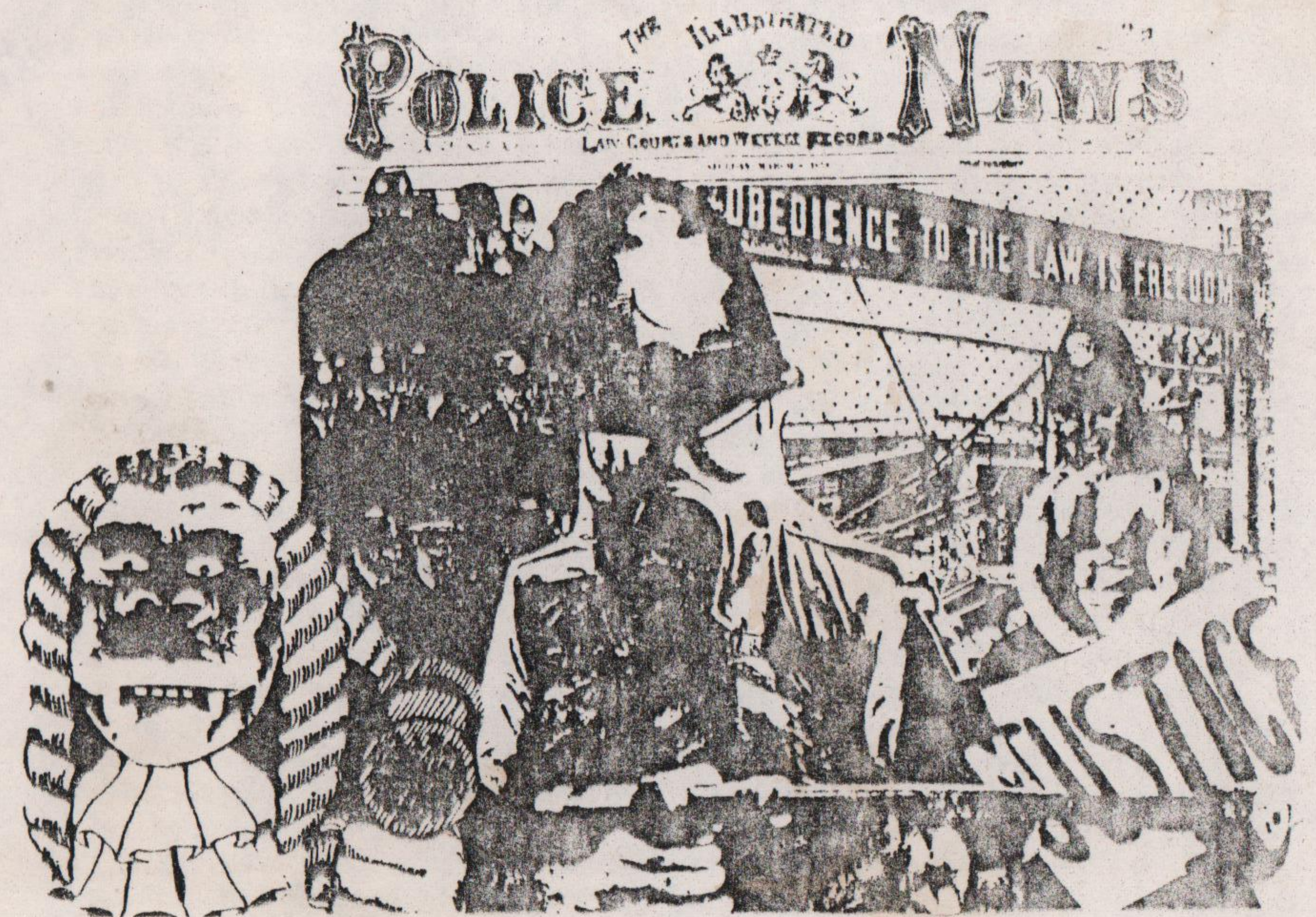


# WAPPING

## DIARY

Some excerpts from "Rebel Violence v Hierarchical Violence"  
(a chronology of anti-State violence in  
mainland U.K., July 1985-May 1986)

The Right To Work = The  
Right to be humiliated, to  
be exploited; the right to be  
forced to sell our activity  
in order to buy our means  
of survival from a system  
which insults, isolates and  
lies to us without end; the  
right to produce surplus  
value to maintain the accu-  
mulation of commodities &  
of commodity relations. The  
'right' to be reduced to the  
absolute margins of existence  
- with or without work, food  
or video recorders - is the  
only 'right' capitalism grants  
to the vast majority. The  
choice is simple: death to the  
world market & it's guard-  
dogs - or else *our* death - slow  
or quick.



