

FREE PRESS

Women's Group

The CPBF London Women's Group will be relaunching after the December Women's Conference.

From January 1986 we shall meet at 6.30pm on the last Wednesday of each month, at NALGO's head office, 1 Mabledon Place, WC1 (nearest tube Kings Cross), which is wheelchair accessible.

Each month we will focus on a particular topic with invited speakers, and we hope specific campaigns can be launched as a result of these meetings.

The first two in this new series will be: Wed 29 Jan: Legislation to counter media sexism? A look at the options and obstacles.

Wed 26 Feb: Sexism and the media unions — progress chasing on the implementation of their own and the Campaign's codes of conduct.

All women welcome.

Manchester Gala comes to London

It looks like the spectacular variety show planned as a fund-raising event by the North West group will now take place in London next Spring.

For more information, contact the NW Group via Nancy Jaeger on 061-832-6991

Coming Soon

Towards Media Freedom, the revised and much expanded version of the Campaign's founding manifesto, should be coming off the press early in the New Year.

Containing a wide selection of essays, the book will be published by Pluto Press, and should be a popular addition to our expanding library of media books.

Put your name down for a copy now.

SPREAD THE WORD

Feel free to reproduce material from FREE PRESS in your own newsletters, information kits, or publications.

All we ask is an acknowledgement and a copy of anything in which FREE PRESS material appears.

JOIN
CPBF
HERE

PLEASE TICK
APPROPRIATE BOX

FILL IN
& SEND OFF
TO CPBF,
9, Poland Street,
London W1 3DG

Individual membership	£6 p.a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Affiliation by organisation	
Unwaged	£2 p.a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 1,000 members	£10 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting membership	£15 p.a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,000 to 10,000 members	£20 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/>
(includes FREE CPBF publications)			10,000 to 50,000 members	£50 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional membership	£15 p.a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	50,000 to 100,000 members	£100 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/>
(includes 10 copies of FREE PRESS)			Over 100,000 members	£250 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/>

(I/We would like to join the Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom and enclose a cheque/PO for £.....)

Name/s:

Organisation (if applicable):

Secretary (if different from above):

Address: Postcode: Tel:

Where did you obtain your copy of FREE PRESS?

CAMPAIGN DIARY

New Directions for the Media

The Nat Cttee and the Cultural Industries section of the Greater London Enterprise Board are jointly hosting a Reception on "New Directions for the Media".

It will bring together members of the Campaign's Nat Cttee over the last six years, Campaign sponsors and media union representatives.

Among items on the agenda will be CPBF plans to launch a media research trust and GLEB's investment policies for media-related job creation projects.

It takes place at The Book Space in the Royal Festival Hall on Dec 12. Entry by invitation only.

Popular Right of Reply

Over 4,000 advance bulk orders for the Campaign's Right of Reply pack have been received.

Containing posters, information sheets, booklets and examples of successful demands, the pack will be ready before Christmas and costs £2.50.

Send off your order NOW, with cheques/POs to the Campaign Office.

Back Copies of Free Press

A limited number of back copies are available, priced 15p.

Recent supplements which may be of interest to new members include: 28: 1985 AGM Report; 29: Photojournalism; 30: Community Radio; 31: Sexism in the Media.

Send your orders, quoting issue numbers and allowing 20p for postage + packing, to CPBF, 9 Poland Street, London W1 3DG.

FREE PRESS ON TAPE

* FREE PRESS is now being recorded on tape for blind and partially-sighted people.

Tapes are being distributed by Alternative Talking Newspapers Collective, Flat 7, 19 Lee Terrace, London SE3 9TF.

Disability and Free Press

All notices of meetings advertised in FREE PRESS must from now on contain details of access for people with disabilities.

Members are encouraged to find venues for meetings that have full wheelchair access (i.e. wheelchair-accessible entrance, lifts if meeting is not on the ground floor, doors wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair, wheelchair-accessible toilets).

Otherwise details of approximate number of steps to the meeting room and the toilet must be given.

(Remember, saying "Sorry, no wheelchair access" is like saying "Sorry, no lesbians").

Regional News

Liverpool CPBF have held a "Media Mechanics" event, with journalist Editor Bernie Corbet, Janet Whyatt, NUJ, Roger Phillips of Radio Merseyside and Kath Grant, NW-CPBF Secretary.

Meanwhile the NW-CPBF have held a meeting for local MPs in the House of Commons, and are planning their own Right of Reply Unit. It will be launched on Jan 15 — for the venue phone Nancy Jaeger on 061-832 6991.

And a debate on "Ireland and TV" is planned for Friday February 7.

Student Siobhan Cartwright has finished a placement with NW-CPBF and is producing a kit on the Media and the Law.

Anti-racism initiatives

The Campaign is to strengthen links with the black press and media groups, and to invite three black people onto the National Committee as part of a series of moves to strengthen CPBF commitment to anti-racism.

More explicit anti-racist aims will be submitted as Nat Cttee motions to the AGM, and more effort is to be directed into servicing the needs of black people in relation to media coverage.

These were among decisions taken at the October Nat Cttee meeting which was devoted to an examination of the Campaign's role in this area.

While a recruitment drive among black people, and the setting up of a Black CPBF group are ways of ensuring that Black voices are heard in and through the Campaign, Nat Cttee members were reminded that racism is essentially a problem that white people have to tackle.

FREE PRESS will continue to give regular coverage of the issue, but it would also be helpful if black journalists could volunteer their services to assist the Campaign to play a more active role in combatting racism wherever it manifests itself in the media.

Keep them coming

Despite difficulties caused by the layout, and poor proofing, many members have filled in and sent back their Readership Questionnaire.

They are proving to be an invaluable source of information, not just about our membership and reactions to FREE PRESS, but also as a guide to future directions for the campaign.

So if you haven't completed yours yet — there is still time to get it in before Christmas.

FREE PRESS is edited for the National Committee by Mike Jempson

Copy for the next issue should reach the Campaign Office, preferably typed with double spacing, by January 1 1986.

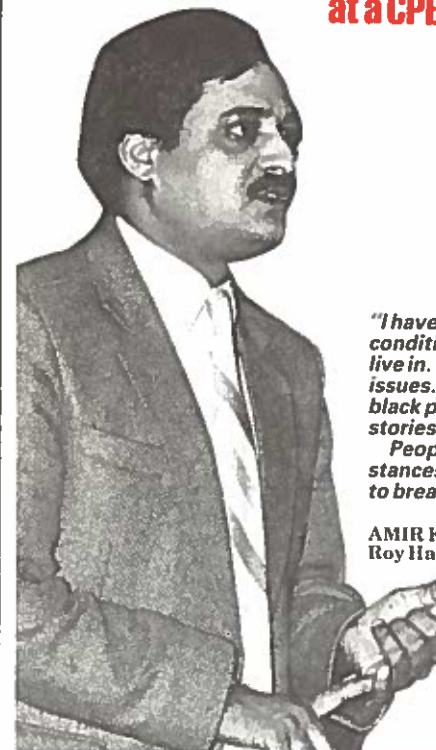
FREE PRESS 30p

JOURNAL OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR
PRESS AND BROADCASTING FREEDOM
NO. 32 DECEMBER 1985

In Whose Image?
CPBF's first Women's Conference, County Hall, London SE1.
Sunday 15 December.
A look back over the impact of the UN's Decade for Women and forward to women's role in the media of the future.
Full details on page 2.

Campaign Christmas Capers
In Manchester:
Thursday 12 December
6.30 onwards in the
Cocktail Bar of the Mitre Hotel
with live entertainment
In London:
Sunday 15 December
8 till late
Duke of Wellington
Balls Pond Road, N1
with Carol Grimes Combo
FULL DETAILS INSIDE

After Handsworth, Brixton, Peckham and Tottenham, Black activists challenge the media at a CPBF meeting



"I have talked to journalists about the appalling conditions that many black people are forced to live in. They say it's impossible to cover these issues. But their editors think it's a big story if black people take to the streets to protest. Such stories just criminalise us.
People are bound to riot under these circumstances. It is a vicious circle that journalists have to break by treating our issues seriously."

AMIR KHAN, Labour Councillor for Sparkhill in Roy Hattersley's Birmingham constituency.



"Race-hate and violence rises and falls to the extent which peoples prejudices are inflamed and made respectable by politicians, the media and the press. What is clear to us black people living in Britain is that the media is just another other vehicle of institutionalised racism...
We say to the media and the press — if you want to talk about anti-racism, show it to us through the nature of your reporting, the issues you report about."

VERA MARTIN, Manchester Working Group Against Daily Mail Racism.

