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PUBLICATIONS

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Send for these and our new mail order catalogue of books and videos. Cheques payable to CPBF, 9 Poland Street, London W1 3DG.

Working against racism

Funds raised from the sale of the "It Ain't Half Racist Mum" video are to be used to live black media workers to extend the anti-racist work of the CPBF.

The CPBF incorporates the Campaign Against Racism in the Media, and the first priority of those appointed will be to produce a teaching pack bringing earlier publications and the video up to date.

North West gets a Right of Reply

The NW CPBF Right of Reply Unit was formally launched in Manchester's Town Hall on Feb 26.

Among the speakers at the inauguration were Colin Bourne, NUJ northern organiser, John Tocher of the AUEW and CPBF worker Lesley Wood. Former Labour MP and CPBF activist Frank Allun chaired the event.

Complainants seeking advice, assistance or Right of Reply packs in the North West should contact Nancy Jaeger on 061-832 6991, NW CPBF, 136 Corn Exchange Building, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M4 3BN.

Black Sections reply

The CPBF has taken up demands for Labour Party Black Sections to receive a Right of Reply in the TGWU Record.

The wrong man

On Jan 7 Associated Press put out a picture of Palestinian academic Dr Abdel Qadir Yassine (right) under a caption saying he was the wanted terrorist Abu Nidal.

Thirty eight newspapers internationally used the story, including The Times and the Guardian.

Since then Dr Yassine has been detained by security forces in Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Finland, and lives in constant fear of assassination.

Neither British newspaper has so far agreed to correct their error.

Interviewed by the Morning Star in March, Dr Yassine said of the British press, "They bark loudly enough about human rights. I expected any self-respecting newspaper to allow me to put

my side of the story."

Dr. Yassine has worked for the PLO and sees the smear as part of a deliberate campaign to discredit the Palestinian cause.

"I am prepared to pay with my life for the just cause of my people. But I will not die for a stupid mistake," he says.

in East London.

And at a mass meeting in York Hall, Bethnal Green, organised by Tower Hamlets Trades Council and the South East Region of the TUC, Kate Holman of the CPBF Nat. Cttee. was one of nine speakers on the Wapping dispute.

Police State?

Birmingham journalist Howard Sharon is to sue West Midlands Police for assault and wrongful arrest during the Handsworth riots.

He had fallen to the ground at the height of the trouble, while researching for Times newspapers. Police beat him with truncheons while he was on the ground, cracking a rib and causing severe bruising.

He produced evidence and witnesses to prove he was a journalist, but was held for 24 hours and charged with behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace.

No evidence was offered at his trial, and he was awarded £1,000 costs.

Meanwhile in Wapping 4,000 local residents have found their streets barred to them by strange police who seldom know where they are. Their job is to keep the tiny backstreets through the riverside hamlet free for Murdoch's TNT juggernauts to avoid pickets outside the NJ printworks.

Some people have strange notions of the freedom of the Press.

FREE PRESS is edited for the National Council by **MIKE JEMPSON**.

Copy for FP 35 should arrive at the Campaign Office by May 1, preferably typed with double spacing.

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No. 34

APRIL 1986

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CPBF Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom

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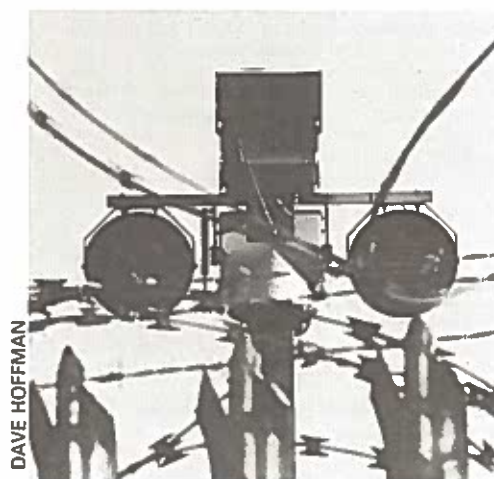
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Censorship, fear, total management control; the end of editorial independence — that's life under Murdoch in Fortress Wapping.

The boycott is one of the most effective ways of striking back.

More on the dispute p 2.



DAVE HOFFMAN

biggest thing in life'

"It has stopped being an intelligent paper," says journalist of the year Ian Jack, former feature writer on the Sunday Times.

"An Andrew Neil editorial (several) weeks ago really said that as Sellafield makes money, people should not make a fuss about it."

He was quoted at the Campaign AGM which roundly condemned the anti-union, anti-press freedom antics of Murdoch and Maxwell.

FULL AGM REPORTS INSIDE — pp 5-8

It's a sad day if proprietors can only think of introducing new technology by forcing people out of the door.
Harry Conroy, NUJ

In the absence of right of reply legislation, trade unions in the national papers have stepped in time and time again when the press are printing downright lies. Without a union presence, that's going to go.
Brenda Dean, SOGAT '82

What we have with the electricians is collusion, subterfuge, and a deliberate attempt to undermine the conditions and indeed the employment of print workers.
Tony Dubbins, NGA

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Pam Sherwood/FORMAT

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



Alan Richardson
 • Sacked Sun proof-reader John Bailey, CPBF Chair Loretta Loach, and the Observer's Neal Ascherson applaud Wapping MP Peter Shore at the Fleet Street meeting.

The brutality of Wapping

"The brutalism of Rupert Murdoch's approach to industrial relations has shifted public opinion throughout the country to a realisation of what the government has been doing," Peter Shore MP, whose constituency includes Wapping, told the well-attended CPBF "Fleet Street in Crisis" meeting last month.

