

Picket

no.22

12486
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Friday, 8th August, 1986

Wednesday afternoon, 30th July, march

Fifteen hundred or so strikers and supporters began a march to Wapping starting near the Old Times building. Here the march filled Gray's Inn Rd for quite a while to yell at the strike-breakers. The demonstration proceeded to Holborn and then passed the Law Courts to Fleet St to remind other printworkers of the strike. A number came out to cheer the march which proceeded in no rush at all, arriving at Wapping three and a half hours after starting.

Later, in the evening, about 50 pickets gathered ad-hoc to march from Wapping to Tower Hill for the evening march, being hassled by the bosses hired thugs all the way trying to get the marchers off the street. Arrived to cheers of those assembled.

Wednesday evening, 30th July

Five to six hundred marched from Tower Hill to Wapping. About 10.30pm the marchers split into two groups. One group made its way to Virginia St to voice its distaste at the scabs inside and outside the scab newspaper plant. The other group of approximately 200 pickets started to march back along The Highway towards Tower Hill. They then turned right into the Minories then right again into Prescott St and left into Mansell St. The march stopped here content at delaying the traffic and a double-decker bus. However it was then decided that more worthwhile targets passed through Aldgate, a mere 300 yards away.

The march again moved off. About 100 marchers were left by the time it reached Aldgate with approximately 50 police arriving on the scene trying to push the marchers onto the footpath in Braham St. The time was now 11pm. Within seconds a scab lorry appeared and was held up in the traffic. The marchers lost no time in swarming into the road to communicate properly with the scab duo. The scab lorry kept inching forward being encouraged by the police, "Don't stop, drive straight through them" with much waving of their arm's (as coppers often do!) Despite the marchers' efforts and with the help of Murdoch's infantry the scabs made good their escape. The police were proud of what they had done, and whilst relaxing and patting backs and busily shaking hands, we, the marchers were busily shaking the window grills of a scab coach 20 yards further on.

This really upset the law and they waded into us quite hard. However the scabs remained our captives for a good 2 minutes, and frightened scab faces could be seen cowering through the windows, before drawing their curtains for the night. Again, the police spoke the same words, "Don't stop, drive straight through them" and with their help the scabs scurried away along their well worn Rat Run. Two arrests had been made. With the large police presence the marchers left at 11.10pm, content in what they felt was a reasonable night's work.

Thursday, 31st July, Thetford

from Friday's Evening Standard, "A newspaper distribution base handling Rupert Murdoch's papers was attacked early today by a crowd of more than 200 ... threw bricks and stones, causing more than £10,000 of damage to the base in Thetford, Norfolk ... A dozen workers' cars and 15 delivery vans were damaged during an hour of mayhem in which attackers lit fires outside the depot and aimed flares at an office block. The crowd fled as police arrived but not before breaching the fence around the depot in two places. Inside the grounds attackers damaged vans and set fire to bundles of papers. No arrests were made."

Saturday, 2nd August, Wapping

Six thousand attended including the big women's march. As the march passed Wapping it was halted about 150 yards away from a double police line with horse backup blocking The Highway. Several hundred pickets moved up to the line ready to continue the march despite the lack of a clear plan. Marching incircles is not an alternative. This was the crucial time. In the event guess who moved in to drive away pickets with a speech. Speeches were begun in The Highway so the Socialists could fill the columns of their newspapers. Very well controlled. A large section of the demo reversed itself and marched back towards Dock St. Further down The Highway a good number of pickets had made their way to various exit routes used by scabs. Numbers were up on this march but pickets are left to themselves if they want to picket not protest. Later some made it to Commercial Rd and Cannon St Rd where a juggernaut was caught. It almost ran Murdoch's police transit off the road trying to escape. He must have had a cold drive to somewhere all his windows were missing. The small crowd that challenged the filth when they arrived in force made them retreat this time.