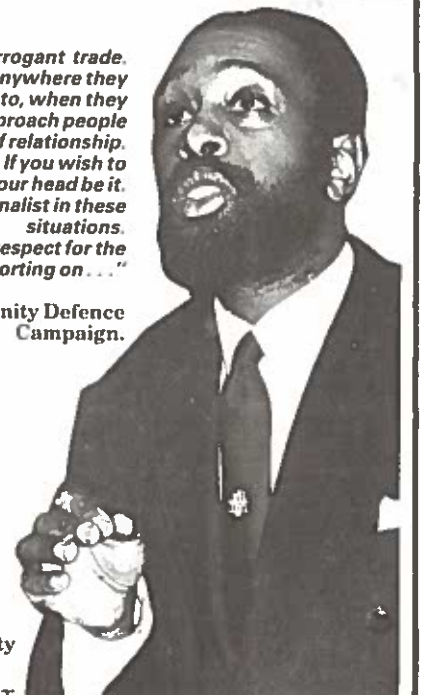
MEDIA RACISM SUPPLEMENT INSIDE



"If you say you won't speak to journalists — they speak for you.
How do you reply? You say one thing — they go and say something else. We have no meaning to them.
You can't get away from the media — it's in our front room, our bedroom. If you don't have it — people tell you what they say. And there are posters up everywhere.
But together as a group we have more power than them..."

MARTHA OSAMOR, Tottenham Community Law Centre.

PHOTO: Pam Isherwood/FORMAT



"Journalists and the media are a very arrogant trade. People feel they can come in anywhere they want, talk to anybody they want to, when they want to talk to them. When they approach people with power it is a different kind of relationship. So what we say to them is this. If you wish to come down here, feel free, but on your head be it. It's very dangerous being a journalist in these situations.
You have to start having some respect for the people you are reporting on..."

DEVON THOMAS, Brixton Community Defence Campaign.

AGM timetable

The date has now been set for the Campaign's 1985/86 AGM Conference.

It will take place in London on Saturday 15 March from 10.30am to 5pm in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London.

Motions for the AGM must arrive at the Campaign Office by February 1, with amendments and nominations to the National Committee in by March 1.

Members are reminded that the Campaign's revised Aims and Rules appeared in FP28 (March/April 1985) and copies can be obtained from the office.

Full details of the AGM will appear in the next issue of FREE PRESS, distribution of which will be delayed to allow inclusion of motions received by the closure date.

A day conference to map out the agenda for the campaign up to the next General Election is planned for May 1986.

Public Meeting

The Campaign has called a public meeting to discuss media treatment of people with disabilities.

It will be held in London on Monday 27 January 1986.

For details contact the Campaign Office. The venue will be wheelchair accessible.

John Jennings Appeal

Don't forget that the threat of a libel action still hangs over the head of former CPBF Secretary John Jennings for an article which appeared in Free Press.

The Freedom Association is suing him. Keep sending in the cheques for John's defence campaign. A John Jennings Defence Fund has been set up. Send your donations c/o CPBF, 9 Poland St, W1 3DG.

WITHER FLEET STREET ?

Alan Richardson reports on the Campaign's fringe meeting at this year's Labour Conference



Tom Baistow



Jean Seaton

"It is easy to knock Fleet Street, but what are we going to do about it?" The tricky question posed by Kate Holman in opening the Campaign's fringe meeting at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth.

On the platform attempting to find an answer were former deputy editor of the New Statesman Tom Baistow, NGA National Council member and FOC at Portsmouth News Richard Page and sociology lecturer Jean Seaton.

The usual problems were identified, concentration of ownership, the power of the advertising agencies, the power of the press representing the power of a handful of unscrupulous men.

Kate Holman said the three M's, Maxwell, Murdoch and Mathews, also stood for 'misery, misrepresentation and malice'.

Plugging his new book Tom Baistow referred to the press as the 'fourth rate estate', where in addition to gross political bias, there was also a degrading decline into junk journalism.

He stepped on a few toes when he criticised the print unions for a 'neo-Luddite' approach to new technology. While he could not defend the actions of Eddie Shah, Baistow said he might in the end turn out to be the saviour of "the street of shame".

These points were hotly disputed and refuted by Richard Page and print union members in the audience.

The meeting may not have provided the answer to the question but once again the Campaign provided a lively debating forum for delegates on many topical issues concerning press freedom and the right of reply.

We have yet to see whether Labour's next election manifesto will translate their protests and policies into progressive practice.

Send your letters in before Christmas. Jan 1 1986 is the next copy deadline. Happy New Year.

NUJ complaint

Your correspondent (Taking the NUI to task; one woman's experience FP31) shows how wrong thinking about the NUI and its Code of Conduct has become.

Having dismissed 'subs and photographers', apparently without exception, because they 'can get away with anything', she despairs of the NUI itself because the chapels at its heart 'feel they are grassing on their mates if you ask for names'.

The only answer she sees is 'harsher penalties' so that journalists 'quake in their boots'. Note that, according to your correspondent, the NUI is going to have to think up penalties so harsh that not only individuals but entire chapels will be quaking in their boots — in fear of the union which is there to protect them!

Not once does your correspondent even hint at criticism of the proprietors and their editorial policies, or the pressures, direct and indirect, that are placed on individuals. There is no recognition that producing paper is a collective activity: not only may it be difficult, it may also be missing the point to name a particular name.

It is precisely this attempt to blame individuals for the sins of the industry they work in that produces chapels which refuse to co-operate with complaints procedures.

The Ethics Council is a step forward because it has the opportunity to break through this destructive impasse. It is founded on the realisation that "enforcement of union policy — including the Code of Conduct — is a collective matter, and that an approach aimed purely at disciplining an individual is inappropriate and ineffective".

The Code was invented to protect journalists and journalism — not to bash them for their (many) failures. The only hope the NUI has of defending and improving journalistic standards is in persuading chapels to take the issues up with their employees, and if necessary,

with their own members. That requires a recognition of the problems chapel members face; constructive debate and mutual encouragement as well as honest criticism. That is what the Ethics Council is about.

Revenge may be sweet, but it rarely wins people over to your point of view.

Alan Mitchell
NUJ Magazine Branch.
Hubert Grove
London SW9

FP replies: Justice for the victim and the perpetrator rather than revenge was the theme of Anne Baccini's piece, from which her by-line inadvertently disappeared — apologies.

It is for the NUI to sort out anomalies of its own making.

Tory figures

Every day, 74% of all the Fleet Street newspapers sold are Tory. In other words, only one in four people buy a newspaper which is anti-Tory.

On Sundays things improve: 59% of all the Sundays sold are Tory, which means four out of ten people buy a non-Tory newspaper on a Sunday.

In terms of actual number of copies sold it works out thus: weekday newspapers: about 11 million Tory and 4 million non-Tory; and for Sunday newspapers: about 11 million Tory and 7 million non-Tory.

I got these figures from recent ABC statistics and assumed all weekday newspapers, apart from the The Mirror and The Guardian, to be Tory and the same for all the Sunday newspapers, apart from the Sunday Mirror, the Sunday People and The Observer.

Arthur Murray
Fivehead Road
Horndean
Portsmouth
Hampshire

Prisoner of Conscience in Taiwan CHEN CHU

Chen Chu, aged 35, was arrested following a Human Rights Day demonstration on 10 December 1979.

She is currently serving a 12 year prison term, having been convicted of sedition, and is reported to be in poor health.

Chen Chu worked for *Formosa*, an opposition magazine, which had organised the 10 December demonstration. After almost two months' incommunicado detention Chen and seven other prominent figures at *Formosa* were charged with planning to overthrow the government by organising a riot.

In court the defendants made statements in which they denied the charges and withdrew confessions which they said had been obtained by illegal means, including sleep deprivation, threats, fraud, intimidation and violence.

All the defendants were found guilty and given sentences ranging from 12 years to life imprisonment.

Amnesty International believes that all eight are Prisoners of Conscience, imprisoned solely for



their peacefully-expressed political views, and is campaigning for their release.

Please send courteously worded appeals for the release of Chen Chu, to:

His Excellency President
Chiang Ching-kuo
Office of the President
Chiehshou Hall
Chingking S Road
Taipei, Taiwan
Republic of China

War-mongering
"FREE PRESS" has given constant, excellent and critical attention to racist propaganda and sexist propaganda. And rightly so.

May I suggest you give at least equal coverage to an even more serious evil: war propaganda. For if nuclear war comes there'll be no point in bothering about anything else.

Almost daily the press is full of attacks on detente, CND and the men and women of peace. Films, such as Rambo, and news items on TV and radio are sometimes guilty too.

May I give just one instance of how the national dailies are used to damage good East-West relations and our hopes of the Geneva peace talks achieving success?

On Aug 22 the Sun, Mail, Telegraph, Mirror and several others carried front page headlines over a sensational story that the KGB had applied a cancer-causing, radioactive, dust to Embassy cars and doors in Moscow as a means of checking staff movements.

