

Picket no. 31

Saturday 25 October

Pickets are settling in for the long haul. Initiatives, such as a printer's march through Brixton, or a Saturday afternoon march from Millwall are good ideas and there are many more coming from the ranks, as always. But the proposal to listen to TUC filth covering their arse in a phoney lobby at parliament, deliberately several miles from the picket line, is *criminal*. Pickets know that the only way to win jobs back is to physically eject every last scab from the Wapping plant. Any proposal to give the TUC any say in their dispute is surrender. The TUC is not bothered by pickets in prison, or the massive strike-breaking operation in the heart of London, or the police assaults, or workers' hardship etc. What bothers them is picketing, just as they hated the miners' pickets. Police threats this week to have a speeding lorry kill a picket are because of the effect of picketing.



Thursday 16th October: 12 Noon, Grays Inn Road. For the past two weeks, members of the Labour Party Young Socialists have marched 125 miles around 22 London boroughs in protest against the Tories' phoney YTS schemes, the objects of which are to provide a cheap, non-unionised, easily disposable workforce for the bosses, and to fiddle the unemployment figures by pretending YTS are proper jobs. At noon today, their march crossed Blackfriars Bridge into the City, and they were delighted to see 150 NGA and SOPGAT sacked NI strikers waiting to join their march under the London Machine Branch SOGAT banner. We proceeded slowly up Fleet Street, to the cheers and applause of Street workers and passers-by. We then proposed to march on to Grays Inn Road for a lunchtime picket, which they accepted, scabbing off the job stealers at the *Times* building. This sparked off a larger than necessary deployment of the blue-clad strikebreakers, complete with several top brass types. The young unemployed squad were only too pleased to demonstrate their distaste for the scabmongers, and performed a co-ordinated cry of "Hammond – UGGH!! – he makes us SICK!", whilst all leaning forward and pretending to throw up. This cry was repeated for Murdoch and Thatcher, and was very effective.

Saturday 18th October: Wapping. After the main march, several hundred people left for other destinations. Groups of pickets 40/50-strong repeated last week's exercise of suddenly appearing on the path on either side of Commercial Road, then retreating round the side-streets. Although this action kept the filth on the hop, they felt confident enough to send a convoy of three artics up Commercial Road at about 11.15pm, where a large group of pickets, monitored by a transit van full of Murdoch's private soldiers, were waiting. When the lorries were sighted, pickets flooded onto a nearby zebra crossing, forcing the artics to stop. Two more transit vans turned up and 30 of Kenneth Newman's lousiest starting pushing, shoving and throwing the pickets back onto the path and making three arrests. They waved their scab mates on and the artics fled, but what they failed to notice was a second group of pickets a hundred yards further on, who pointed at the scab lorries. Shattered windscreens and side windows. At least 7 artics and dozens of scab white vans were done over the weekend. Another large group lay in wait on another scab route near Burdett Road, and at 12.45am got their reward in the shape of another three artics. There also the windscreens and side windows parted company as they were air-conditioned. Three arrests were made. Police spotters were in unmarked cars. From about 1.15am onwards, artics left the plant via Wapping Lane then west along the Highway and up Dock Street, hoping that was a safer route. The action is being stepped up. Roving pickets hold the key to breaking the will of Murdoch's scabbies. Success from mobility. But it can't be done by leaning up against the tea vans in Wellclose Square.

Saturday 18th October: Wapping (Cont). Brilliant tactics by the pickets. People went pretty quickly to a road junction once the march had reached Wellclose. One group of over 100 people gathered and moved off at 10.33pm, northwards. Cop van followed, but was left behind when we went down a footpath. Emerged onto Commercial Road and turned right, crossing Butcher Row. A few people chose to remain on the western side of Butcher Row. Four or five stayed on the eastern side. The mass of people crossed Commercial Road and proceeded eastwards, split into three groups (more by accident than design), then waited. At 10.52pm, a scab coach was spotted. The small group at the top of Butcher Row acted as an early warning system; their shouts of "SCAB" alerting those on Commercial Road. At least one missile hit the Scabmobile as it scurried eastwards.

Then at 11.02pm, a convoy of three scab artics, with the usual pig escort, turned right from Butcher Row to travel east along Commercial Road. At least one of these lorries was hit by at least one missile. It may be of interest that at least one of these lorries had a TNT trailer, but had a Fitzroy cab. (The fact that not all the lorries are TNT, and that some of them are from different TNT fleets, must indicate some success by pickets in persuading the lorries not to move). The group on the north side of Commercial Road then coalesced into one. We were being watched by a swarm of bluebottles in an unmarked van, so we literally went "round the houses" to lose them.