A chronology of some events related to  
the printworkers dispute

26/1/86: Petrol bombing of Eddie Shah's Manchester printshop. Door burnt.

8/2/86: Wapping - over 5 lorries have their windscreens shattered, as does a police coach carrying scabs. Best of all - Murdochs' Merc gets the same treatment.

13/2/86: Wapping - cops bricked whilst distribution of Murdochs' lies is held up for 2 hours. At least 2 TNT trucks have their windscreens smashed.

15/2/86: Wapping. Crowd of 5000 outside Murdochs' work-camp. About 1000 hang around an exit ¼ mile from the main exit. SOGAT bureaucrat, standing next to cop, tells everyone to disperse through his megaphone. There are shouts of "Where's your uniform?" etc. The official, whose job, unfortunately, is not on the line, denounces the crowd, which includes sacked printworkers, for not being much support for the printworkers. Everyone initially ignores his pleas to disperse, but after a short while, a large contingent of Militant leads the retreat back to the main entrance, and the majority of pickets disperse. So much for Militant's militant image. Later, several lorries leave by the very exit which the official had told everyone to abandon. At the main entrance, when the cops attacked on horses, with the snatch squads in riot gear behind them, a few missiles are thrown, barriers are dragged across the road, and there's a bit of hand to hand fighting. Not very much happened, but with 58 arrests the media and the cops could pump this up as something approaching a riot, even though what happened was hardly bigger than the mini-riot in the Notting Hill carnival at the end of August, which received virtually no media coverage whatsoever: one can only assume that the intention of this exaggeration was to prepare the masses of spectators ('The Public') for justifications for a future escalation in cop brutality well ahead of time. On the Union side, complicity with the cops is aimed to get printworkers to police themselves, their friends and allies against any expression of autonomous activity independent of union control, and to heighten mistrust of, and isolate, any unofficial forms of solidarity from other proletarians. These are caricatured as 'outsiders' in order to reinforce an archaic trade unionist mentality which identifies with a craft status now made redundant by capitalisms' development of new technology. But, despite the lies of the Met and the Union, the most useful damage that night was done not by so-called 'outsiders' but by printworkers to 2 lorries quite early on - when everyone, including the cops, had disappeared. Later, at 5.40 a.m. a scab driver was attacked in Wandsworth Bridge Road, Fulham, by five men wearing face scarves. The driver escaped with minor injuries as the group smashed the windscreen of the vehicle with pick-axe handles and bricks. Wyn Jones, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Police said, "We saw the classic example of honest well-intentioned union members supporting their cause being joined by diverse elements whose only interest was in causing as much trouble as possible...disrupting business and assaulting officers." Brenda Dean, who models her image on Thatchers', also condemned the violence, "I want to have orderly picketing and no violence... Our people have been genuinely trying to keep to that". Thatcher, MacGregor and Scargill also refer to "Our people": though they each mean something a little different, the same patronising possessive attitude shows the same common aspiration - the hope of commanding the ownership & leadership of the masses, the ambition of every form of hierarchy. Rupert Murdoch had stated, some time before, that "So long as Brenda Dean is in charge, I think things will be fairly peaceful". In other words, so long as the union can command the allegiance of, and maintain control over, its' members, the bosses will win an easy victory. SOGAT 82, like all the unions, is pinning its hopes for reversing the rapid demise of the unions at the hands of the bourgeoisie on the return of a Left-wing capitalist government, which could only have a slight chance of coming about if the Left and the unions can be seen to be able to repress and contain proletarian violence better than the Right. Unions cannot be reformed or made to fight with a 'more radical' leadership or even with more militant shop stewards. Unions, like pimps who

negotiate the rate for which prostitutes get screwed, assume a social function of mediating between capital and labour which inevitably escapes the control of each member and of the union members taken as a whole. Even during the miners strike every initiative of consequence was organised not by the NUM structure but by miners, their wives and friends organising themselves (although often local union delegates played as much a part in these initiatives as those without any official status).

22/2/86: 4 TNT lorries attacked and smashed in Commercial St.

### Raiders' blazing revenge!

A GANG of thieves stole thousands of copies of The Sun early yesterday and burned them.

The raiders, calling themselves the Swindon Action Group, swooped on six newsagents in the Wiltshire town and grabbed papers which had been dropped on the doorsteps by wholesalers.