The dust, Nitrothynylpestadien (NPTD), would remain on persons with whom it came in contact.

Washington made a strong protest to Moscow against its use, we were told. The staffs of Western embassies in the Russian capital were called together. The British Embassy was to hold an immediate enquiry.

About six weeks later the British Embassy reported that after a full enquiry there was no evidence of any such matter. The American government had also told our Embassy that they knew of nothing of this kind.

Yet I traced only one paper reporting the denial, and that was down column and brief. So millions of readers have been left with this deception in their

minds. I'm sure "Free Press" journalists and readers could provide examples of equally misleading reports.

How about it?

Frank Allauin
President,
Labour Action for Peace,
Manchester.

FP replies: Analysis of both subtle and blatant forms of propaganda which intensify Cold War panic would make a useful contribution to the next FP Supplement on the media and the peace movement. Copy deadline Jan 1.

'No comment'

2. Profligacy at the Mirror
There are those who unkindly suggest that Maxwell's constant threat to close the Mirror stem from a desire to simply expand his office suite.

Others say that Mad Max's cavalier excesses have precipitated the current financial crisis.

Witness the affair of the hapless smoker. Seen puffing in the corridors by the Man himself, this technician was asked what his monthly pay packet came to.

On being told Big Bob peeled off a wad of notes from his voluminous wallet and told the smoker to leave the premises at once.

Somewhat bewildered, but considerably richer, the British Telecom engineer staggered out into the daylight and lit up another fag.

At last Books at a discount

The latest left-wing books at a big discount and delivered straight to your door.

A dream? No, a reality with the new Red Flag Book Club.

A monthly list of the latest popular titles — all with huge savings — and a bonus selection of the best sellers at even better prices will greet each member of the Red Flag Book Club every month.

Titles from Pluto, Virago, Verso and even the Labour Party itself will be on offer to every member. And we let you choose. There are no unwanted books and the only ones you receive are the ones you've ordered.

To join this special new Club run by Labour Party Sales, just send a cheque for £5 for one year's subscription to the Red Flag Book Club, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

To The Red Flag Book Club, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT

RED
FLAG
book
club

Please enrol me as a member of the Red Flag Book Club for one year.
I enclose cheque for £5
I wish to pay by credit card

Signature _____
Name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____



Your Right To Know

The main priority for the Campaign for Freedom of Information this winter is a Campaign on Access to Personal Files.

The Campaign has produced a special report and Bill and will be promoting it heavily in the Private Members Ballot this autumn.

Exercise your right to know. Send for: "I want to know what's in my file..." (Special report including the Bill) £1.50. "Secrets" newspaper (50p) 12 page update on all aspects of the Campaign for Freedom of Information, including details of the National Conference held on November 7 on access to personal files.

Available from CFOI
3 Endsleigh St, WC1H 0DD
01 278 9686

Campaign for Press and
Broadcasting Freedom

IN WHOSE IMAGE?



A Conference on Women and the Media
Sunday 15th December

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

What effect did the UN Decade for Women have on media sexism — if any? What initiatives are currently being undertaken? And what new approaches do we need for future change?

Come together with women media workers, trade unionists, campaigners and other women who are just plain fed up with media sexism!

10am Sharp! Registration.
10.30am Panel discussion on past and present initiatives chaired by Beverley Anderson — speakers include Diane Abbott, Pratibha Parmar, Anna Coote.
1pm Lunch.
2pm Workshops on broadcast and print media introduced by media workers and trade unionists, including Wendy Moore, Linda Mitchell, women from Outwrite.
3.50pm Closing session "Breaking free" Future strategies with Cynthia Cockburn, Janet Wyatt and others.
5.30pm End.
● Fully wheelchair accessible ● Creche
● Food ● Bookstalls

County Hall
London SE1

(Waterloo/Westminster tube)
Cost £5 (delegates) £2.50 (waged individuals) £1 (unwaged individuals)
BOOK NOW! CPBF, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG 01-437 2795.

'No comment'

1. Ban on brutality
This summer America warned Pic Botha that televised evidence of SA police violence was doing his image no good.

The racist regime immediately tried to restrict media coverage of "trouble spots".

Since such brutality is endemic there, that strategy did not work — though Thatcher's Britain was quick to follow suit by restricting the movements of journalists covering inner-city unrest.

A point the SA Ambassador here drew attention to when the media expressed outrage at Botha's latest blanket ban on international press movements.

Feminist Library (WRAC) and information centre

We've got feminist fiction and non-fiction, poetry, plays, newsletters and magazines — information on women's studies courses and an index of work/projects/research in progress.

Free library use to all; income-related membership fee for borrowing. Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment London WC2N 6PA 01-930 0715

Opening hours:
Tu, W, F, Sat
11-5.30
Thurs 11-7.30

Next door to Embankment Tube
GLC Women's Committee Funded



RI

AWAITING TRESPASS

by Linda Ty-Casper

Readers International takes you behind the headlines. Each hardcover volume, by subscription, is just **£4.50**

(Retail prices average £8.70)

Begin with today's Manila, where tyranny makes Filipinos exiles in their own country. Linda Ty-Casper's suspenseful novel, *Awaiting Trespass*, cannot be published in her native Philippines for political reasons. During a Passion Week full of risks and pilgrimages, the Gil family lives out a nation's painful search for reason and nobility in irrational and ignoble times. "This deeply moving book is full of good people, good talk, and a wisdom regarding the inner life" *Kirkus Reviews*, USA.

Every other month you will receive the latest ERI selection, six original titles in all—all attractive hardcover editions published by the new non-profit organization dedicated to bringing recent works from outside Western Europe into English for the first time. "A splendid and important enterprise and well worth supporting" says the *Financial Times*. Because your subscription brings RI special support, we give you special savings of more than 50% (compare retail prices below):

Series books include: **Japan:** *Fire from the Ashes* is the first-ever collection in English of stories by Japanese writers on the impact of the Bomb during 40 years (£8.95). **Poland:** Janusz Anderman compels you into the eerie, Dickensian Warsaw of martial law in *Poland Under Black Light* (£7.95). **Argentina:** Two outstanding novels that can only now be published at home after the end of military rule—the dramatic *Mothers and Shadows* by Marta Traba, about the defiant "madwomen" searching for their missing children, and *A Funny, Dirty Little War*, Osvaldo Soriano's bloody, brilliant farce on Peronism (each £8.95). **South Africa:** Njabulo Ndebele's *Fools and Other Stories* brings a powerful new voice from the black townships. Subscribe now and give these and other gifted writers a voice in English—and yourself a powerfully good read at a very modest price.

READERS INTERNATIONAL
8 Strathay Gardens
London NW3 4NY

Please begin my year's subscription to RI with *Awaiting Trespass*. Every other month I receive a new hardback, six titles in all, each at the £4.50 subscriber price (+ 50p postage). At any time I may cancel my subscription simply by writing to you.

Name _____
Address _____
Town _____ Postcode _____

My cheque to Readers International for £5.00 enclosed (£6 abroad)
SPECIAL SAVINGS: I want to save money, & save RI billing costs, by paying £21.00 plus postage for all six hardback books.
I enclose my cheque for £24.00 (£30 sterling abroad), incl. postage. **FP4**

MIKE POWER, Daily Mail compositor and CPBF National Organiser reviews a news book on Fleet Street

No Marx For The Fourth—Rate Estate

Tom Baistow's new book confirms and gives detail to much of the CPBF's critique of Fleet Street. But his even-handed attack on the press barons and Fleet Street unions for the current appalling state of things, leads to a sympathy for the new pretenders to proprietorship, such as Eddie Shah and his technological bag of tricks, to establish a more diverse press.

This position creates a tension between analysis and the application of alternatives. "Fourth-Rate Estate" offers a devastating critique of junk journalism and declining standards linked to the competition for circulation and advertising revenue. However, it also damns with faint praise the NUJ's proposed Ethics Council which aims to enforce the union's Code of Conduct.

Baistow provides an excellent analysis of the concentration of ownership, right-wing bias and the client role of the Press Council. Equally though he denounces as censorship print workers' industrial action for Rights of Reply.

A nine-point Press Charter is suggested to restore some integrity to British journalism. This means little when the solution requires a future government "with the mettle to challenge Fleet Street", and there is not the slightest hint of a strategy to create the kind of movement that will force a government to enact the legislation needed to create decent standards.

The overall scenario of the book is of demon barons and demon unions, visionary charters

without strategic application — and an abandonment of political will.

The immediate hope for diversification of the press, apparently, is for new technology to de-staff and de-unionise in order to cheapen access. But new technology is not cheap for new entrants to national newspaper publication. Shah needed well over £20 million for a 700 staff 300,000 circulation daily without direct input technology.

