will burn in the heat of that anger."

The bulletin expresses sharp criticism of the print union leadership at national and branch level, saying that the speeches on the picket line last week by print leaders "had a significant effect in disorientating and pacifying pickets." It goes on: "Are bare fists and rubble adequate weapons to the task we face?"

Mr Freeman said yesterday he had seen copies of Picket and deplored its contents. Steps were being taken to locate its authors and prevent further publication, he said.



MORNING STAR Tuesday May 13 1986

PICKETS supported by demonstrators successfully delayed Rupert Murdoch's union-busting newspaper operations at the weekend in Leicester, Worthing and Brighton.

No copies of any newspaper left the Surridge Dawson wholesalers in Brighton and demonstrators successfully blocked a bid to sidetrack them by getting the newspapers into the town from the railway station.

At Worthing, nearly 500 demonstrators, including a large contingent of London printworkers, prevented strike-breaking TNT lorries leaving Portobello Press premises till 2.15am — making them three hours late.

Non-union

They were handling between 80 and 90,000 copies of the News of the World which the non-union firm prints on a weekly contract.

The 100 pickets and demonstrators at Thurmaston, Leicester, blocked the road outside the TNT depot, delaying distribution of the News of the World and Sunday Times to the Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln and Leicester areas.

PRINTWORKERS who lobbied delegates to the electricians' union industrial conferences in Scarborough yesterday were greeted by Wapping-style police formations.

The peaceful presence of some 100 London printworkers was met by dog handlers, more than a dozen police vans and trailers full of riot gear.

Vandalised

Over the weekend some 20 cars belonging to officials of the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union were vandalised.

The union's leaders have refused to stop their specially recruited strikebreakers from assisting Rupert Murdoch in the destruction of trade unionism at News International.

Militant

ON SUNDAY 11 May around 250 printers sacked by the News International Group left London to travel over 300 miles to the Yorkshire resort of Scarborough to lobby the industrial conferences of the EETPU.

We arrived at Scarborough at about 7am after seven hours travelling. The police blocked all entrances and would not let any of us lobby or speak to delegates as they entered.

So we picketed about a mile from the hall, together with local Militant supporters and other trade union supporters.

We managed to speak to many delegates in their cars and others on foot came over to show their solidarity.

It was sad to see so-called trade unionists totally ignoring us. But many of the delegates took leaflets and we managed to distribute copies of the London Sogat Post.

By 10am most of the delegates had gone in and most of the printers went off to leaflet roads in Scarborough and give out hundreds of leaflets.

After nearly 11 hours in Scarborough we left for London. All the way back from Scarborough to Leeds we were escorted by a van load of riot police, no doubt wanting the pound of flesh which they hadn't got at Scarborough because there had been no trouble. We got back to London at midnight.

The mood of the printers is now getting angrier. Many are upset at the behaviour of the leadership and the current silence of the TUC and the Labour Party leadership.

Paul Wilkinson and Danny Austen two Sogat '82 members told me: "the only way to win this dispute and stop Murdoch and the other

Picket no.12

Sunday 18th May 1986



Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)



15th May, letter from a striking driver's Sogat official

Dear Mr Freeman: If you were half as good at your job as those on "Picket" we'd all be happier.

18th May

Sunday, 115th day. "News International held separate talks with national leaders of the engineering union." (Guardian, 19th May)

Saturday 10th May, Worthing and Brighton

Three to four hundred pickets, all in private cars and with no advance warning, turned up around 11.30pm at Portobello Press, Worthing where 250,000 copies of the NoW are printed. There were negotiations with the manager, but two lorries came out at 1.15am with a police escort at a very slow speed. The lorries were more like bread vans than the familiar artics at Wapping. All hell let loose - windscreens went and doors whipped open. The lorry drivers were taken to hospital. Then it was on to Brighton where a picket formed from 2.30 at Station Road. The road was successfully blocked for a time. There were arguments between pickets and drivers. The drivers are all Sogat members but took no notice of the pickets. People felt satisfied - they had achieved something.