Three hours later firemen were called to a blazing garage, where they found the papers burning.



## PC HURT BY SNOWBALL OF GLASS

By GEORGE LYNN

A DEADLY snowball packed with razor-sharp glass fragments ripped open a policeman's cheek outside The Sun's hi-tech plant at Wapping.

The murderous weapon was hurled during a mass picket on Saturday by striking printworkers. It hit Pc Philip Cross full in the face.

With blood streaming, the shocked officer was rushed to hospital where he had three stitches put in the wound. He was sent home to recover.

### Collapsed

Another policeman and policewoman were hurt, one woman demonstrator collapsed, and there were 32 arrests.

5/3/86: Printers under threat of redundancy from Maxwells' Scottish papers - the Daily Record and Sunday Mail, begin an occupation of the Anderson Quay printing plant in Glasgow.

15/3/86: Massive demonstration of local residents, printworkers and supporters at Wapping. 100+ people shake the hard metal fencing outside the printworks, and, after 10 minutes it's pulled right down, some of it coming away completely. People start throwing crash barriers over and on to the rolls of razor wire that cover the ground leading up to the fortress - but cops on horses and snatch squads charge forward before the place can be stormed. The event is a big high, however, and people hang around until 2a.m. or so chatting together in a festive atmosphere, delaying Murdochs' papers for over 5 hours - too late for most deliveries outside London, costing Murdoch an estimated loss of over a million quid. A quiet, but still relatively satisfying, victory. Sure, it can be arrogantly dismissed as just a Left v. Right Show - and certainly if you just listen to and look at the Union stewards you'll get an impression of utter stupidity. For instance, one steward, a couple of days after a TNT lorry had hospitalised 2 pickets, told everyone through his megaphone that they should all sit down in front of on-coming lorries, telling everyone to "remember that little man from India" (Gandhi, if you remember, set up a scab union in the textile industry and threatened to kill himself if the super-exploited went on strike; unfortunately, they didn't). But picketing at Wapping and elsewhere is not just controlled by the Union cops & by the polite policing inside people's heads - cops get hospitalised, fences are torn down, lorries are delayed...Sure, it's no Broadwater Farm - but the losses Murdoch incurred this night meant one of the biggest successes for picketing for several years (which is one reason the media kept pretty quiet about this picket). And nothing would have happened that night if the Unions had been in control. That even this traditionally quite complacent conservative sector of the workforce are coming out with the age-old tune, "I used to support the police but not anymore..." is indicative of a bubbling anger which could sweep both Unions and cops aside.

23/3/86: In the early hours, a few hours after Tony Dubbins, NGA leader, gets nicked, 7 TNT vans get all their windows smashed, close to Wapping. This kind of attack, together with the theft of Murdoch papers from newsagents and their subsequent destruction, are very common - and so most of these kinds of incidents are not listed here.

6/4/86: Wapping - corrugated iron fencing torn down by pickets, whilst leftist paper merchants sell their wares urging the picketting to be stepped up, but doing fuck-all themselves, as usual. Missiles are thrown and 6 coppers are hospitalised. Before this, at a tedious rally, the Unions had rejected Murdochs' offer of a Labour movement paper, though they keep their options open for a compromise deal involving compensation payments. They know that too readily accepting a labour movement journal as pay-off for a cop-out would make the paper too obviously a way of leading workers up a fatal dead-end. After all, if Murdoch wants the paper, then it must be a con. But if they can make it look like "the best in the circumstances" then perhaps the Labour movement paper can seem more "concerned and committed" than just a cynical attempt to boost the chances of a Leftist capitalist government. The wet-dream of these left-wing Murdochs is that an alternative to The Sun will be able to push The Great New Hope - Labour Into Power! (so that they can rearrange the weights on our backs).

DAILY MIRROR, Thursday, January 17, 1983

## PAUL FOOT reporting

# THE MICKEY MOUSE SWINDLERS CLEAN UP

● WHILE MPs make laws in the House of Commons, cleaners who work all round them are paid in "Mickey Mouse" names to avoid tax and national insurance.

The Department of Health and Social Security and the Inland Revenue know all about it, but have taken no action.

In June, 1983, Mr Ted Cheeseman,

regional manager for Exclusive Cleaning, was arrested outside a London bank. He had just cashed 29 cheques made out to false names.

Mr Cheeseman had an office at the House of Commons, where he had helped his firm get the lucrative contract for cleaning the Palace of Westminster.