The prospect on this basis is for more right-wing papers produced by the same wealthy companies who deliver our present 'choice'.

A political and industrial struggle is essential and cannot be brushed aside. Legislation is needed to create access to printing facilities, launch-funding, distribution and limits on ownership before genuine access is achieved.

These demands are being worked for by a growing movement including the CPBF, trade unions, political, academic, community, social and economic forces who seem to be taken more notice of in the real Fourth-Rate Estate.

*** Fourth-Rate Estate**
by Tom Baistow £3.95
Comedia

SPEAK UP!

When managements suddenly get interested in communications, you can be pretty sure they're up to something.

American and Japanese management techniques are being introduced into Britain, and such media figures as Frank Bough, Roger Cook, Francis Coverdale, Martyn Lewis, Trevor MacDonald and Brian Redhead are lending their skills to the process.

Dave Rushton of Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre has put together an easy to read guide to these changes in management methods, and offers practical advice on how workers can combat them and how unions can turn the same techniques to their advantage.

Speak Up!
Comedia Series No 25. £1

Points of order!

Sue Ward has replaced Walter Citrine as chair of the Standing Orders Committee.

Among the matters arising from the growth of a new generation of activists, and the "arrival" of new social forces, is the vexed question of how to win votes and influence people who insist on doing business according to time-honoured traditions eg ones that only they know how to operate.

Sue Ward spells out all you could possibly want to know about how to manage meetings — with clarity, and a few sly digs at those whose noses are buried in Citrine.

Another essential handbook from Pluto.

A-Z of Meetings
By Sue Ward
Pluto £3.95

Switched on

Ever heard of Radio Enoch, Radio Arthur, Gaywaves or Sheffield Peace Radio?

They are among the idiocies and delights which the pirate radio "underground" has managed to smuggle onto the airwaves.

At a time when community radio is about to win recognition, its interesting to look back over the "alternative" history of broadcasting and consider the lessons, lunacy and variety which

could have been crackling through our wirelesses for generations.

Rebel Radio
By John Hind & Stephen Marco
Photo: £3.95

Beating hearts

The vibrancy of Channel 4's "Beats of the Heart" series is difficult to capture in book form, but Jeremy Marre and Hannah Charlton are able to get beyond the occasional superficiality of the commentary.

Seeing and hearing the "voices" of people to whose experiences we are seldom exposed in the relative safety of Britain, is a revelation.

Were the joy, anguish and poetry of the "popular" music of Black South Africans, Puerto Ricans, Romanis, Thais and Chinese workers to get more exposure on the box, the strangle hold of commercial pap might at last be broken. And we might all discover more about solidarity and the dangers of cultural imperialism.

Watch the series, read the book. And demand much, much more of the same. There are many more doors to be opened than the 13 knocked on so far.

Beats of the Heart
by Jeremy Marre & Hannah Charlton
Pluto/Channel 4 £6.95



DUMMY RUN FOR NEWS ON SUNDAY

A 64-page dummy, jam-packed with news and features and interleaved with full colour photos and graphics, has just completed the first real test for the ambitious News On Sunday project.

It is a lively left-of-centre tabloid, and the proto-type for a new national Sunday paper scheduled to launch late next year.

Rigorous nation-wide market research around the dummy, produced under life-like conditions the weekend after the Tory Party conference, has revealed that the paper is likely to attract a bed rock circulation of well-over half a million.

In fact, early analysis of the market research suggest that many more would find NOS compulsive reading. Certainly it has won more approval than the McCarthy dummy for a labour daily.

"The results are very good," says dummy editor Alan Hayling. "They exceed our expectations,



Former BBC producer Alan Hayling, NOS Dummy Editor, is now Acting Chief Executive

and the proceed now has a really good chance of going head."

His caution reflects the project's insistence that being carried along by excitement and enthusiasm is no substitute for a clear-headed, business-like approach.

These market research results form part of a year-long feasibility study which should be completed by the end of December.

Then the search for the £6 million launch capital will start in earnest, and a date will be set for the first issue.

So far the project has attracted funds from several major unions who clearly see it as a better option than the TUC's ill-fated McCarthy investigation into the chances for a Labour-movement daily.

The Greater London Enterprise Board and Manchester City Council have also backed it for its job-creating potential.

The Campaign has played an active part in the feasibility period, with both Mike Power and Loretta Loach serving on its executive.

The Campaign's concern has been to ensure that the project is tackled in a business-like manner and that firm policies are adopted on racism, sexism, the right of reply and internal democracy.

While final details of company structure have yet to be sorted out, NOS promises to be a much-needed antidote to the ideological conformity of the mainstream press.



News and feature pages from the NOS dummy

So far its National Executive has been supported by a series of regional groups, and over 100 journalists contributed to the dummy. So broad a base argues well for a paper that plans to shun the notion that London is the only place that news happens.

Souvenir copies of the dummy are available at £5 each to help cover costs, and Campaign members are encouraged to take a keen interest through the nearest regional group.

Comments on the style and content of the dummy will be appreciated.

NOS Regional Contacts

● **Caxton House**,
13-16 Borough Road,
LONDON SE1

● **Henry Stewart**,
38 Brighton Grove,
NEWCASTLE NE4

● **Gerry McCann**,
5 Banowie Road,
GLASGOW G11 5AW

● **John Bohanna**,
12 Honister Walk,
Woodlands Estate,
LIVERPOOL L27

● **Peter Warren**,
3D Kinsleigh Road,
Heaton Mersey
Stockport, MANCHESTER

● **Peter Bevington**,
256 Derbyshire Lane,
SHEFFIELD 7

● **Richard Woodcock**,
4 Vicars Terrace,
LEEDS LS8 5AP

● **Juris Jostins**
Flat 1,
63 Gregory Boulevard,
Hyson Green,
NOTTINGHAM

● **Roger Kline**
c/o T.U. Resource Centre,
7 Frederick Street,
BIRMINGHAM B1 3HE

Calling Peacock's bluff

BY JANET WHYATT

The next few months will have a major effect on what you watch on TV and hear on your radio.

Professor Alan Peacock and his Government-appointed committee are considering new ways of financing the BBC.

What they recommend could mean not only the scapping of the BBC licence fee but also a commercialisation of public service broadcasting.

To counter this, the Campaign has set up its own inquiry, aiming to explore ways of making broadcasting organisations more accountable and accessible.

My work as CPBF researcher will fit in to a three-pronged strategy, with academic analysis provided by the Polytechnic of Central London and a comparative study of international broadcasting systems provided by the Broadcasting Research Unit of the British Film Institute.

Professor Peacock has promised full public consultation and invited all interested bodies to submit evidence for or against advertising on the BBC.

He has called a conference on 'How should broadcasting be funded' — but invited only advertisers, broadcasting managers and politicians to take part in the discussion. That is in

spite of the fact that all the main broadcasting trades unions made detailed submissions to the inquiry, along with community groups such as Voice of the Listener.

They are all being treated in exactly the same ways as members of the general public — with access to a limited number of tickets to the conference and an instruction that 'Members of the public are asked not to join in the discussion.'

If this is Peacock's idea of public consultation, the only genuine chance of a voice in the matter will come from the CPBF's series of meetings, debates and think tanks between now and April 1986.

The Campaign's research is being funded by the GLC, which has been developing its own Communications Campaign to examine the impact of the technological revolution on job prospects and public access to the media.

And there are plans for a Channel 4 series to prompt public reactions to Peacock's plans.

● For more information about the broadcasting enquiry, contact Janet c/o CPBF, 9 Poland St W1. 01-437 0189.

CAMPAIGN CHRISTMASTIME

COCKTAIL CAPERS

Live music + lively company

Thursday 12 December

6.30 onwards

Cocktail Bar, Mitre Hotel
Cathedral Yard,
behind Corn Exchange
MANCHESTER

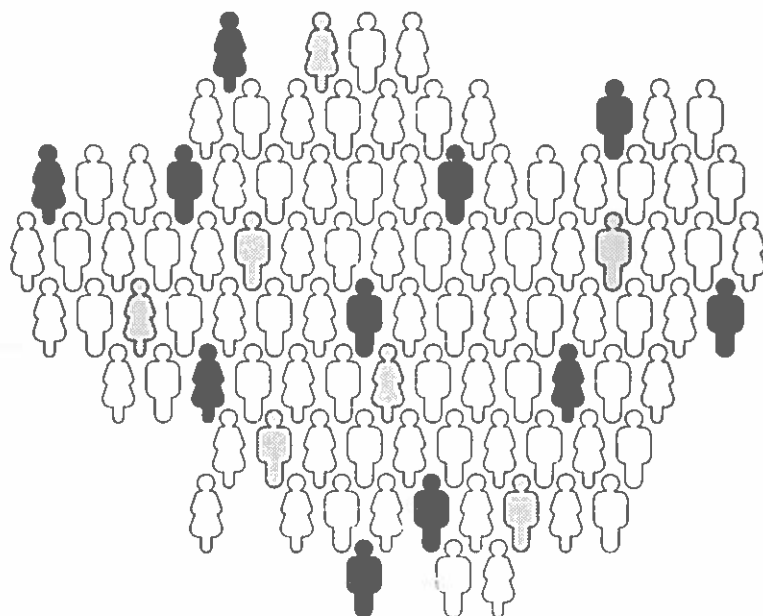
CABARET NIGHT

Sunday 15 December
with Carol Grimes Combo

Comedy + Food + Fun

Tickets: £3.00 (£1.50 unwaged)
from Campaign Office
or on the door

8 till late
Duke of Wellington
Balls Pond Road
London N1



LONDON AGAINST RACISM

London's ethnic diversity is an asset. Yet, held back by racism, discrimination, racial disadvantage and deprivation, the black and other ethnic minority communities are prevented from realising their full potential in society. This is currently a fact of life — but one which the Greater London Council is helping to eradicate.