At Portobello an official went in to speak to the drivers, but after 45 minutes had no luck in persuading them not to cross the picket. Two hours later than usual two lorries came out, flanked by police bike riders. The police hadn't a clue what to do as the pickets had spread themselves all along the road. The lorries were held up a minimal time but long enough to stone them both. Windscreens and side windows were totally demolished. One bloke was arrested but the police had to let him go.

After, the pickets went to Brighton to picket depots. One near Brighton Station was shut, so was another near Brighton FC. On to Surridge Dawson's where the caretaker was just opening up. First we pulled a compressor across the front entrance and slashed the tyres. A few scab vans turned up but went away after seeing the size of the picket. It was around 5am and still no lorries had arrived, so we went to Brighton station. By now the police were out in force. Four pickets were allowed into the station to inspect vans and trains. No NoW or STs were found.

At 6am there were still about 50 pickets at Surridge Dawson's. Everyone came home feeling exhilarated.

Monday 12th May, Scarborough

Four coachloads of pickets left London Sunday night for the EETPU annual conference in Scarborough. Once again the powers that be had the foresight to let everyone concerned, including the electricians, know in advance. Eric Hammond told the police on the Sunday that the printworkers were not going to Scarborough to hand out posies. Police cars met the coaches and prevented the pickets getting to the conference centre. There were many police reinforcements in evidence, and the coaches were sent to the car park at the other side of the bay well away from the conference. Pickets leafletted the town and attempted to return to the conference area. No group of pickets was allowed within 200 yards, but a number did speak briefly to a few electricians. The pickets went for an electricians' breakfast "Hammond eggs" and later spoke to more electricians as they came out for their lunch break. There was a good response from the ordinary members but it was obvious from them that the bosses would not be swayed. A meeting was arranged for that evening at the Mount Hotel which was attended by pickets and quite a few sympathetic EETPU members. These were mainly from London but there were exceptions. Inverclyde EETPU has already been on picket duty in Glasgow. Those who addressed the meeting could not understand why Sogat had purged its contempt. But then even the pickets could not understand that! Most coaches left after the meeting, arriving back in London 4am Tuesday morning.

Monday 12th May, Gray's Inn Road

The early morning picket of the Times building was small. Fifty were there to lobby the scabs. Word had obviously not been spread effectively through the striking chapels. This was particularly galling after the ingenuity of last Friday's early-morning picket at Bouverie Street and the ensuing march to Gray's Inn Road which surprised the police.

Wednesday 14th May, Wapping

About 800 printers marched from Tower Hill, organised by the Sogat London Central Branch. When the march reached Virginia Street, in front of the plant, The Highway was blocked by two lines of police strikebreakers with a dozen mounted, visible behind. The march

stayed there until it was moved off the road at 10.45pm. The Highway was open to traffic at 11pm. Distribution was unaffected.

It was noticeable how few supporters were present. There was no spontaneous march around the side streets this Wednesday.

Saturday 17th May, Wapping

A new tactic was tried to seal the plant. Printworkers were given one of four prearranged exits to cover and told to arrive at 11pm. The march from Tower Hill at 9.00 was to be for supporters outside the print. Three artics had been seen heading north up Commercial Road under escort as early as 8.30pm.

There were about 1,500 in the march from Tower Hill and it took 40 minutes to get to the top of Virginia Street. Here the road was again blocked by lines of police across The Highway. There was a bit of pushing and shoving but the line held firm. On the railings by Wellclose some nationalists had put up strongly-built hoardings saying "Britain's Our Country" in carefully-painted red-white-and-blue. These were removed by pickets and destroyed.

The crowd was rather dispirited and many dispersed when the rain came down. Many of the supporters had been kept ignorant of the change in tactic and wondered where the printworkers had got to. They felt isolated. Police disappeared from Dock Street and a number of private cars came down The Highway at speed towards the crowd. It would only have taken one idiot to try to accelerate through.