Eventually (after many doubts as to where we were going) we reached Burdett Road. It seemed that the main con-

voy had already left, so we returned to Commercial Road, spotting a scab coach on the way to the plant, at 11.43pm, just as we turned into Turners Road from Burdett Road. Eventually our nomadic band again reached Commercial Road, and stood on the eastern corner of the junction of Commercial and White Horse Road. There were other groups of pickets, on the corners of Butchers Row and Commercial Road. Several Pigmobiles had assembled in the area by this time. 12.10am – and 4 artics appear in Butchers Row and turn right. Some people rushed into the path of the convoy, but quickly retreated when it became apparent that the driver of the leading police Landrover would be quite happy to kill a few pickets. Suddenly a massive barrage of missiles of all shapes and sizes hit the convoy. Cops poured out of a van and ran into the crowd, dragging off two pickets, one of whom got a kicking in the van. The police were outwitted by the brilliant tactics of the pickets.

A number of white mice got damaged in Bethnal Green. Also, a white mice convoy got a hiding at Tower Bridge at about 2.15am. There were two arbitrary arrests at this incident, and reports indicate that the police used a new tactic – h'ling in a white mouse, from which they jumped to make their arrests. At 1.45am, a convoy of 2 artics exited from Wapping Lane, turned left and drove past Wellclose, as did at least 2 other convoys later. It appears that tactics had been so successful on Commercial Road, that the cops had decided to steer clear of the area, even though there can't have been any pickets left there by that time. Next time it needs more people. People need to stay longer. White mice are alone after 2.00am.

Monday 20 October: Grays Inn Road. At 12.30 noon, 350-400 pickets met outside the *Times* building in Grays Inn Road, and after a brisk 45 minutes of heckling the scabs, we formed up for a march. We went down the Grays Inn Road, turned left into Clerkenwell Road. There the Inspector in charge said: "Where are you going? Which way? Make up your mind. Scotland Yard are getting a bit humpy with this." We stopped at the junction of Farringdon Road, and the Inspector issued an official caution to the march leader: "If you stop again, I will arrest you for obstruction." We went on, Old Street, Moorgate and round the City, meeting many people and much traffic. Eventually we got to Ludgate Hill, down and into Fleet Street. By now we had both City and Met police with us. There must have been over 150, doing a man-for-man marking job. We arrived at the junction of Bouverie Street to see it sealed off by about 60 City police, three deep, with what I think was a Chief Superintendent in charge. There the march finished.

Wednesday 22nd October. In the afternoon, several hundred demonstrated at the TUC. No joy here. A march was led along Oxford Street. In the evening, the regular march was held to Wapping.

Clarifications, corrections.

- Peckham W.H. Smith Depot does not handle Murdoch titles, nor was this stated in *Picket*. Two scabs who are served by this depot do handle Murdoch's titles. One of these newsagents, Harry Ansell, a scab, is not a *Sunday Mirror* committee member as stated in *Picket* no. 30. He was removed from the committee some time ago.
- JAL Newsagents of Grays Inn Road is now handling Murdoch titles. The information in *Picket* no. 30 was wrong.
- *Picket* no. 28 referring to scabs G. Hurley and J. Hurley selling Murdoch titles. Please let it be known that these are not George and Jennie Hurley, who are in no way connected to the scabs. George is *Times* Night Machine, and can always be found in the NATSOPA Hilton, fully committed to the dispute.

A Song

Conveniently sung, more or less, to the tune of "My Old Man's a Dustman"

Eeyore – Eeyore – Oink, oink, oink,
 Here come the Boys in Blue,
 We're Rupert Murdoch's bully-boys
 And we've got a grudge against you.
 We are the Met – We're Fierce, we're Bad,
 And we're noted far and wide
 For beating up pickets, helping out scabs
 Aaaand... being on the losing side!

(Poems, songs & drawings always welcome in *Picket*)



MARCH TO WAPPING
 TUESDAY 12.30PM
 28TH OCTOBER
 FROM 110 PECKHAM
 LONDON SE15
 AUEW HQ



TUESDAY 2PM 28TH OCTOBER
 MARCH TO PENTONVILLE PRISON
 FROM CLERKENWELL GREEN
 CENTRAL BRANCH CASUAL SPONS.

✍ Written and financial contributions welcome. No report is too pedestrian for this Bulletin, in fact the more simple and tedious the better!

Income: 60p working SOGAT member; £4 unemployed NGA member; £3.20 *Times* Night Machine, Hilton; £15.14 NGA strikers; £47 NoW Publishing Collection;

Published by picketing print union members and residents.
Picket, c/o Housman's, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX