

Notes:

- Friday 30th May, 7-11pm, unemployed/unwaged night at Wapping, organised by the Federation of Claimants Unions.
- Pickets assemble every night at West Horndon TNT depot. Last week, when a flying picket bolstered the usual numbers (about 30), one scab suddenly saw the clarity of class issues in all their theoretical, ideological and historical perspectives and drove into a cop car.
- Pickets in Liverpool are having uneven success. A small number is being stopped from going into the large Bemrose plant which does colour supplement work for Murdoch.
- Pickets were pleased to learn of support from a minder in the General Trade who refused to print an insert for The Sunday Times and was sacked.

**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**

Quote: "Fifty million? That's alright for ten of us, but what about the rest?"

Murder on The Highway (1830)

'Tis of a Dreadful Deed of Blood to you I will infold,  
The slaughter of a waterman; 'Twill make your blood run cold.  
On Thursday eve, at Ratcliffe Highway, at the White Hart he drank so free,  
But little did he think that night would prove his destiny.

The policemen came into the house the people for to clear;  
Seeing John Wood intoxicated, to him they were severe.  
They dragged him over to the door without any fear or dread.  
On the stones there he was dashed, and with truncheons they split his head.

After they had ill-used this man with their arbitrary power,  
They dragged him to the station house, they were above an hour.  
Oh, had you but heard his moans, would have grieved your heart full sore.  
When they took him to the station, he lied weltering on the floor.

Then to add to the Cruelty, most dreadful for to tell,  
All in his Crimson Gore he was confined in a Dismal Cell.  
No surgical assistance for him they got, until the next day,  
But the next day was too late, Death had summoned him away.

The Skull before the Inquest was brought, and on the table placed,  
While Grief and Consternation was painted on each face.  
The policemen must answer for this crime, all on a future day,  
For the killing of a waterman in Ratcliffe Highway.

So far as is known the police never paid for the killing of that waterman - and they have carried on unchecked to the present day. This song was written in 1830 - one year after Sir Robert Peel's "New Police" had been introduced into East London (the Peelers). The new police were much hated. The reasons why were clear. In the inquest on John Wood, a witness said: "The deceased was taken to the police station house on the back of a coal whipper. There were 5 or 6 policemen with him. Having laid him down on the ground they dragged him towards the cell with his head trailing along the ground ...". He died of a fractured skull.

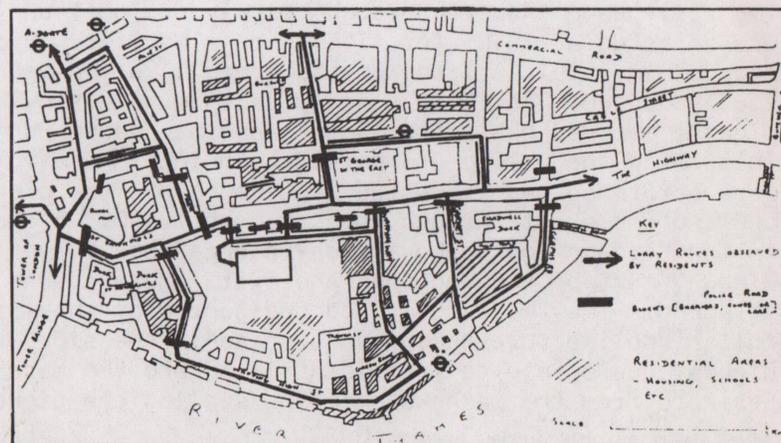
Two Phototec scabs at Wapping:

Mick Gell, 10 Robins Avenue, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent (0622 858282) has applied for a union card from the NUJ. Happily they have seen through his lies and put the block on. Brian Carmichael, 49 Bramerton Road, Beckenham, Kent (ex-directory), an ex-FoC is now a manager at Wapping.

Income: £1, £1, 40p, 20p London Machine Branch; £1 S Times "Natsopa"; £2 Sogat members; £1.45 picket; £2 Sun Machine chapel; £5, £5 Guardian Multi-trades chapel; 50p, 35p Times Graphical chapel; £1 Sun Publishing; £2 Sogat striker; £1.20 W H Smith Peckham; £3, £2, £1 misc; £10 NGA machine minder; £5 Times RIRMA; £1 SWP printworker; £1 working Sogat machine member.

Donations are most welcome and necessary.

Picket: published by NGA/Sogat pickets.



Based on two maps in NCCL's "No way in Wapping"

# Picket no.14

Thursday 29th May 1986

15070 P 000

HAVING READ THE PROPOSALS FROM THE COMPANY, ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF ACCEPTING THEIR FINAL OFFER?