From 10pm onwards the police blocked many of the side roads so as to stop printworkers getting to their stations. Those going to Cannon Street Road found Ensign Street and Cable Street blocked. Even residents were not allowed to pass. But printworkers arrived as scheduled at 11pm. For most of the evening the two Murdoch titles were not stopped from leaving by the eastern exits, although some time after 11pm artics were bricked at Glamis Road and one or two had to go back. At midnight Wapping Lane and Glamis Road were cleared and at 12.25 a convoy of about half a dozen artics and scab cars left the plant via Wapping Lane. Another convoy about the same size left at 1.20am.

Many pickets dispersed and didn't wait for the arrival of the smaller white vans for the local distribution. The tactic was deemed by many printworkers and supporters to have been demoralising. It had split the printers from their supporters, there was no march for the printworkers, and it was all but ineffective.

A message to Thatcher's Boot Boys (3rd May)

To the Flat Top who had me handcuffed --
You wanted to kill me so bad,
But I'm back here on the picket line
Alive and well and so glad.
Your cuffs I've had framed and mounted,
To remind me of evil days
When the police of this land fell into the trap
Of behaving in Hitler's ways.
I'll gladly surrender your cuffs, Chief
This Saturday night around ten
I'll wrap them in Murdoch's barbed wire
That's if you're better by then.

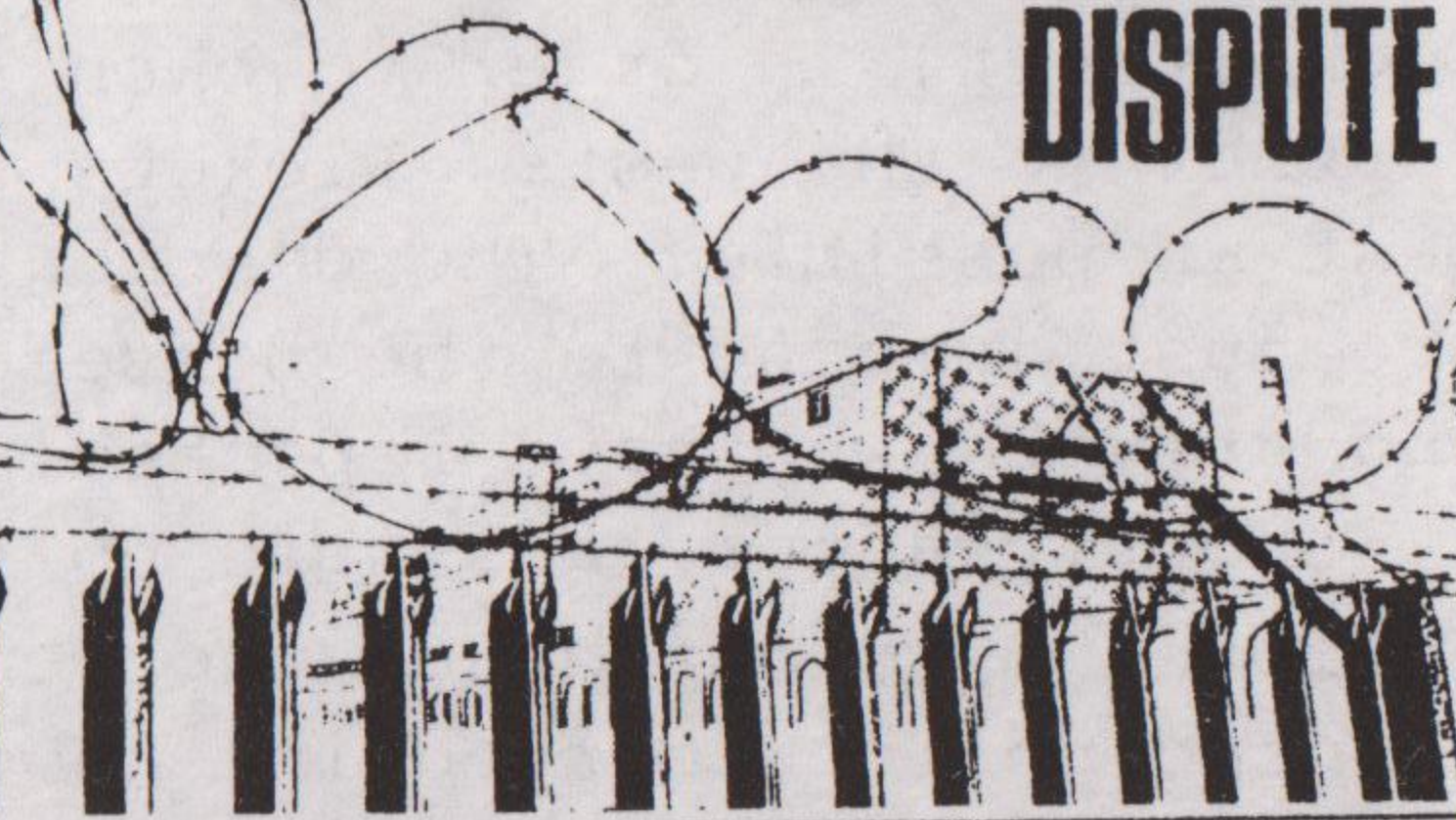
To the horseman who battered my head in,
I don't know what you achieved
For I'm back here on the picket line
Alive and well, not aggrieved
You with the stick, shield and visor
I won't even give you a name;
For your kicking and punching the women,
Your foul deeds were all in vain.
For we're all back on the picket line
Determined as never before,
To smash you and Rupert Murdoch
And that we'll even the score.