He told Scotland Yard's Fraud Squad that his company employed "about 50" people at the House of Commons. But the police noticed that regular wages were paid to 85 people, and most of these did not have House of Commons security passes.

Mr Cheeseman explained that many of

the 85 did not exist. A lot of workers were paid using false names or given cash. He would personally endorse falsely-named cheques, cash them and hand over the money to the cleaners. He insisted he wasn't taking any money for himself.

After a long inquiry, the police accepted his story.

In April last year, Mr Cheeseman was charged only with the technical offence of signing a false name on a cheque. He was fined £100. At that time, he had been sacked.

Soon after his arrest Mr Cheeseman went to the DHSS offices in Lisson Grove, West London.

He handed over all the documents about the House of Commons.

A DHSS spokesman told me: "In October 1983, the papers were passed as they were supposed to be in these situations, to the Inland Revenue Audit Centre."

### Check

The Inland Revenue say there has been no prosecution.

The statutory Mounsell practices at the House of Commons are still going on. Documents leaked to me show payments

received last October and November by the same false names as those which were being used before Mr. Cheeseman's arrest.

Two workers signed for payments in eleven different names.

Mr. Cheeseman is not happy. "I was sacked and convicted for helping out the cleaners," he said. "But no action was taken against the company or the workers who benefit."

Mr. R. D. Pope, managing director of Exclusive Cleaning, told me:

"I can say first and foremost it is a fact that each individual person is obliged to declare him or herself on a certain piece of documentation that we have, and that person would only be paid in that name."

"In relation to what you say about the House of Commons, I am absolutely staggered. What I'd like to do is have our own security people check this and I'll ask them to respond to you on Monday."

But nobody did.

Perhaps the new Labour Movement paper will contain such investigative journalism like the vicious crap above, now being churned out by the Daily Mirror's tame Trotskyist. Leftist shit like this don't normally come out with such blatant grassing - but this article blowing the whistle on the black economy reveals in a crude form the aim of all investigative left-wing journalistic revelations: to get the State to rationalise the anomalies and incongruities in the organisation of the market economy which the State manages - and, in so doing, putting even greater constraints on the dispossessed (usually the pay-off for a few reforms). Paul Foot and the SWP opposes Kinnock, but with enemies like these Kinnock

needs no friends. How come those rebellious youths at the bottom of the SWP hierarchy accept the humiliation of being led and ranted at by such elitist scum? Do they really think that their lives & struggles, their anger, become 'meaningful' by being in such a crass organisation (which even condemned the miners' violent attacks on scabs because it was bad for the miners' image)? Not that there are any better organisations: there's no such thing as a Revolutionary Organisation - none are either worth joining or setting up. Being part of an Organisation is just a sectarian way of setting up a screen to project a collective image that just adds to the wall of mediations keeping you apart from other proletarians. Being part of such an Organisation is a way of hiding your resignation by appearing to 'do something', swallowing your point of view & losing it in The Collectivity. There's a world of difference between this and organising theoretical-practical activity that subverts this society. For instance - the attack on Brixton police station began because individual blacks, and later whites, organised themselves together, not because they organised an Organisation which would then attack the cops.

11/4/86: Southend TNT distribution depot smashed up, with typewriters and furniture being wrecked by 40 or so printworkers. Also several lorries smashed. SOGAT and the NGA threaten to discipline these pickets for not following their picketting guidelines urging non-violence. Peregrine Worsthorne, now editor of the Sunday Telegraph, said in a TV interview on May 11th 1980, "We haven't had fascism in this country because...the trade union movement has done what in Italy and Germany had to be done by the police force". So if the cops don't get you the Union cops will. The printworkers' Unions want to demoralise the strikers with the impotence of purely symbolic acts - the humiliation of "doing your bit" by shouting 'scab' from behind 3 lines of barriers, over the heads of row upon row of cops, to a lorry moving away from you 400 yards in the distance. This totally frustrating gesture is known as "Freedom of speech" - say what you like (within certain limits) - but do as you're told. Putting some desperate anger into this cry of "scab!" doesn't make it any the more useful or morale-boosting: most of the real morale-boosting goes on in the side streets and in little groups of people who trust each other. And the Union bureaucrats are doing their best to make sure that the activities of these hit squads receive as little publicity as possible - preferably none, even to the point of telling their members that some 'outsiders' who publicise some of what's going on are agents provocateurs (it's well-known that, like in the miners strike, there are cops dressed as pickets down at Wapping, so obviously this gives printworkers and their families good reason for mistrust).