YES

NO

MAY 1986

"Stick your offer up your Arse"

Picketing printworkers are right now organising to defeat the current combined attempt by the company/police/officials to stop the picketing. The job remains to clear the scabs from Wapping, 100% entry to Wapping and to clear the police from the area. For that, reinforcements are needed. Fellow workers - the road to Wapping is the road to your freedom. Join us.



1984: South Wales miners receive Willis

Central Hall, Westminster

For this eagerly-awaited meeting, on Friday, 30th May - the 127th day of the strike - the London Machine Branch has officially hired the hall and invited all the sacked Sogat members from the Murdoch quartet. Brenda Dean has a full diary and has given notice she will be unable to attend. With a "no" vote on the ballot the individual Branches have promised support and full backing. The union has been less forthcoming. The Fleet Street levy will also continue, with word already from The Guardian and Mirror in particular that they are solidly behind the strikers. Bouverie Street has been left out of the latest talks. Murdoch plans to print extra News of the World there with scab labour. The unions may well win the unfair dismissal cases - it would be a pity if these actions were to be dropped. The London wholesalers, who are united behind the strike, are being left out in the cold. To cease picketing in London, Glasgow and the distribution depots, to end the boycott campaign and to end the fight for jobs at Wapping would be abject surrender. Gray's Inn Road has nothing to offer. The fight is not for redundancy payments. The NGA made this clear at Thursday's meeting with a massive rejection of the offer. We fight for jobs at Wapping.

### Saturday 24th May, Wapping

This was Wales night. The march from Tower Hill was sponsored by Sogat Wales and SW England Branch and there were at least five coachloads of supporters from South Wales. They sang and led the 4,000-strong march from Tower Hill at 9.05pm. There was a carnival atmosphere, both on the march and in Wellclose Square, and the shop selling badges and mugs was doing well. There was also a balloon race. The atmosphere changed as the march arrived. There were many hundreds of police in evidence - contingents at Thomas More and Dock Streets and ten on horseback in Virginia Street behind the police lines near the main gate. Riot squads were visible in Artichoke Hill. The Highway was blocked by over 100 police and access to the eastern exits - Wapping Lane and Glamis Road - was frustrated. Contingents of pickets heading for these exits by way of the flats behind Wellclose were harassed in the side streets and turned back by police road blocks. There were even 20 police in the churchyard at St George's. Cable Street was blocked off at Ensign Street and Cannon Street Road with no one allowed through. The police tactics were successful in that many pickets were prevented from getting to the Glamis Road exit and The Highway here was cleared from 10.30pm. The first articles had left the plant at 7.30pm and another convoy headed out soon after 11pm. The police at the top of Wapping Lane kept the pickets moving away from the area, and even those shouting "scab" as coaches left were intimidated. At Cannon Street Road the group assembled there refused to budge and although isolated from much of the action held firm. At Thomas More and Virginia Streets the pickets also remained solid. The pickets opposite the plant were loud and vocal, and whenever anything moved inside the plant the noise was deafening. The numbers this night were up, and this was heartening especially as many printworkers had been drawn away elsewhere for a flying picket.

### Saturday 24th May, Worthing and Brighton

At 9.45pm a flying picket left London for the Portobello Press in Worthing. There were 300-500 pickets, all in cars. On arrival at midnight the pickets were told that the plant had been shut down. The pickets had been expected and the police could not guarantee the safety of the lorries. There were twelve police on the estate guarding an empty plant. At 1.30am a meeting was held to decide on the next move - to head for Surridge Dawson's or Hove distributors. S & D won, and at 2.30 pickets arrived in central Brighton to find 20 police at the entrance. The surrounding roads were sealed off. The pickets were told that nothing would be entering or leaving that night. The place seemed to be in darkness. Police allowed four pickets into the building and they were delighted to see piles of return copies of The Sun. A group stayed on just in case this was a ruse. One car left for Hove to investigate the situation there. At 4am another meeting was held and again the police promised that the place would remain closed. The pickets threatened to double their numbers if the distribution went ahead. Roads were sealed, with transit vans blocking access even for residents, but the police were less hostile than at Wapping. The pickets gradually dispersed after the meeting - and reckoned the night was a complete victory. Pickets were pleased with their effectiveness. There were no arrests and no hassle.

