

# Picket no. 28 Tuesday

7th October 1986

## Monday 6th October: NGA Strikers' Meeting Closes with Unused Ballot Boxes Being Carted Away

Grim determination mixed with jubilation was the order of the day as the 800 NGA Tartars met. Hostility to the ballot was clear from the outset of the meeting. The vote to adjourn was overwhelming, with only a scattering of voices against. The meeting reconvenes Wednesday, in time for the special march in the evening.

On Monday 5.9.86, the *Daily Telegraph* printed that we were beaten before the ballot was even fully collected and counted. They are trying to stampede the strikers. Another Brenda Deal?

In the filthy ink and paper-dusty M/C room of 70 years ago, the Skilled Printers and Print Labourers earned between 14 shillings (70p) and nine shillings (45p) per week. They then fought for a higher wage and better conditions. Now in 1986, the Print Workers are fighting for jobs, but still had to maintain the antique conditions. Now ALL publishers wish to move away from Fleet Street. Now everybody says we're not good enough any more. The ballot has been left to everybody who doesn't care whether we live or die.

**Saturday 4th October, Wapping.** It was a damp cool evening, with a chill in the air. Leaves could be seen falling from the trees over by the Tower. Autumn. The dispute was now in its fourth season and almost travelled full circle to when it began last winter. About 2,000 printers and supporters turned up for the regular Saturday night visit to the zoo. Shortly after 9.00pm, the marchers formed up in the road. By 9.15pm, they were trundling their way towards the scab plant.

10 SOGAT (Home Counties) members that had marched from Southampton (leaving Wednesday and arriving today) took the place of honour at the head of the march. Some welcome visiting banners were in attendance. Namely **Surrey and Sussex Area (SOGAT 82)**, **South Essex Branch (SOGAT 82)** and **Bradford Graphical Soc. (NGA)**. The march travelled at a swift pace, and by 9.50pm had reached Thomas More St. Workers chanted "Burn TNT" at a sloganeering Socialist contingent.

Opposite, two cars were attempting to leave the "Ivories" bar by driving through the middle of the procession. But the marchers stood their ground and serenaded the occupants with "Show me the way to go home". Police were confronted, sitting in an unmarked van. This was the 7th unmarked police vehicle the march had passed since leaving Tower Hill, despite recent Scotland Yard press releases that no such vans are used by the Met.

Soon after 10.00pm, the march reached Virginia Street. Pickets called to rally at top of Virginia Street. Expected to go down en masse to the gate. Instead, speeches started. Pickets heckled Hicks, who called our pickets "CID". Pickets incensed, Hicks exposed.

Down the Highway, just short of Wapping Lane, stood the usual double row of Murdoch's Militia. Beyond them were the paper boys (mounted branch). By 11.30pm, about 75 pickets remained here in the road. Small in numbers, they decided to move over to Wellclose Square and so deny the police their usual pleasure of pinching, punching and pushing them there.

Meanwhile, in Commercial Road area, hundreds of pickets roamed, but only one scab coach was sighted here.

**Wednesday 8 October  
from 9.30am  
High Court  
Strand WC 2**

### Support the Council Boycott

On Wednesday 8 October, Camden Council is compelled to attend the High Court to defend the Council's boycott of News International publications.

The Boy stood on the burning deck, his name was Rupert Murdoch.  
He tried to take the printers on, but found they were no flock.

You'll sink the ship, mate Matthews cried, of this I have no doubt.

"Fuck the ship," said Rupert, and gave him such a clout.

"I'm doing this for Maggie, we have to make this stand.  
Pulverise the work force, to make a better land."

"I'm getting out" said Matthews, "You two are fucking mad.  
I'll go and join the pickets, but they will be so glad."

"I don't need you or pickets," the wily Rupert said,

"I carry on alone, if I must, to make this paper Dead."

(And then all steam came from his head.)



**Wednesday 8th October  
Special March  
Tower Hill 8.30pm**

**More Scabs.** The following are SOGAT 82 London Central Branch members all working in Fleet Street, who are still selling Murdoch's papers in their newsagents shops or news stands. These scabs are profiting while their fellow members are suffering from Murdoch's disgusting treatment.