Sunday, 3rd August, Tudor St

In the early hours of Sunday a white mouse cruises slowly past the Mail building to deliver scab papers to Clan House 2nd Floor. The only challenge they got was one lone supporter. Apparently this is a regular drop but times may vary. Honest Mail workers band together. If you allow it on your doorstep it is inside too.

Tuesday, 5th August, march

The 68th march to Wapping. We arrived at Gray's Inn Road around 12.45. The crowd was impressive. Picket was assembled outside the Times building and during this time managed to put a few scabs off their lunch to say the least. Also one scab who had only been there a day and a half decided to pack it in and joined the picket line.

We were eventually moved to the other side of the road. The crowds were growing by the minute, both pickets and spectators. Word was passed around that we were marching to Wapping. At 2.05 a Sogat banner appeared to loud applause and traffic came to a standstill. Police seized the banner but returned it. They were going crazy radioing for assistance as pickets blocked the road and pavements. One picket spotted a scab mingling amongst us trying desperately to worm his way back into his hole.

Within seconds he was surrounded and boy did we give it to him! We marched from Gray's

Inn Rd through Holborn chanting and singing. Children lined the pavements handing out leaflets. We had a warm welcome along Fleet St as onlookers and supporters applauded us on our way. A cheery wave to our colleagues on Bouverie St was in order. All in all a good day, and now 3-500 marched out to Wapping, where else.

Wednesday evening, 6th August, Wapping

The 196th day of the strike. About 6-700 pickets marched and rallied. The fortitude, perseverance, bravery, stubbornness, patience and will to win of the strikers was in evidence. Pickets have excellent morale despite the large police presence and other problems.

Letter from a picket

You really are not doing much standing in Wellclose, organise a march, stay peacefully if you must, but at least do something other than stand in one spot. The police love that, easy to contain.

Notes:

- Special scab awards to Kinnock and Livingstone for having articles in the Sunday Times.
- August 10th, Brands Hatch, there is a Sun Free Motor Race Day.
- The FT does not and has never used Bemrose pre-prints. That leaves the Express and Mail.
- The London Machine Branch has called off the picket of Bemrose, even though they say it is only temporary, while tactics are reviewed. The truth is plain to see, having made the opportunity to extend the blacking campaign, they do not have the courage to carry it through and black all Bemrose products being used in Fleet St. From the outset of this lock-out the need to enforce the blacking campaign has been one of the major failures. Murdoch could not get a paper out without the support and connivance of Fleet St and that is the thistle that they are not prepared to grasp. For the last eight weeks members of the Casual Chapel have carried out most of this picket. Three principled workers were sacked for refusing to cross.
- Excerpt from a letter, "last night (23rd) ... the 10-or-so of us from Bristol made a detour to the Old Sodbury TNT depot on the way back to see if there was anything going on there, which there wasn't; no picket of any kind and no lorries came our way."
- Wapping scab, Richard Goggin, The White Heart, Kneller Rd, Whitton, Middlesex.
- Were two scab Yates vans seen picking up at the Express?
- Judas and Scab were two of the words noted by the scabs in blue when mortally offended complainants told them that they were deeply offended and intimidated by these honest and accurate descriptions given by pickets at Wapping this week.
- Recipe for picketing: Add 99% boredom to 1% Russian Roulette, mix and stir well.
- Rumours are the work of the Company. Rumours are not fact.
- The courts are used to get the trade union leaders to police the ranks.
- The shops at Snodland are refusing to take papers from Murdoch due to picketing.