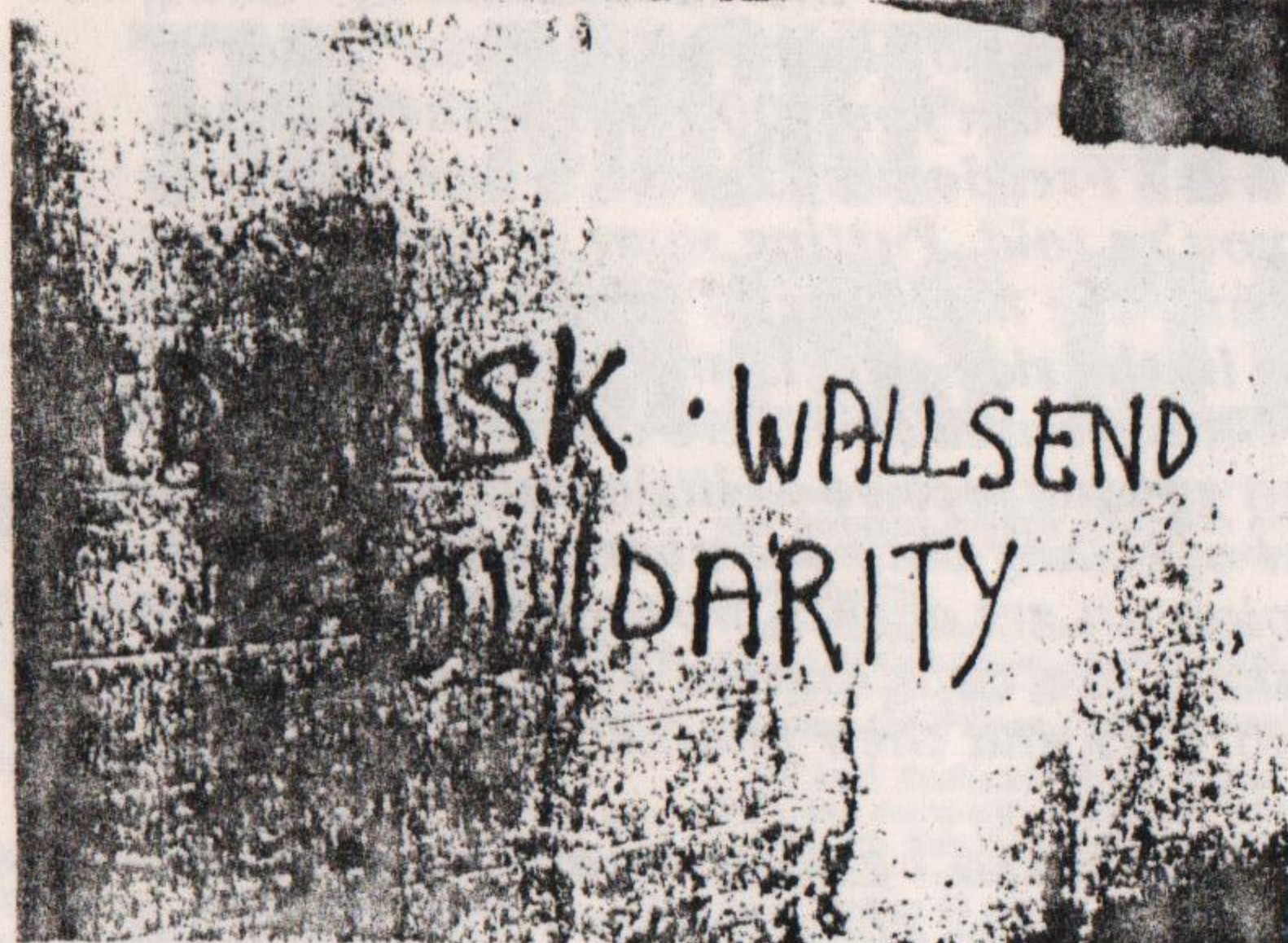
16/4/86: When a large number of pickets, bored by hanging around the main gates at Wapping, walk off down a side street, they come across a TNT lorry out on a limb, with the cops caught unprepared. The windscreen is smashed and the few cops around get a good battering.

26/4/86: 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 this night, as the cops had blocked off any advance past Wapping Lane.