In 1981 the Council established the Ethnic Minorities Committee as a major committee of the Council supported by an Ethnic Minorities Unit. Since then the Committee has initiated a wide range of activities designed to meet their overall objectives of combatting racism, avoiding race discrimination and ensuring that the Council takes direct action at all times to secure race equality in London.

Steps have been taken to:

- develop equal opportunity programmes;
- under its equal opportunities policy to carry out a review of all personnel-related procedures and to initiate appropriate programmes of positive action to redress imbalances;
- ensure equality of access to services such as housing, employment, community enterprises, training, arts and recreation;
- provide grant-aid assistance to black and other ethnic minority groups, especially those of a self-help, anti-racist, and youth nature;
- provide regular information, advice and assistance for voluntary and statutory organisations;

- provide assistance to ethnic minority businesses, co-operatives and community enterprises;
- campaign for changes in local and central government policies and services in order to meet the needs of ethnic minorities;
- establish effective consultations with ethnic minority communities;
- provide adequate funding for initiatives and work towards the setting up of a Black Arts Centre;
- support sport initiatives for black and other ethnic minorities particularly in recreational management activities.

All Committees of the Council have a clear Anti-Racist perspective and are required to give consideration at all times to the particular needs of black and other ethnic minorities so that race equality can remain a permanent priority for achievement.

As part of this intensive programme the Council designated 1984 as Anti-Racist Year in order to raise public awareness about the divisive nature of racism and to encourage positive action to achieve racial equality. Thus the fight to dismantle all forms of racism in London has been accorded a high priority.

If you want to know more about Anti-Racist Year or generally about the work of the GLC's Ethnic Minorities Unit, please write to: Ethnic Minorities Unit, Room 686a, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB



GLC
Working for London

Polls, Public Opinion & the Press

Newspapers commission about two-thirds of all published polls and thus have a huge influence over the information that we get about public opinion. But their handling of the polls includes distortion, manipulation and subordination of the views of the public to editorial policy.

The Common Market has been generally unpopular with electors since about 1967. In the run-up to the 1975 referendum there was a massive pro-market press campaign. Little publicity was given to public opinion until a 'yes' vote appeared likely. In the fortnight before the vote the Sun carried three front-page leads on poll predictions: "TWO-TO-ONE FOR EUROPE", "WOMEN SWING TO THE MARKET" and "BENN SCARE CUTS 'YES' LEAD". After the referendum public opinion slipped back towards unfavourability, where it has remained.

A consistent proportion (about 60%) of voters want British troops to be withdrawn from Northern Ireland. Only a minority are in favour of the existing constitutional arrangement. But these are not the issues that gain most prominence. One Daily Star/MORI poll also posed questions about the hunger strike and headlined: "Let them die, poll verdict. That's what you think of the IRA." (15.5.81)

The Sunday Times (23.1.83) reported that the siting of Cruise missiles in Britain was unpopular; 36% for, 54% against, and that 31% felt that their views had become more anti-nuclear in response to the Greenham campaign. "British thumbs-down to Cruise", was the headline. The article concluded, "the protest has shifted a nation's thinking." The Daily Star, however, focussed on the finding that 54% were unfavourable to the Greenham women and 60% reported no change of opinion as a result of their campaign. "PACK UP AND BELT UP, the verdict of Britain's women on Greenham peace protestors", ran the headline. (12.4.83) Both polls were done by MORI.

A most unpleasant piece of poll misrepresentation was carried by the News of the World (29.11.81). "PLEASE SEND US HOME, shock 'Enoch is right' verdict of blacks in Britain." Audience Selection had asked a small sample of black people whether they would consider leaving Britain in return for large financial incentives. The headline was a racist elaboration of the responses, posing them as an appeal and gratuitously adding the reference to Enoch Powell.

Just after the Tories were re-elected in 1983 a Parliamentary debate was held on capital punishment. In the month before the vote which massively confirmed parliament's rejection of capital punishment, there was intense press coverage of the issue, but not one opinion poll was published.

The following day the Telegraph published a poll which confirmed, equally massively, public support for the death penalty for a variety of offences. The right-wing law and order press

LEN MASTERMAN suggests that co-operation between teachers and journalists could improve standards all round.

SCHOOLING JOURNALISTS

It is time for journalists and teachers who are concerned about issues of press and broadcasting freedom to consider ways of collaborating.

Media professionals, of course, have an up-to-date experience and knowledge of the day-to-day workings of the media which even specialist media teachers lack.

They are able to illuminate media practices, and the ways in which particular texts are produced, with a concreteness of detail beyond the scope of educators.

In my own courses in media education certainly, some of the very best experiences have been provided for the pupils and students by journalists and broadcasters who could cast a constructive, knowledgeable and critical eye on their own working practices.

Unfortunately, contacts in the past between teachers and journalists, indeed between the educational and media systems, have frequently been somewhat less than cordial. When teachers and media professionals do get together they need to be aware that they are entering a minefield of possible confusions and misunderstandings.

On the journalists' side, media education is often identified as a form of moral protection, a concern to protect children from excesses of media sex 'n' violence. Lurking behind this misunderstanding seems to be the fear that

had backed off to save the Tories from embarrassing pressure.

During the coal dispute as many as 35% of people were on the miners' side. The Economist commented (30.6.84): "To the sort of people who read or write The Economist this extent of public support is astonishing."

Other papers gave little publicity to these 'alarming' figures. Most published polls about mass-picketing and Scargill's public image. "Violence is condemned", "Scargill out in the cold", headlined the Sunday Times. One poll, in the Sunday Express, did misfire. It found that 57% of miners did not want a ballot, but if one were to be held then 63% would vote for continuing the strike, (31% against, 6% don't know). The report made the front page, but with little prominence.

Even when a relatively straightforward account of the polls is given the figures themselves cannot be relied upon.

It is therefore re-assuring to note that despite continued press attacks, a fairly stable 30% supported the miners throughout the strike. Despite the fact that no national newspaper of any size supports unilateral nuclear disarmament, some 20% of the population holds to that viewpoint. While the papers heap criticism on trades unions for political activity the memberships vote heavily to continue their political funds.

People may choose to purchase reactionary newspapers, but they do not necessarily share their reactionary views, even when such papers suggest, through the use of opinion polls, that their views are also those of their readers.

By Martin Roiser

media teachers may constitute part of a censorship lobby wishing to control and limit the freedom of journalists and broadcasters.

Or journalists may see media education as a generally worthy but patronising movement designed to improve children's media tastes. Or finally, they may think — with some justification — that media education is too theoretically abstruse by half, as well as being an almost entirely negative and critical activity, rather than one which is in any sense concerned to explore the pleasures which students take from the media. Many journalists are understandably reluctant to extend a co-operative hand to an enterprise which seems intent upon making their institutions the butt of a continuous stream of frequently uninformed criticism.

It is now pretty well universally understood by media teachers (though not yet by the rest of the profession) that our task is not to strike narrowly-defined moral or evaluative attitudes but to develop a critical understanding of the media.

As to abstruseness and the negative side of media studies, practising teachers tend to have very concrete and down-to-earth objectives in working with young people. There is now widespread recognition that media education ought to be a celebratory activity, involving the sharing of pleasures, and not simply a narrowly critical one.

Most media teachers would go a long way to meet journalists who were less than impervious (à la Prothero) to well-documented and constructive argument, and who were prepared to acknowledge that they are involved in something rather more problematic than simply reflecting reality or acting as a window on the world.

Intellectual dinosaurs and blinkered thinkers abound in both education and the media, but that is no reason for each sector to write off the other. Indeed the kind of issues regularly explored in *Free Press* seem to me to lie at the heart of good media teaching, which at its best should be urgent, topical and, yes, even campaigning.