March to Wapping, 12 noon
Thursday, August 14th
from Thavies Inn
Holborn Circus

Residents March,
All pickets welcome
9pm from Glamis Rd
Saturday, 9th August



Southampton scabs: Mick, Neil, Paul, Bill & Anne Scanlon, 244 Bridge Rd, Burlsedon; Nigel Diben, 377 Butts Rd, Sholing; Zollie & Tony Gregan, 34 Lilac Rd, Swaythling; M. Mongan, 34 Menzies Cl, Lordshill, 737800; Nigel Alderslade, 55 Admirals Rd, Lock's Heath; Stephen Bingley, 261 Bridge Rd, Lwr Swanwick; Stephen Cole, 40 Fisher's Rd, Eling; Alan McCann, 35 Painswick Cl, Sarisbury Grn; Steven Seaman, 40 Cheviot Rd, Millbrook, 770468; Robert Paul, 85 Tangmere Dr, Lordshill, 734445; Geoff Clark, 41 Barnfield Cr, Calmore, 868558; Tony Atkinson, 19 Thornhill Pk Rd, Thornhill, 462965; Roy Wallace, 16 Brading Cl, Bassett Grn; Arthur Osbourne, 17 Cromarty Rd, Lordshill; Vic Booth, 31 BlueBell Rd, Bassett; Barry Moth, 493 Hinkler Rd, Thornhill; Joe Glover, 48 Burghclere Rd, Weston, 449190; Maurice Newman, 47 Chesil Ave, Bitterne; Barry Burton, 88 Swift Rd, Woolston, 442733; Stanley Dodds, 3 Broadway Pk, Stevenson's Cl, Wimborne, Dorset, 885399; Ian McRoberts, 30 Methuen Rd, Bournemouth, 020224758; Peter Griffiths, 79 Abshott Rd, Titchfield, Hants, 84984; Gary Rockett, 11 Birch Cl, Shirley Warren; Mickey Street, 42 Gordon Ave, Portswood, 552437; Gerry Swartz, 40 Taranto Rd, Lordswood, 789827; Alan Teare, 32 Menzies Cl, Rownhams, 734897; Rod "Squeak" Steel, 8 Lawson Cl, Swanwick, Lock's Heath 5938; Ross Blackwood, 2 Valerian Rd, Hedge End, Botley 4910; Jack Brown, 101 Bramley Cr, Sholing; Bill Cruse, 40 Churchview Cl, Southampton; Stewart Buchanan, 32 Milbury Cr, Bitterne, 445787; Neil Johnstone, 217 Kingsclere Ave, Weston, 438500; Garry Rogers, 180 Kathleen Rd, Sholing; Mick Lowman, 11 Havensstone Way, Swaythling 581853; Tony Cutler, Houseboat, Moody's Boatyard, Bursledon; Michael Staunton, 346 Bitterne Rd, Southampton, 441062; John Kehoe, 4 Crawte Ave, Fawley; Dave Small, 3 Longmore Cr, Sholing, 432029; Kenny Mathers, 254 Bridge Rd, Lwr Swanwick, Lock's Heath 2196; Mo Dryer & Mick Halliday, 242 Dridge Rd, Bursledon; Anna French, French's Grocery Store, Bridge Rd, Lwr Swanwick, Lock's Heath 3170; Alan Bevan, 35 Winnards Pk, Sarisbury Grn, Lock's Heath 3648; Gary Morgan, 6 Westbrook Way, Swaythling; David Pink, 22 Osborne Rd, Warsash; David McIntosh, 47 Arnheim Rd, Lordswood, 769037; Robert Avery 25; Woodpecker Way, Eastleigh; Colin Smith, 64 Diamond Rd, Bitterne Pk; David Hollins, 9 Outer Circle, Cxford; Stephen Middleton, 8 Rosoman Rd, Sholing; Riccardo Woodier, 99 Havre Tower, International Way, Weston; Graham Easson, Wyndham Ct, near Southampton Station; R Kinch, 9 Nightingale Grove, Shirley; Noel Barrett, 49 Sandringham Rd, Bitterne 582372

Income: £2, 10p, 50p, 50p, 50p pickets; £5, £10 Sogat London Central Branch Officer; £1 Bristol; 50p, 10p Now Publishing; 50p unemployed minder; £1, £1 Sogat Rirma; £1, £5 NGA minder; £10 Manchester Strike Support Group; £4 NGA comps/badge table; £1 London Greenpeace picket; £5 ST NGA machine; £5 Claimants Action Group Edinburgh.

Concise written reports, contributions welcome. Published by picketing print union members.
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