

Picket no.39

Tuesday 23rd December 1986

Saturday 13th December, Wapping, Additional. I was glad to see a return to barricade building across The Highway at midnight with barriers kindly supplied by the other side, as 1000 people still blocked the road at Virginia. What a great atmosphere! We held our ground with humour and courage, including a number of rucks with the police.

● Additional note on 14th December. The 3am picket was so effective that copies of the Sun/Times were late or undelivered all over the country.

Wednesday 17th December, Wapping. Incident at tube while assembling. One deluded toff tries to walk through the strikers waving a copy of the Sun. Stupid fool had his scab paper liberated and he was given a rough ride away. One thousand printers and supporters marched. Organisation brought out increased numbers. Clearly in evidence was the depth of loyalty to union. Large numbers hung about till late.

Friday afternoon 19th December, Wapping gate. Six NGA machine minder pickets are singing songs on the gate. Police sargeant found this offensive and came charging out of the Popemobile to order six new pickets be sent down. Also during the afternoon two other pickets were arrested on the gate.

Saturday morning 20th December, Deptford. Local supporters were joined by printers for picket of twenty-five outside Convoy's paper warehouse.

Saturday afternoon 20th December, Wapping. A nicely concealed group about 300 strong move swiftly along Pennington Street at 5pm, while another of 100 moved down Virginia St, catching Plod on the hop as one said on radio "They're on us". The gate was taken and held for one hour and forty minutes. Round about 7pm, Plod's reinforcements arrived, and pickets decided to retire to Wellclose for tea. In the ensuing traffic chaos, lorries were piling up, scab journalists in coaches and cars couldn't move without making matters worse and - the ultimate indignity - the Southampton scabs had to dismount from their Marchwood coach and walk in the rest of the way! Full marks for organisation and fortitude in freezing conditions.

Monday afternoon, 22nd December, Wapping. Doing gate duty today. Polis wouldn't allow me on gate without armband. Had to search around for one and finally found and get down there and polis say can't shout or approach the scabs or you're arrested, but did my job anyways.

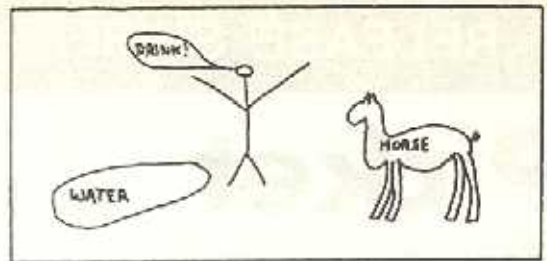
Monday afternoon, 22nd December, Home Office. Demanding Release of Shirfield and Hicks but chanting was a bit one-sided which is not on at all. Protest started about 3pm with police trying to pen six or seven hundred pickets in behind barricades and corral loose ones but not enough of them and we're stretching their lines out and chanting "Go home you bums, go home". Some pushing and shoving then a group broke into street and across road which opened up the situation and then a larger group into street. This went on for quite a while until more and more police arrived and they got control of the street and then staged a provocation by busting into the crowd from the rear out of the tube station and making some arrests. Things quietened down after a while when suddenly a banner appears in street and we're all in the road.

Can't forget the arrival of fifteen or so FTAT strikers from Hanger's Lane, Roehampton.

● Engineers. The 140 AUEW staff on strike have been ignored in Picket. When it comes to picketing, demonstrating or handing out leaflets there is none better. In addition a permanent presence is maintained outside the AUEW office. Apologies are due, engineer writers are welcome.

SEASONAL GREETINGS

● Self-congratulations to our writers for all the good copy. But here's what the Spartacist/Workers Hammer thought of it "pathetically workerist rag" "endlessly trivial accounts" "a wretchedly apolitical handout". They support the Sunday Times which they claim contains "information of importance to working-class readers".



● Scabs: Dave Pettit, 21 Dobbin Close, Harrow, Middlesex, reel room overseer, Sun/NoW. Timothy Bland, 2 Debden Walk, Hornchurch. David Lang, Glasmere Gardens, Redbridge. G. Cross Transport, Chapel St, Witcham, Northwich, Cheshire, deliver paper reels.

Convoys drivers; Arthur Keeble, Arthur Large, Billy Marsh, Mark Ockenden, John Tall, Peter Gusman, Doug Kiver, Len Berry, Ken Vine, John Singleton, Maurice Vignall, Peter Fallton, George Mathew, Eddie Ockenden, Nobby Harding, Afie Lawrence, Billy Heaver, Len Bailey, Tommy Baynard, Teddy Knott.

● Letter: Why have you not printed the scabs names we sent? We are very downhearted when we get copies and the scabs weren't named.

Reply: Unable to verify.

At this time of year it is traditional to look at the past year and evaluate progress made.

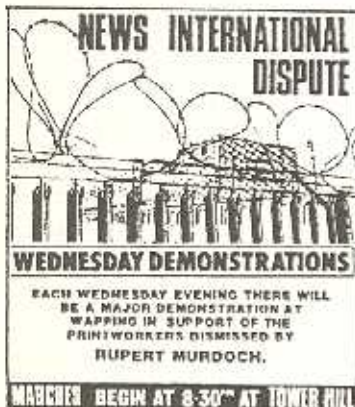
In the case of the dispute we are at a stalemate, News International are getting their papers out, but we are harassing them. Further we are frustrating News International's efforts to expand and they are suffering from a declining share of the UK Press Market. The longer this dispute goes the more frustrated the employers will become. It is a war of attrition.

We have still to take the initiative, from the start of this dispute it is the employers who have made the running, the question is how we take this out of their hands. Some are claiming that the key to the dispute lies with the TUC. However, even if the TUC expelled the scabs or the EETPU the strikebreakers would carry on. Moreover the TUC is a sellout.

Some people think that if we intensify the picketing then we will be able to force our way which is correct. It has become obvious from the beginning that the leadership of our Unions are either unwilling or unable to prosecute the dispute and therefore all the action has to be organised and implemented by ourselves.

News International did not expect this dispute to run for so long, they will now let the winter run its course and we have to keep up the pressure, if we do and we organise bigger and better pickets then we can win, if we fall under the spell of the TUC, we will be reduced to impotent protest.

● Print Baron Robert Maxwell has begun advertising for drivers and journalists in a union-busting move.



New Year's Eve Party
Wapping

Wednesday 14 January
12-2pm, Old Bailey
Broadwater Farm
Demo at Trials



**PICKET
WAPPING**



Income: £17.67 bookshop sales; £20 sales to Evening Standard workers; £20 Sogat Unattached Machine Chapel; £1 NGA clerk; £10 NGA machine minder; 28p clerical striker; 80p Saturday night; £32 NoW Sogat Publishing Chapel collection; DM60 Kiel, W. Germany Printers/Miners Support Group.

Published by picketing print union members

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