1/5/86: May Day - march from Tower Hill to Wapping. Barriers protecting the cops and the Wapping fence from demonstrators, are removed - but the union stewards intervene to put the barriers back into position, telling everyone, through megaphones, to move on. Abuse only is hurled at the stewards, by printworkers and 'outsiders' alike. Some men half-heartedly continue taking the barriers away, but being urged, in dull 'reasonable' tones projected through the dominating voice of the megaphone, to continue walking has its intended demoralising effect. So most people walk on, drawn away by the added enticement of the Pied Piper band on the lorry, churning out uninspired sleep-inducing drones. Then a scuffle with the cops at Breezers Hill: bricks are thrown, barriers taken away. But in such a mixed crowd, it's hard to be sure how others might react if a little group took the risk of a direct attack on the cops, and generally it's hard to keep more than 4 or 5 people whom you know together for any length of time. On the highway down to Glamis Road, there's the usual taunting of cops - and threats - but peace peace peace is the useless reality. Then, at Glamis Road, riot cops on horses get pelted with about 40 missiles - and 1 cop gets hospitalised. But most people are content just to watch - too used to treating events like a TV show. Top steward Hicks, appeals through a megaphone for reverential silence from the band and the crowd, and then outlined his street cred credentials - "I got arrested the other day, my house got raided etc.etc.", using this credibility as the basis of his demand for a PEACEFUL picket, saying that a peaceful picket is an effec-

...tive picket. They've been saying this for ages - allowing the pigs to hospitalise pickets, intimidate residents and let the scab lorries through, Sure, even some of the peaceful picketting sometimes delays distribution, and is sometimes effective. But such "peaceful" moments of picketting happen mostly because a bit of violence has boosted peoples' confidence and sense of fun to make them feel that it's worthwhile hanging around for longer - and not just going home or to the pub after an hour of boredom. After a fight with the cops 'strangers' talk with each other without inhibition - in London, this is a breakthrough! What's more, it's the violence that brings in the kids from the area, the kids who might not know all the details of the struggle of the printworkers, but who have good reason to hate the cops who hassle them all the time, whilst protecting the rich pigs who are removing the poor from the area (on a previous occasion, Wapping kids, who had nicked a couple of crates of milk intended for the London Marathon runners, were seen lobbing open milk cartons at passing posh cars - Rovers, Rolls, Bentleys, etc. - but not the cheaper cars). Only abuse (not rocks) is hurled at Hicks who asks anyone who sees people throwing stones to point them out to the stewards "who will deal with them". Hicks is a notorious shit - he's often called over the cops to deal with people who remove barriers at Wapping. And on this day, a couple of blokes who'd removed barriers argued with the stewards who'd replaced them, upon which the stewards called over a couple of muscular loyal printworkers who punched each of them in the face. These hypocrites - like the cops - can only "preserve the peace" by violence. Inevitably: there is no middle ground between the violence of this society and the violence that opposes it. Of course, it's up to the more rebellious printworkers to hurl more than abuse at these Union cops: unless it's the only way to avoid getting hurt or arrested, for 'outsiders' to fight with these scum would be substitutionist. Nevertheless, there are lots of liberal-lefty 'outsiders' who believe that, since it's not directly their struggle, all they can do is grovel at the feet of the official representatives of this struggle. Their notion of 'support' is to masochistically tag along with whatever the bureaucrats want them to do.

Towards the end of the evening, a couple of cops eager to make an arrest beat a hasty retreat after being surrounded and spat at. Then - with no cops around - a mini-barricade made up of roadworks is thrown across East Smithfield opposite St.Katherine's docks. A fun ten minutes which partly made up for the frustrations of the rest of the evening.