### Letter from Occupied Wapping

They are out to smash us  
They are out to maim  
From Peterloo to Wapping  
The struggle is the same

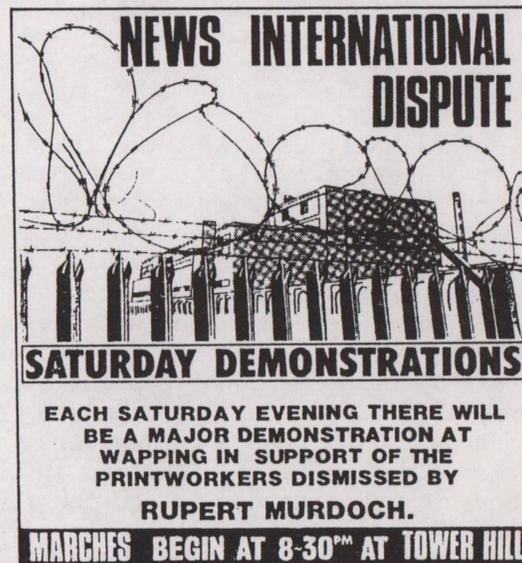
When I see the police attack  
I sometimes get an awful dread  
That one day a picket  
Is going to end up dead

The police can arrest the innocent  
They're free to commit assault  
The pigs who murdered Blair Peach  
Did not even go to court

It's what's called British justice  
The boss wins ever time  
To take someone's job is legal  
To defend jobs is a crime

They want to crush the unions  
The working class to tame  
It's the rich that get the profits  
And the workers get the blame

Now the bosses' cops are deadly  
It's not a game of cricket  
But every union member  
Should join the Wapping picket



### Sunday 25th May, Wapping

It was quiet during the afternoon. There were about 50 pickets on duty. And every scab was greeted with shouts like "low life ... filth". Morale was good. The advertisement for The Mirror was still on the railings. As the leaflet "Murdoch is scum (part two)" said: "A capitalist is a capitalist is a capitalist". One local resident/picket was complaining how the local Labour Party in Tower Hamlets has had their fingertips in Murdoch's till the whole time. A Coliseum Co coach from Southampton, full of scabs, went in at 5.30pm. It is sobering to see that it has no armour.

### Bank Holiday Monday, 26th May, Wapping

Seventy pickets were in front of the plant all afternoon. Many cars passing by tooted their horns in support. Very few scabs-in-uniform were visible but every so often a vanload would cruise by. More of these thugs are being recruited to suppress the unemployed. These soft cops are working overtime this Bank Holiday, not to support the strike, but to contain, isolate, strait-jacket and smash the pickets. At 6pm the magnificent vanworkers on duty heard on the radio of Brenda Dean's plotting in secret behind the backs of the strikers with Murdoch and the TUC5. The members sacrifice and risk their lives: the leaders collude.

### Pre-march picket

Wednesday 4th June, 7pm

Aldgate East Underground

Picket a scab picking-up point

Organised by Sogat strikers.

### Wednesday 28th May, Wapping - early-morning picket

Eighty pickets gathered behind the barriers at the top of Virginia Street from 7.30am. An almost continuous stream of traffic in and out of the plant was loudly heckled and abused. One enterprising picket managed to "stall" his car on Virginia Street and block the entrance for a good five minutes.

### Wednesday 28th May, Fleet Street - afternoon lobby

Over a hundred printworkers took part in a lobby of the Press Association in an attempt to stop scab copy being sent to Wapping. Pickets feel disgust for the NGA/Sogat members here who are strikebreaking (even though officials at the beginning of the strike did not issue a blacking order). Pickets standing on both sides of the entrance were an inspiration to Fleet Street day workers many of whom formed part of the lobby. After two hours outside the main entrance a short march was held around the corner and past the pickets at the old Sun building in Bouverie Street. Police blocked the march in Tudor Street. More pickets less meetings.

### Wednesday 28th May, Wapping - march and rally

At 9.15pm 1,500 pickets left Tower Hill for the march to Wapping. At the Thomas More Street exit the march halted briefly and sang "Overtime" in front of the police lines. The Highway was blocked by lines of police at Virginia Street with ten horses behind. The rally sang "Rupert Murdoch stick your money up your arse". A Sun clerical striker was arrested at 10.05 for sitting on a barrier. Pickets piled in but were unable to rescue him. This stirred up the crowd. Police and vehicles leaving the plant were loudly abused. At 10.30 a small section gathered in nearby Swedenborg Gardens and 100 pickets marched behind the Sogat Machine Casual Banner round to The Highway from the east. This threw the police and helped to maintain the momentum of the picket. The police lines were stretched and it was 20 minutes before the pickets were corralled. Police brought one van and a car through the crowd at 10.50. A second march of 70 pickets began at 11.05 in the Gardens and wound its way along Cable Street to King David Lane ending up at The Highway east of the Wapping Lane exit. Here a scab artic and coach appeared driving east at speed. They were surprised and jeered by the march. During the march transit vans full of police were taken by surprise in the side streets - it was a good jaunt. The Highway was opened to traffic at 11.30 and the march returned to Wellclose Square. Strikers from the mass NGA meeting swelled the picket. Morale was solid. This was the fortieth march from Tower Hill.