Letter from a member of the Lesbian and Gay Support Group (shortened with apologies)

We have been meeting weekly for three months and regularly picket. And we march behind our own banner. We also collect money for Sogat clerical. Given the viciousness of the homophobic propaganda put out by Murdoch's papers why should lesbians and gays want to support the people who have been printing this? Who can forget the description of AIDS as the "gay plague"? Decisions about content are made by management. The workers who print have little control except when they refuse to print. It is important to be aware of the deeper implications of Murdoch's attack on the unions. They were asked to sign a slaves' charter.

Unions have not been falling over themselves to support gay rights, far from it. But the attack on trade unions makes lesbians and gays more vulnerable to discrimination and harassment. By being at Wapping we are offering positive support and a more positive image of lesbians and gays. Past experience of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners shows that enormous changes of attitude are possible.

**NEWS INTERNATIONAL
DISPUTE**



WEDNESDAY DEMONSTRATIONS

EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING THERE WILL
BE A MAJOR DEMONSTRATION AT
WAPPING IN SUPPORT OF THE
PRINTWORKERS DISMISSED BY
RUPERT MURDOCH.

MARCHES BEGIN AT 8-30" AT TOWER HILL

Letter (shortened) from a Sogat RIRMA member on the Glasgow to London Printworkers' March
There is support around the country especially in areas like Preston where factory workers clocked off for an hour losing money to give support. And an FoC in Lancashire approached by News International to print copies of the NoW was offered £1,000 per man guaranteed for a minimum of eight weeks and they turned it down. There was also great support in all the mining communities and in Scotland too - especially from Sogat members. I contrast this with the lack of support from my own officials. There were five RIRMA members on the march, and the lack of support was a great disappointment.

Notes:

- Greetings to Wapping Post no.1
- Thursday 22nd May 8.30am at Wapping: a mass picket is being organised by RIRMA strikers
- Deptford picket at Convoys Wharf, King St, 6.30am is continuing every Friday
- The two NUJ Communist Party scabs at Wapping mentioned in the last issue have now been expelled from the party.
- Walter Dowie, a member of the NGA, was jailed this week for seven days by Thames magistrates on charges arising out of the 15th March demo at Wapping.
- The Daily Telegraph may try and do a Murdoch at the Isle of Dogs as soon as September. They are demanding a slaves' charter, big cuts in staff and wages. Will concessions be accepted and the Wapping pickets further isolated, or will pickets take matters into their own hands?
- Weather report: At the close of the miners' strike the NCB claimed 36 scabs at Markham Main colliery, Armthorpe. This pit has recently become SCAB FREE.



Discerning news vendor at King's Cross
(from Wapping Post)