

LESBIANS & GAYS



SUPPORT



THE PRINTWORKERS

SOGAT • AUEW • NUJ • NGA

BULLETIN No. 1.

March 1986

JOIN THE PICKET!

Assemble by LGSP banner
8pm Tower Hill tube
SATURDAY MARCH 8
SATURDAY MARCH 15

DEMONSTRATE!

National demonstration called by
Sogat in London—watch press
for details
SATURDAY MARCH 22

SHUT DOWN WAPPING

Tory multi-millionaire Rupert Murdoch has declared war on the print unions. He wants to put another 5000 on the dole and smash hard-won trade union rights. Like all Tory union-busters, he can rely on the backing of the government, the press, the courts and the police, now armed to the teeth with the new technology of repression and itching to try out their weaponry.

The sacked printworkers are being denied Social Security payments, and SOGAT members get no strike pay due to seizure of their union's funds by the courts. For many, the situation is desperate.

Murdoch and the Tories want to drive down wages to starvation level, vastly increase private profit and criminalise trade unionism. Last year Murdoch made £47 million profit from his British operation alone, and has vast holdings in Australia and the US. His arguments about 'economic necessity' and a 'survival strategy' are blatant nonsense.

The conditions News International have forced their scab workforce to accept include:

- NO job security: management can lay off, suspend, fire, demote or reclassify employees as they want.
- NO recognition of, or negotiations with, any union.
- NO right to strike for any reason whatever.
- NO right of appeal against sacking.
- NO say in working conditions.

These are the kind of conditions the Tories want to see imposed throughout industry. Unless Murdoch is stopped, it may not be too long before YOUR employer decides to implement such policies. And lesbians and gay men would find themselves worse off than most.

As lesbians and gay men, the prejudice, discrimination and outright victimisation we already face at work will be given free rein.

That's why we're going to be on the picket line at Wapping every Saturday. Join us on March 8, March 15 and every Saturday night.

Meet outside Tower Hill tube station at 8pm. Look for the LGSP banner.

Lesbians and Gays support the Printworkers is an independent organisation, not affiliated to or connected with and political party. In the short period since it's launch LGSP has already won the support of

Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights
Campaign for Homosexual Equality
Gay Rights At Work

Why not ask any organisation you're a member of to send us a message of support and/or make a donation? All money received goes to the hardest-hit of the sacked printworkers.

LGSP meets every Thursday at 7pm in the London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67 Cowcross Street,

We'll be on the national demonstration called in London by SOGAT on March 22, and are in touch with the main print unions. All lesbians and gay men who support the printworkers fight for jobs and justice are welcome.

For further information, supplies of leaflets and posters, write or phone us at the address below. Donations are welcome, and cheques should be made out to 'LGSP'.

MORE 'WAPPING' LIES

... but we give you the facts

When Did Negotiations Start?

MR MURDOCH says he's been trying to negotiate since 1979.

We have a letter from our IFOC at the *Sun* dated 30th January 1982 asking for negotiations. The reply from NGN, dated 10th February 1982, states, "It is too early to enter into meaningful discussions."

We have a further letter from NGN dated 22nd June 1983, which says:

"Mr W. O'Neill has confirmed that he will be returning to this country in the first week of August 1983. He has indicated that he would like to begin the negotiations the week commencing Monday 8th August 1983."

Wages

MR MURDOCH is suggesting that all our members at News International earn £30,000 or £40,000 per year.

FACT

News International's annual report

gives figures on higher paid employees. That report shows that News International employ just over 10,000 people.

Only 200 of them earn over £30,000. This is in fact 2 per cent of the workforce, and clearly a number of those are management jobs.

FACT

The highest paid director of News International earns £104,000. Last year he had a salary increase of £15,000.

Mr Murdoch claims that 80 per cent of our members have other jobs.

FACTS

NONE of our 820 clerical workers have other jobs.

NONE of our executive or sales members have other jobs.

NONE of our circulation representatives have other jobs.

NONE of the 200-plus engineers have other jobs. Nor have any of the engineers' assistants.

NONE of Printing Machine Branch members have other jobs.

NONE of our 280 RIRMA Branch members have other jobs.

We have 255 members in the publishing room. Of those, 105 are totally employed by News International.

There are some of our members who do have two jobs. For example, in one of our chapels, which has 500 members, 350 do have two jobs — they work for the *Sun* and the *News Of the World*.

Of course some of our members work on other titles. When a publisher has a paper that only comes out one day per week, that's inevitable. But the truth of the matter is that some 80 per cent of our members did, until they were sacked, rely totally on News International for their living.

SOGAT
STRIKE BULLETIN No. 1

'Murdoch and the government are talking about 'new technology' to justify the sacking of 5000 print-workers. But Wapping is not a high-tech plant at all — some of the machines are 60 years old, some need three workers each to operate them: they are dangerous in the hands of electricians untrained to work them.. The print room is known as 'The Black Hole' because of the unhealthy cloud of ink dust in the air and the copy-takers are writing everything down in longhand.

Murdoch's huger-than-ever profits won't be due to 'new technology', they'll come from the small workforce on double-shifts and low pay; no union activity without Murdoch's say-so, instant dismissals for any reason and specifically in cases of industrial injury and no job descriptions. New Tecnology means job losses, union bashing, slave labour, and more of Murdoch's sexist, racist, anti-gay trash on the news-stands'

Campaign Newsletter(Journal of CHE)

End this bigotry

I was appalled by the letter from Jerry Withers (October Journal) regarding stereotyping and discrimination in the media. In opening his letter he argues that the case against stereotyping is being taken up by "all the wrong people". Surely, it is only logical that gays and feminists will be in the forefront of any campaigns to eliminate stereotyping, as these groups are currently taking the brunt of media abuse.

Further on in his letter, Comrade Withers tells us that the TV and media "teem" with items about the handicapped. Yes, there are good documentaries on BBC2 and Channel 4 at odd hours about the disabled, but where are the disabled people in 'Coronation Street', 'Eastenders', etc? Let's be realistic, it is the soaps with the very high ratings that help to influence people's views on disabled, gays and feminists — not the meaningful late-night documentaries.

Sadly, we have a very long way to go in the fight against discrimination

Recent letters in the SOGAT monthly journal

Gay rights is a union issue

After reading Jerry Withers' letter (Oct. '85 Journal) regarding the pamphlet entitled 'What's it all about?' produced by the Campaign for Real People, (an NUJ initiative to change the way people are portrayed through the media), I immediately dashed off to read it.

I was curious to know what could have sparked off such a passionate, even vitriolic, response from a fellow trade unionist. As it turned out I was disappointed. Far from being a "torrent of one-sided rant" the pamphlet is a simple, readable document which takes issue with the reporting of several