The CPBF will, I hope, give some thought to ways of broadening its educational base — perhaps by offering special subscription rates to schools and students, making overtures to the teacher unions, and publicising its activities in journals read by media teachers.

Then we might begin to see the emergence of a national network of contacts between journalists and teachers aimed at producing what is so absent from Britain's culture at the moment — a public opinion which counts on media issues because it is well-informed and articulate.

That absence is inimical both to the cause of progressive and courageous journalism, and to the democratic health of our society.

Len Masterman, a lecturer in education at Nottingham University, a long-standing CPBF member, editor of *Television Mythologies* and author of *Teaching the Media* (both from Comedia).



Award winning television history available on VHS video:

Brixton Tapes, Making Cars, Rumours at the Miners Fortnight, Woman to Woman, Hooligans or Rebels? — City General. — "providing a vivid picture of British society in the twentieth century"
Plus range of resources to help people record their own history.

Contact Television History Centre — 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AJ. 01-405 6627.

VHS EDIT SUITE AVAILABLE FOR HIRE!

Honeyford bias & the media

In the winter of 1984 Ray Honeyford published "Education and Race — An Alternative View" in the Salisbury Review, a "journal designed to challenge established pieties in a way which causes offence." (What The Papers Say, 27/9/85). An article in its first issue called for the repatriation of black people. New Society (3/5/84), T.V. Eye, (21/3/85), What The Papers Say, (27/9/85) and Newsnight (15/10/85) are among the many that categorise Bradford as Asian and then stereotype their culture.

At the extreme DPAC are described as a "mafia of Imams" involved in "village politics" (Guardian, 21/10/85). The equally legitimate grievances of other minorities, Afro-Caribbeans, the white working class, or single parents are marginalised, cut, or rejected as "complicating".

The Times (3/1/85) more subtly distorted and ridiculed the anti-Honeyford message the day before the vital High Court judgement. My own careful analysis of bias in "Othello" and the "Merchant of Venice" became, "Shakespeare is 16th century racism, why do we need that in schools?" This misquote was reproduced in a Yorkshire Post editorial and I was labelled a West Indian "fanatic".

Interestingly, it appears that the freedom of speech demanded for Mr. Honeyford (Express, 4/3/85) is not equally offered to his opponents. Bradford's Lord Mayor is told in one of many hate letters, "Get back home to your bowl of rice".

Another wrote, "Who the hell do you think you are?", a question also asked of Jenny Woodward, the Chair and spokesperson for the DPAC.

Media ignore police raids

Last year 918 people were deported. The circumstances of their apprehension, detention and trial and consequences of their deportation has proved to be of no concern to the media.

The removal system operates almost secretly; blanket raids of factories take place; and in this atmosphere of fear and anxiety people are afraid to speak to the press.

In April a raid on a factory in Hackney resulted in the detention of ten people, two of whom were back in Cyprus within 48 hours. Another factory in Hackney was closed because of the large numbers of deportations.

Manchester City Council's police research unit is investigating police involvement in the apprehension of immigrants without reason, the confiscation of their passports and consequent deportations.

On Sat 9th Nov in a raid on a club, 14 members of the Latin American Workers' Association/T&GWU were detained. None of this has been reported by the media.

In 1978 a Parliamentary Select Committee proposed an inquiry to set up an effective system of internal immigration controls.

The inquiry never took place, but the system has developed largely unnoticed and unchallenged. Hospitals, schools, social security offices, and local government departments are all involved.

Internal controls affect not only immigrants but all black people, reinforcing divisions in society and attacking civil liberties. Another serious implication is the development of a vast surveillance system, based on the criminalisation of immigrants.

Journalists wishing to cover the story should contact: Dave Owen; 432 6191. PO BOX 39, Kingsland High St. London E8 2NS.

By Dr. Olivia Foster-Carter
University of Bradford

In a way which merely exposes the biases of the reporter, this "mysterious Ms." is defined as an individual antagonist and an ambiguous category, i.e. white, wearing Pakistani clothes (sic) and with West Indian friends. (Sun 27/9/85). The statement that she is the "brains behind the rebel parents", derogates them as unable to think for themselves.

Jenny's categorisation in the article as a member of the "loony left" was one of numerous attempts to suggest that opposition to Honeyford is limited to "Left Wing Zealots" rather than from anti-racists in general. This image was reinforced when Honeyford's invitation to Number 10 in October this year was widely reported.

DPAC's view is that Honeyford is a racist because he misrepresents facts and reproduces insulting, divisive and provocative "hidden messages" about his clients' homelands, cultures, families, languages, religions, ambitions or values. In doing so he contravenes his employers' policies on race relations which were agreed by all parties.

The media so paraphrase Honeyford's assertions that he is redefined as a hero (T.V. Eye, 21/3/85) and the voice of the poor white minority who, incidentally, he thinks cannot speak for themselves.

The popular press failed to report the Bradford Educational Advisors' conclusions that, despite Mr. Honeyford's "commonsense intuitions", there was no evidence that white pupils "under-achieve" in his school.

All this has led to predictable results; rigid ethnocentrism, and the scapegoating of black people for the general problems of the educational system. One Honeyford supporter summed up the basic fears of many of them when she wrote:

"Why should we change our ways to accommodate these foreigners" (BTA 2/10/85)

A banner shown in the BTA (30/3/85), read: "Let's defend Honeyford. He's defending us".

All of which is in direct opposition to DPAC and their supporters whose main theme is that the struggle is against racism. They do not want segregation. (Yorkshire Post, 6/3/85).

They want "us" to mean a united, egalitarian, multi-racial, multi-cultural Drummond Middle School, Bradford and Britain.

How often has the media allowed them to express this sentiment?

It Ain't Half Racist, Mum

Hundreds of hours of TV programmes were monitored by the Campaign Against Racism in the Media (now absorbed into the CPBF) to put together "It Ain't Half Racist, Mum — the video".

The half-hour film scrutinizes racism in TV output — from current affairs to sitcoms. It's blistering analysis remains relevant, and TV should never seem the same again.

The CARM book of the same name takes on the press, radio and TV, and challenges the record of the media establishment on race coverage and black employment.

It also outlines policies to monitor and confront race reporting and gives voice to the small number of black people who have already breached the structural racism of the media industry.

It costs £15 to hire the video from CPBF. USH copies are on sale at £35, U-Matic at £45. (Cheques payable to CARM) The book, published by Comedia at £2.95, can be purchased for £2.25 from the CPBF Office.

Several articles have had to be held over and will appear in future issues of FP. Apologies to those contributors, and thanks to Jude, Dianne and Alex who helped to compile this Supplement.

● The CPBF Nat Cttee has endorsed the setting up of Black Groups, along the same lines as Women's Groups, to deal specifically with media racism, drawing up an anti-racist Code of Conduct and considering ways in which it can be implemented.

If you are interested, please contact Lesley Wood on 01-437-0189

● The Working Group Against Daily Mail Racism (see FP 31) is still awaiting a reply from the Attorney General about their action for criminal libel against the Mail.

Watch FREE PRESS for further developments.

Media and the peace movement is the theme of the next SUPPLEMENT



Future topics include Homophobia, Who owns the Press, Photojournalism II, and the Media & Ireland

Searchlight Please make me a Supporting/Ordinary Subscriber to Searchlight

Searchlight

Searchlight

Anti-Fascist Magazine

I enclose cheque/PO for £

SUPPORTING SUBSCRIBERS in addition to a year's subscription receive free copies of all Searchlight pamphlets and indexes.

Published by Searchlight Publishing Ltd., 37B New Cavendish Street. LONDON W1M 8JR. 01-928 9801

Name/Organisation

Address

Donation £

Ordinary Subscription Rates:
Individuals £9 for 12 issues (inc p&p)
Organisations £12 for 12 issues (inc p&p)
Europe: individuals £12
Outside Europe (airmail) £20

Supporting Subscription Rates:
Individuals £12
Organisations £20
Europe: individuals £16
Europe: organisations £22
Outside Europe (airmail) £25

made out to Searchlight.

How can you help Searchlight to broaden its beam on the fascists & racists
Please tick one or more of the following boxes as applicable:

- ☐ I would like to make a regular donation by standing order to Searchlight.
- ☐ I enclose a donation of £ towards the Searchlight 10th Anniversary £25.00 appeal.
- ☐ I would like details of how I can sell Searchlight to my friends and colleagues.
- ☐ I am willing to help monitor fascist and racist activities in my area for Searchlight.
- ☐ I would like to become a regular subscriber to Searchlight

Name

Address



MEDIA RACISM

A FREE PRESS SUPPLEMENT

BLACK SECTIONS and media lies

News media coverage of the Labour Party Black Sections — particularly in the press — has provided a good illustration of how Establishment journalists both sub-consciously and consciously distort and even suppress Black issues.