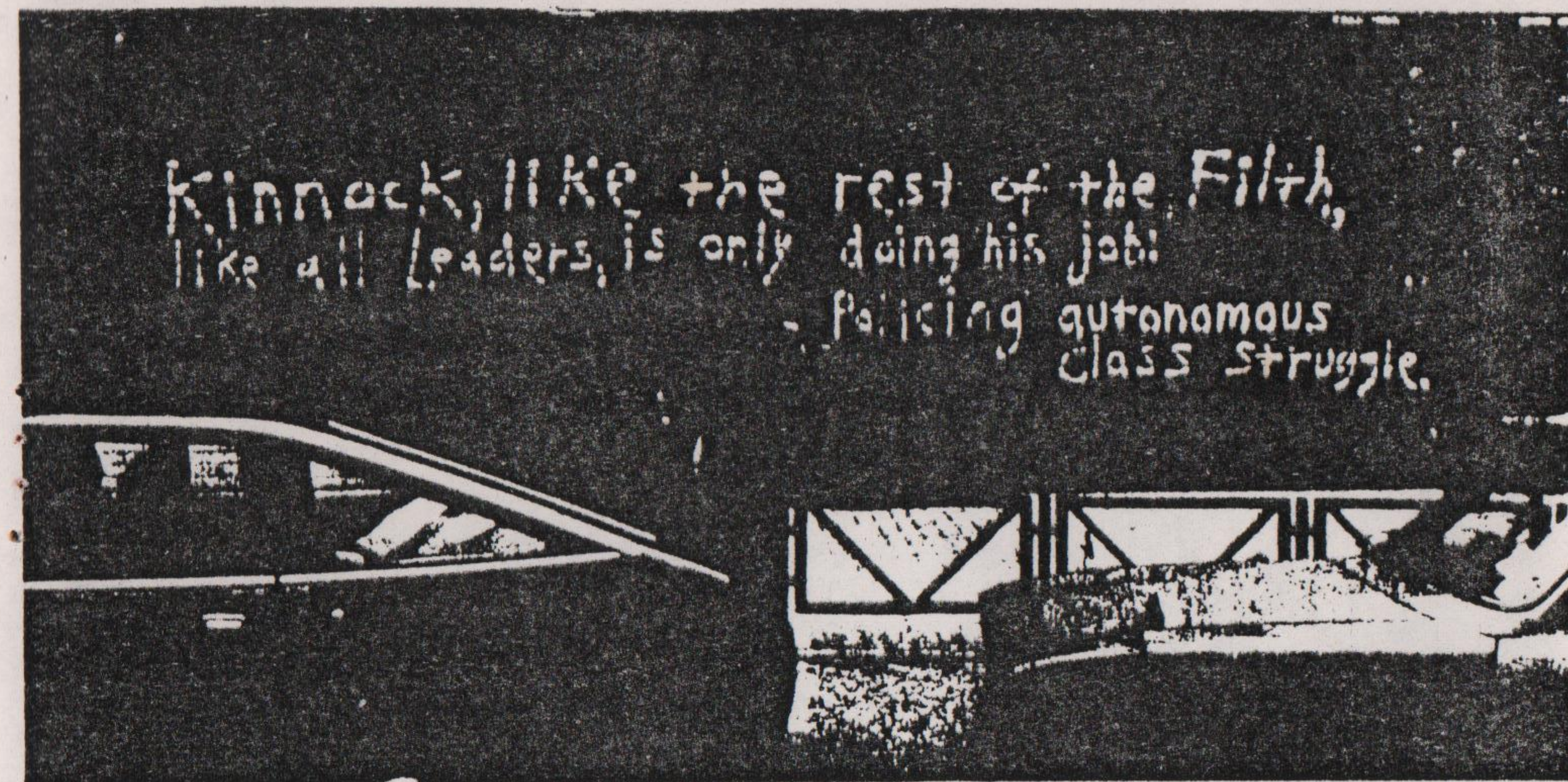


A hopeful but inspiring graffiti on a wall in Newcastle Upon Tyne. Wallsend is one of the main shipbuilding centres in the UK. In September '85 a strike broke out there which spread to other yards belonging to the Swan Hunter group on the Tyne. It lasted for some 2 months &, though pickets were mounted daily, these were scarcely needed to prevent scabbing. It began initially as an occupation of the main yards, above which there hung a banner saying "Under Workers' Control". The strike remained unofficial throughout its duration, when, after 7 weeks, the management unexpectedly capitulated to meet the main demands in full. These included an end to on ship rest breaks & an assurance there would be no return to the bad old days of the right of foremen to hire & fire. The victory was all the more remarkable considering the degree of demoralisation that existed amongst the working class especially of Durham & Northumberland after the defeat of the miners. There was even talk of setting up a breakaway Union. Put like this the central question of the Unions as capitalist institutions was never posed - but there was enough self-activity and initiative to throw a scare into the Confederation of British Shipbuilders.