K. Brown, 87 Higher Drive, Banstead, Surrey  
D. O'Brien, 3 Wickstead Close, Bexley, Kent  
T. Fullbrook, 17 Dahlia Drive, Swanley, Kent  
G. Hurley, 13 The Knoll, Hayes, Kent  
J. Hurley, 12 Ribston Close, Bromley Common, Kent  
J. Marshall, 32 The Riding, Surbiton, Surrey  
J. Newman, 328 Long Lane, Bexleyheath, Kent  
K. Skevington, 38 Abbot Avenue, Raynes Park, Surrey  
B. Wicks, 78 Portland Avenue, Malden, Surrey  
E. Wicks, 163 Warren Drive, Sth Tolworth, Surrey.

**Another Scab.** G. Schooling (Wapping Fire Chief) drives a Vauxhall Cavalier - SRO 416W

**Scab Job Changes.** 1) Nick Lloyd, ex London Post to Daily Express editor.

2) Duke Hussey, ex Times director to BBC Chairman

"ONCE A SCAB, IS A SCAB FOREVER"

### A First Impression of the new Daily Telegraph Building on the Isle of Dogs

To reach the new Telegraph building I travelled along the dark, depressing West Ferry Road. It was like driving through a long dark tunnel with the black sky above it for its roof.

On reaching the fortified entrance, I was approached by 3 security guards. Whilst one recorded my vehicle registration number, another was busily thrusting a card into my hand. "You've got to have one of these," he said. "Hand it in when you leave." Whilst he was talking, I could not help but wonder if he had ever *scabbed* on the gates at Fortress Wapping.

I was then allowed to drive on into the large warehouse type lorry park. Inside I was confronted by a battery of 15 loading chutes, each being painted in one of five colours. Of the 15 chutes, *only 3 were operational*. I hadn't been stopped for long when a security man passed by, speaking secretively into a walkie-talkie type radio.

I ventured across the yard towards a pair of red doors in the corner. I was met by familiar Fleet Street faces wearing unfamiliar expressions. Each man wore an ID card bearing his photograph. "We can't enter or leave without showing these," they laughed. One took the time to tell me that "Boycott Murdoch" posters had been removed from the walls. "It's a sacking offence now," he added.

Beyond the red door was the warehouse. Walls painted cream, the floor grey. I immediately noticed how few men were employed and how managerial types strutted around with a new found arrogance.

It was obvious that the workers had received little consideration in the building design. Modern technology had ousted any thought of people being involved. They were just regarded as a necessary commodity. Machine room personnel were moving around in uniforms of sky blue shirts over navy trousers. They looked more like Wormwood Scrubs inmates. Everywhere were badges stating a "New Spirit".

The canteen was austere, no pictures on the walls, no pot-plants on the floor. A few soft chairs were to one side. Elsewhere was the usual utility-type canteen furniture. Meanwhile, down in the loading area a wholesale driver was having trouble loading his van, trying to keep pace with the machinery. Bundles were falling on to the floor and then onto the ground. "Stop the belt." "Can't stop the belt," came the reply, "they won't like it." Spoken as if THEY were some supernatural being. It was THEY that were content in keeping the wholesalers waiting in Fleet Street for *3 hours*, but would not now wait *3 seconds* for him.

On leaving the plant, the same security guard approached me. "Where's your pass," one asked. "Can't find it," I replied. The guard looked at me furtively and with a reluctant voice said, "OK, you can go." I was granted my release, or should I say parole, as I was due back within 24 hours.

I came away thinking I had had an insight into life inside the SCAB FORTRESS, but could not help but feel that the place reminded me of an ABBATTOIR, with the smell of DEATH hanging in the air.

**Saturday Afternoon, 4th October.** Thousands, mostly youths from the socialist groups, march from near Aldgate East tube to Cable Street, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street. That the march did not join the picketing only hundreds of yards away was partly due to a failure of printworkers' organisation.

**Income:** £1 picket; £2 bookshop sales; £3 Natsopa m/c; 50p man in black; £1 cop's son; £4.60 Wednesday night pickets; 20p Big X; £7.50 Saturday night pickets; £2.50 NGA strikers.

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

Published by picketing print union members.