Race Today editor Leila Hassan talks to the "improbable alliance" ranged against us: the Militant newspaper, on the so-called hard-Left, the 'liberal' Guardian and Right-wing Daily Telegraph. Yet, as Hassan points out, Black Sections are a legitimate expression of a mood in the Black community which had not had major public expression since the inner city uprisings of 1981.

Both have had a bad press. Why? Because both are manifestations of the central demand that we as Black people must speak on our own behalf. This call, which would be supported by many current opponents if it came from an oppressed people thousands of miles away, is objected to by our fair weather friends like the Guardian.

They cite spurious ground for opposing us. Black Section leaders are "middle class" (what about Labour's white, male middle-class leadership?)

But there is a more cunning argument. "A number of constituencies are going out of their way to select ethnic minority candidates . . . All this without recourse to the setting up of Black Sections." (Guardian leader, June 12 1985).

More recently and viciously the paper printed a story headlined: "Candidate quits Black Sections over strategy — Concern grows as Vaz says campaign damages Labour." Yet in the subsequent story Keith Vaz, prospective parliamentary candidate for Leicester East, makes it clear he is still a firm supporter.

The author of the piece was Martin Linton, a Kinnock-loyalist member of Battersea Labour party and friend of Labour's "race spokesman", local MP Alf Dubs who has recently undergone a miraculous conversion from Black Section supporter to opponent.

This very partial piece of journalism is based on a chance comment from Vaz that he had differences with members of the campaign over tactics and, because he had moved to Leicester where there is no Black Section, that he was no longer on the National Committee. Linton had spent the previous week telephoning members of the campaign dredging for a story about a split.

In the Vaz report, he repeats his favourite contention that candidates have been selected "without the help of Black Sections". This is official Labour Party propaganda.

Fact: seven Black prospective parliamentary candidates have been selected by Labour parties — five are leading campaigners for Black Sections.

By MARC WADSWORTH

Fact: Paul Boateng was selected from an "all-Black short-list" initiated by Brent South Black Section.

Fact: prior to our campaign, Black Labour parliamentary candidates (with one or two historical exceptions) were placed in hopeless seats.

The distortion of the truth I am forced to refute comes from a paper which has consistently attempted to usurp the Black cause despite to the fact they cannot boast a single Black journalist on their staff.

The Guardian have employed other tricks. They have built up the profile of maverick Black "leaders" who have either criticised or opposed us. And omitted items, like letters of correction from National Committee officers and news stories about the NUR and NUPE coming out in support. Private Eye (9 Aug 85) sank into the sewers for their attack, portraying Black Section activists as murderers.

"Although played down by the Councils concerned, "Black Section" politics within Labour-Left controlled London boroughs have now played a significant role in the appalling death of two small children."

This reference to children killed by their foster fathers is obscenely linked to a "Black foster parents for Black children" policy. Black Sections have no such policy.

For us, the coverage that has really mattered has been in the Black and Left press.

"Black Sections as far as politicising the community, must now be taken seriously as we have the right to argue for change based on our own experience" (The Voice, April 20 1985).

"The influence of Black Section activists now outweighs the influence and views of those Black party members who came out of the woodwork at last year's party Conference to speak against Black Sections" (Caribbean Times, April 19 1985).

"We give qualified approval" (New Life, July 5 1985).

On the Left, Socialist Action and Labour Briefing have led the way with exemplary coverage. The big surprise was the New Statesman whose measured and rational arguments in favour came after months of sitting on the fence.

The pro-Kinnock Mirror spends much of its time ignoring the issue. When Black Sections is written about, it's a couple of paragraphs — "No

● Over 100 people turned up for a riveting meeting organised by the CPBF in London's County Hall on Oct 9, when black community leaders challenged media interpretations of unrest in inner-city areas.

It was as unsettling for the Campaign as for the few white media representatives who attended.

Only when the media are more accessible and accountable to those without power, will black people find equality of expression.



Marc Wadsworth, National vice-chair of Labour Party Black Sections, is a member of the CPBF Nat Cttee and the NUJ's Race Relations Working Party.

Over Blacks" or "Round One to Kinnock".

Meanwhile, the Daily Mail — no friend of Black people, — has given prominence to the issue, which the editor hopes will damage the Labour party. We have assiduously avoided contact with such journalists.

But, given the opponents we face, there is a tactical judgement about press allies we must make. There are times when your enemies are your friends.

● The Black Sections Campaign can be contacted at 39 Chippendale Road, London W9.

PHOTOS: Pam Isherwood/FORMAT

HANDSWORTH: behind whose lines?



“Once the police had control of the area after the worst of the rioting they didn't just have early access to the media's ears. They also had at least some control over their eyes. On the Tuesday morning I was with a group of press and TV reporters in an area reserved and roped off for the media. We could all take identical photographs to our hearts' content. Many of those identical photos were on the front pages on Wednesday. One photographer

went beyond the police line, was challenged for his press pass and sent back. “It's a different angle from over there,” he said. That night journalists gathered at the desk of the Thornhill Road Police Station waiting for the next piece of action. News is not just event-led it is led first by the type of events that appear on police radios and police reports (not by the type of events that might be kept off police radios and out of police reports).”

Confronted by the inevitable consequences of racism and youth unemployment, the media took shelter behind a Thatcherite line of lawlessness amongst the lower orders.

ROB WATLING examines news gathering techniques (below), while NANCY MURRAY (right) examines the wreckage of national press coverage of the Handsworth riots.

David Scott, editor of the Daily News (one of Birmingham's free newspapers) received more than 200 overtly racist letters after the Handsworth riots of September 9 and 10.

He refused to print any of them, just as he had refused to publish anything which described the disturbances as ‘race-riots’.

“I had reporters and photographers in the area from the beginning, on both sides of the barriers, and I knew that the riots were not racially motivated,” he explained.

National papers like the Sun, Express and Mail knew differently.

Was it just that Scott had his reporters on the scene first? Was it their local knowledge at the way in which they collected the news? Or is it just rare to find an editor with a sense of responsibility?

“Local papers are there all the time,” says Keith Parker, editor of the Wolverhampton Express and Star, “reporting controversy and the hum-drum activities.”

But local knowledge doesn't necessarily lead to sensitive reporting and Parker carried a story which failed to distinguish between “immigrant” and “black”, and the misinformed and unhelpful suggestion by a local councillor that political extremists from outside were to blame — “scores of vehicles with non-Birmingham registration numbers arrived in Handsworth on Monday and Tuesday night.”

There will always be a variety of reactions to any crisis. BBC radio was putting out live reports from a phonebox in Lozells Road at the height of the riot and even at that stage it seems likely that subjectivity was creeping into ‘objective’ coverage.

Keith Whetstone of the Birmingham Post and Mail suggests that by the time the national media had arrived and begun to find out what was going on they were witnessing racist responses to the night's events and confusing these with the intentions of the rioters.

Many analysts joined Douglas Hurd and Chief Constable Geoffrey Dear in dismissing “social issues” and putting the whole thing down to criminal elements.

But even then they did not all manage to avoid the suggestion that “criminal” equals “black” in an area such as Handsworth.

Many of the reports and reactions confused “ethnic” with “immigrant” with “criminal” with “drugs” with “ghetto” with “unstable” with “deprived”. And different races with their “subcultures” their “jealousy” their “hate” and their “community leaders” were portrayed as warring tribes:

Knots of West Indian youths launched into aggressive Zulu chanting on spotting newsmen. (Daily Telegraph).

If we have to pin a one-word label on this predominantly black riot it would be “tribal”. (Daily Mail).

News suffers from being event-led. Issues only get raised in the brief moments after the event — when senses are dulled and prejudices are to the fore. The national media hadn't written about Handsworth since the last time there were riots and now they could offer little more than clichés.

“It is the speed with which it happens,” said Keith Waterhouse when asked why so much of the reporting jumped to inaccurate conclusions based on the hasty reactions of the easiest people to find. And in the early reports, that set the agenda for the coverage and debate that follow, “you inevitably rely on a few people's interpretations. And immediate quotes come from official sources only.”

On the morning after the worst of the rioting these included Chief Constable Dear who said that the trouble-makers found they had “enjoyed” the early excitement of rioting and suggested “copycat rioting” by people who had seen TV pictures of South Africa.

Only one newspaper appears to have paid any serious attention to the suggestion that it was institutionalised racism that played a major part in the hours, days, months and years leading up to September 9th:

Mr John Hayles said that (police) policy had stored up future trouble and amounted to a form of racial discrimination: “It's like they're saying ‘we know where the niggers are, they're not causing trouble because they're in Handsworth.’” (Guardian)

The media did Handsworth no great favours in its coverage. Instead it offered an exorcism by national exposure.