3/5/86: As about 7000 marchers join up outside the main entrance along The Highway, 2 orange smoke bombs are hurled under the police horses, whilst a few stones are chucked at the cops. The pigs launch a cavalry charge, and all hell breaks loose - rocks, barriers, anything that people can get their hands on is thrown at the strikebreakers in blue. At least one mounted cop gets dragged off his

horse. The riot squad then launch largely indiscriminate attacks into the crowd, with the cops making most of the running after their first few minutes of retreat. One guy, truncheoned by the cops, has a heart attack - and, as he leaves by ambulance, a cop smashes 1 of the ambulance windows. All through the snatch squad charges, Union & leftist speakers, including Tony Benn, spew out impotent horror shock statements declaring that "this is not the British democratic way....I've never seen anything like it....Glasgow cops aren't like this..." etc.etc. They're either plain ignorant or, more likely, just trying to present a purely moral concern and boost up the idea that the 'Nice British Bobby' has been polluted by the aberrations of Thatcherism. Their main theme was that the cops had launched an unprovoked attack - an insulting but convenient way of reducing the demonstrators, who have a million good reasons for being violently angry with the cops, to merely innocent victims. One Union official shouts, "I appeal to the police to withdraw - we can keep order amongst our people." Quite: the Left don't like the cops' heavy thuggery because it weakens their ability to mediate between the angry masses and the powers-that-be, it weakens their ability to 'keep order' (i.e. keep THEIR order). Meanwhile, in the side streets an ITN van gets its' windows wrecked, and a car is overturned. Much of the evening is spent hurling frustratingly useless insults at the ruling classes' mercenaries, which

they're trained to ignore or laugh at. One young guy shouts out, "Just you wait till Labour comes to power - you'll be out on your arses." When someone points out that Kinnock had recently declared himself "the policeman's friend", he replies, "Yeah - I know, the bastard! He even said he'd wanted to be a cop". It would be a little heavy to make a big thing of this kind of contradiction. Sure, it ex-



presses at one and the same time the banal hope for an exit from misery by a change in the personnel of the State, and an underlying despair that doesn't want to draw obvious logical conclusions. But there's a simpler explanation, however: when winding up the cops to say what you know is the truth is a waste of time. Nevertheless, since shouting at the cops is not a communication with these scum but is really a communication between those who are fighting them, the best wind-up s are those that get to the heart of the situation, ones that speak the truth to potential friends.

Though the electricians at Wapping are scabs, we shouldn't therefore underestimate the minority of good people who happen to be in EETPU. EETPU - appropriately pronounced EAT POO - run the Union like a mafia more viciously than the other Union protection rackets: it makes autonomous action difficult. Rebel electricians in the past have been sectioned by Hammond & Chapple - 28 days shoved in a bin by order of the court. Freedom and democracy. In November 1984 - at the height of the miners' strike - there was a majority vote amongst electricians to go on strike - not for the miners, but for their own - wage - demands (which, anyway, would have been the only effective way workers could have expressed their solidarity with the miners: solidarity begins at home). Nevertheless, when fighting for ones own demands submits to the ballot box, it inevitably means fuck-all. In the November '84 ballot, the majority was not the necessary two-thirds - only 55%. Thatcher came to power with under 44%. The secret ballot was so secret that the results weren't released until January (and then, virtually only the Financial Times gave it publicity). Democracy moves in mysterious ways. Some electricians have a good history - in 1977 they were almost the only sector of workers which had courageously risked an attack on the Labour governments' Social Contract (the Social Con-Trick, as it was known then). And they were almost as vilified by the press as the miners were in '84. Some workers at the end of the unofficial strike even organised against the divide & rule tactics of the 'militant' shop stewards. Supported by the right-wing press, the then Minister of Energy, fading hero Tony Benn, even made contingency plans to call the army in if 'necessary'. But he'd found this unnecessary when the militant shop-stewards accepted a deal worked out with Benn and the CEBG bosses which created a skill hierarchy (status, 'responsibility' and small differentials) as the 'reward' for weakened solidarity. If Hammond & Co. can get away with organising the shit conditions for his loyal slaves at Wapping he owes it to a certain extent to Tony Benn's part in the crushing of the rank and file electricians in 1977. Which makes Benn's presence on the picket line at Wapping all the more ironic. Hammond, of course, will make sure that the recent 72% vote for strike action remains just a vote - with no action (like NACODS in 1984). After all, if there were power cuts today like there were in 1977, then...oh what a beautiful morning, oh what a beautiful night....

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: "Ars bare fists and rubbish 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.

For the best ongoing written contribution to the printworkers dispute see PICKET, c/o 628 Tottenham High Rd., N.17.

Police chiefs and print union leaders met for two hours yesterday to discuss ways of avoiding the violence which broke out at an anti-Murdoch Wapping demonstration last Saturday.

They agreed to establish better communications between demonstration organisers and police both before and during rallies. Police and union control centres are to set up telephone links.

Produced by an agitated outsider,  
London, May 15th 1986.