If it's been in the papers and on TV, and if all these important people are analysing it something will be done.

We can turn the page or change the channel. It will be alright in the morning.

Rob Watling, Community Video Co-ordinator, Swindon Media Arts Lab

For reporters deprived of the excitement of a foreign posting, Handsworth got their adrenalin flowing.

The Mail's Brian James: (“then I knew ... then I knew ... then I knew about the fear”); the Sun's Ian Hepburn: “I tasted race-hate violence first hand when I was mugged and kicked by a 15 strong mob of West Indian youths” (11/9/85).

Only towards the end of this emotive piece does the reader find out what they were after: not Hepburn's money, nor his life, but — on discovering he wrote for the Sun — his notebooks.

Talking mainly to each other and the police, the media invaded Handsworth.

The tabloids without exception depicted Handsworth in apocalyptic terms, within a framework provided by the riot-strewn centuries of national history, but by the myopic obsessions of Enoch Powell, demonstrating the extent to which he and the popular press have come to share a common ‘folk-memory’ — fixated on 1981.

Powell predictably crowed ‘I told you so’ in the Sunday Express, adding that perhaps Handsworth was a blessing in disguise. It demonstrated how misled were those who believed that they could “conjure away disaster” and proved that repatriation was the only way to “stop the torch from being put to Britain's funeral pyre” (15/9/85).

With the exception of a few ‘send ‘em back’ zealots like the Mail's Andrew Alexander the press may not go all the way with Powell.

But it has kept company with his paranoia about ‘numbers’ and his vision of black-created ‘alien territory’.

Headcount

For Peter Taylor of the Sunday Express, Handsworth represented the full-blown Powell nightmare, where whites live in terror of their black neighbours: “Lives of such quiet desperation — usually led by old ladies — can be glimpsed through lace curtains in Handsworths all over Britain” (15/9/85).

The Sun leapt at the chance to count heads, giving a population break-down by race in “Britain's biggest centres of immigration” under an enormous headline “Cities in the Front Line, where the fear of mob war grips the streets” (11/9/85).

Apparently it is not the loss of 190,000 jobs which has made Birmingham the Sun's “ticking time bomb” — but imported hatred which has set black against brown.

Roy Kerridge's now infamous Sun feature drew upon every racial stereotype in the book to explain “Why the bitter blacks hate the Asians”.

A few months ago, the violent face of white racism at last forced itself into the public consciousness. Following the murder by arson of the Kassam family in London, the epidemic of racist attacks disfiguring the country has



finally been given a measure of press coverage.

Handsworth was used by the media to “cancel out” attacks by white on black with attacks by black on brown.

The Guardian's David Rose, (12/9/85) and Leslie Anthony Goffe, (19/9/85) visited Handsworth and described the Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities “united by poverty” and their common experience of white racism and police harassment.

But for the most part, where ‘racism’ was mentioned as a contributory cause to the riots, it was the ‘racism’ of jealous blacks and Rastafarians lusting for loot against their “natural victims”, the Asians in their midst.

That white and Asian youth also took to the streets; that white and Afro-Caribbean shops also got attacked; that more whites than blacks were arrested on the day of the riot — such facts were conveniently overlooked.

The ‘eye-witness account’ of 2 Asian brothers in their sub-post office allegedly proclaiming they would stay put to protect the Queen's property, and then being beaten by a ‘West Indian gang’ of anywhere from 10 to 100 youths (depending on which paper you read), crying for mercy, and finally being burned to death, was given sensational coverage by all the papers. Few paid must attention to the subsequent pathologist report that the brothers had not been beaten, or to the arrest of a white youth in connection with their murder.

Bad coppers

The notion of policing as a cause of the upheaval also got a new twist.

The police were indeed partly to blame, as far as the Mail, Express, Telegraph and Sun were concerned, because they were too hesitant, not because they were too intrusive.

According to the Express they simply “walked away from abuse” (11/9/85).

Coupled with the ‘fact’ that “drug dealers find ideal cover in immigrant communities”, this provided the papers with an acceptable explanation — Handsworth was “Britain's first drug riot” (Daily Telegraph, 13/9/85).

Speculating that the motorist stopped at the start of the trouble was a drugs dealer, the Sunday Telegraph went on to describe the riot as a drug barons' conspiracy to protect their lucrative trade — “Recruiting a few hundred dim and disaffected West Indians to rampage against ‘police harassment’ is sadly not a difficult task.” (15/9/85).

Reported sightings of ‘white revolutionary scum’ (Roy Hattersley's phrase) were used to beef up the tabloid version of the drugs angle.

“How did they get here so quickly?” asked the Mail (11/9/85). Peter Shipley, a former member of Thatcher's Policy Unit, wrote in the Telegraph of the way “Trot fanatics” had moved into London's East End to “fan unrest” among Asians enduring “a spate of violence” against their “property and persons”.

Trots were also “present in Birmingham in the days proceeding the outbreak of this week's rioting, ostensibly to hold meetings — some on the streets — about South Africa” (12/9/85).

Why look further to see what went wrong? Black people seething with racial resentment, police lying low, drug dealers recruiting their own riot squads, Trots on the streets — and South Africa on the TV.

The Handsworth events enabled South Africa to be seen not so much as a matter of racist injustice, but as a simple law and order problem.

Black people everywhere are inherently unruly was the assumption behind vicious Cummings' cartoons in the Express and the Sunday Express (11, 15 & 22/9/85) and a Jak cartoon in the Standard (11/9/85).

We will hear much more about Handsworth and other urban disturbances — but understand even less — when the government introduces its new public order legislation into Parliament.

Nancy Murray, Campaign Against Racism and Fascism.

A version of this article was published in Searchlight Magazine, November 1985, no. 125.

Right against anti-racism

For the New Right it is not just the ‘people of the street’ that create riots but also the subversive intellectuals who inform and incite them.

In recent weeks they have singled out for attack the Institute of Race Relations, which has been researching into and publishing on race relations for over thirty years.

What has provoked the ire of the Right and especially its educational ‘expert’ Baroness Cox (now, along with Ray Honeyford, one of the advisers to Mrs Thatcher) is the highly popular IRR cartoon book for older children ‘How racism came to Britain’ published in June.

It locates the development of racism in Britain's slave and colonial history and shows how racist beliefs and attitudes came to be woven into British culture and institutions. And it examines the prevalence of racism today in employment, housing, education, policing, immigration, the media and street attacks.

The day after the Tottenham riots Baroness Cox, in a Daily Mail double-page spread, implied that the IRR contributed to the riots, by ‘brain-washing’ teenagers to hate the police and by stirring up racial conflicts.

Taking its cue from her the Daily Telegraph ran features (Oct 9 & 10) in which the book was derided as ‘grotesquely dishonest’ and the IRR written off as ‘a Marxist oriented body which does not make a useful contribution’.

The Sunday Telegraph of Oct 13 gave Baroness Cox a platform to make yet another attack.

Ronald Butt, Times columnist and one of the architects of New Right philosophy has also used the cartoon book in order to brand anti-racism as a subversive creed.

‘It is a book of great wickedness’ and a perversion of history, he wrote in a feature called ‘The new breed of racist’. In a subsequent meditation on the riots he rounded on the ‘class warriors’ (including again the IRR) who, by stirring up young blacks on the streets, were really those responsible for the riots.

But Cox and co. do not want to hear. Worse still they do not want others to hear — and all in the name of freedom.

‘How racism came to Britain’ is available from bookshops and the Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leake Street, London WC1X 9HS (£2.95 plus 45p p&p)

BROADCASTING & BLACK PEOPLE

NUJ Day Conference
Sat 7 Dec

University of London Union
Mallet St. WC1
11am start

Apply — John Foster NUJ 01-278 7916

Supported by ACTT, Equity, BETA

CARIBBEAN
TIMES

An ^{24p}
Authoritative
Weekly
Newspaper

Inside
ASIA

a radical bi-monthly
on Asian affairs.

Issue No. 6 (Nov/Dec) includes:

Jomo on Malaysia's estates of poverty.

Praful Bidwai on Bhopal.

Walden Bello on the Philippines' economic crisis.

Ben Kiernan on Pol Pot's 'retirement'

plus articles on

nuclear Micronesia, prostitution in Thailand, Malaysian women in industry, racism and UK immigration, repression in Taiwan, Brunei's oil sultanate, modern Chinese painting, travel in Vietnam and—the end of multi-racialism in Singapore?

and more ...

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

sample back issue available free on request

Subscription rate for 6 issues (one year)
£10 in UK, Europe, Third World, £15 in Japan, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

INSIDE ASIA (S) 242-244 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UP.