"The uprooting of production from Fleet Street to East London allowed employers to negotiate new terms of employment," he said. "But massive unemployment opened up the possibility of recruiting new staff, and the combined impact of legislative changes in 1980, 82 & 84 allowed them not only to sack staff but also to limit the action unions could take to protect their members."

Decrying the lack of rules governing newspapers, Mr Shore drew attention to those which require broadcasters to attempt balance in matters of dispute, provide stringent controls against monopoly ownership of commercial stations, and ban foreign ownership of British broadcasting.

"They may not always be kept to," he said, "But at least they are there to be called on."

He spelled out what a future Labour government should do: repeal anti-union laws; provide arms-length state assistance for new, more diverse titles; and establish a national facility for newspaper production.

Prompted by the Observer's Neal Ascherson, he agreed that the loophole that allows employers to sack workers for breach of contract if they go on strike should be closed.

Neal Ascherson went on to deplore the "extraordinary humiliation of the NUJ" caused by the decision of most News International journalists to go to Wapping, which he

saw as a shattering defeat for trades unionism. And he outlined the many ethical and political questions that the dispute has raised.

In a knockout speech Ron Leighton, former printworker and SOGAT-sponsored MP from neighbouring Newham, welcomed new technology as a release for printers from appalling working conditions.

BY MIKE JEMPSON

He poured scorn on lies about average earnings of the 5,000 sacked workers, and deplored the craven behaviour of "journos" who kowtowed to management. "They're the ones who do the thing that keeps the adverts apart," he said.

Sacked Sun proof-reader John Bailey, whose job disappears under new technology, was glad to be out on the cobbles "striking back at Murdoch."

He described the archaic disciplinary procedures printers have to endure daily, and the deceitful methods Murdoch called "negotiations."

For the Campaign, Mike Power spoke of the importance and impact of the boycott of NI titles, and listed CPBF's prescient demands for greater access and accountability in the media.

John Foster of the NUJ ended the meeting with a call for comprehensive policies to link all aspects of the communications industry, from the arts and broadcasting to telecommunications and the press, with the Campaign's demands.

The meeting then adjourned to a mass picket in Wapping.

Ripe for takeover?

The 1986 Manchester Broadcasting Symposium

'Hands off our airwaves' was the message for advertisers and multi-national corporations at this year's symposium.

Not that they were listening. Ad agency Saatchi Saatchi Compton made an unconvincing plea for commercials on the BBC, claiming their clients are looking for specialised audiences.

"They are particularly interested in male ABC1s" (middle-class high spenders) enthused Saatchi's Andrew Green.

Deeply sceptical, Channel 4's Dr Naomi Sargeant pointed out that specialised programmes simply do not attract specialised advertising. C4's tightly targeted programme for the over-55s gets a big audience but no commercials for thermal underwear or pensioners' holidays.

"If advertisers only want male ABC1s, that happens to all the other minorities?" she asked.

A good question for Professor Peacock's inquiry into BBC financing. One member of his team — Prof Alastair Hetherington — was at the conference but refused to say anything about their deliberations.

He defended British news values and he claimed the media coverage of the miners' strike was well balanced.

"Most news producers base their priorities on what is important for Britain's peace and prosperity" he said, referring to his recent research study.

CPBF's Janet Whyatt contested his views, quoting research by Justin Lewis which shows most TV news viewers feel alienated and say that the version of events pictured on the screen does not reflect their lives.

She argued that this was a result of the moral and political values embedded in most news judgements, which portrays dissent as violent or evil and keeps women, black people, the unemployed and the working class on the margins of society.

Where the Professor and the Campaign agreed, however, was in defending British journalism against cultural imperialism.

Janet reported that the international media unions' federation FISTAV has set up a worldwide inquiry into the shrinking number of foreign correspondents.

Journalists are being sacked because news organisations prefer to buy in satellite reports from Ted Turner's Cable News Network. This is doubly damaging, say the unions, because it cuts jobs and produces news with an American slant.

The conference concluded that British news values need improving, but should not be sacrificed to further takeover by multi-national predators.

sion with the image of 'body beautiful' as the perfect physical human being.

The exclusion of anyone but able-bodied people from roles in mainstream television — as newscasters, chat-show hosts or as fictional characters in soap operas — persuades viewers that people with disabilities are socially worthless and merit their disadvantage position in society, he said.

Rachel Hurst added 'this invisibility is terrible for children with disabilities who grow up surrounded by able-bodied adults and never see any adult role models they can relate to.'

Chris Harrison, a blind activist with the Liberation Network, expressed anger that even when disability issues are covered, the views of those most directly con-

cerned are ignored in favour of able-bodied professional 'experts' and their own views as consumers of local and national government policy goes unheard.

The meeting proposed a joint campaign by the CPBF and the NUJ's Campaign For Real People to create an opportunity for people with disabilities to unite and form guidelines for media coverage. Judging from the positive energy throughout this discussion there'll be no shortage of input for this initiative.

As a deaf person I felt proud at what the meeting achieved: Deaf, blind, physically handicapped, epileptic, able-bodied and others coming together as writers, journalists, teachers, actors and parents all making powerful contributions to the debate. If only we could see this on our TV screens and in the press!

Let us know what you think about the AGM, Murdoch, Shah, Peacock, and FREE PRESS — typed with double spacing, please, by May 1.

Another peace

Congratulations on your supplement (FP33) on media distortion of peace issues — the most serious misrepresentation of all.

May I give a later example from the recent leader in the Daily Telegraph on the Soviet proposals?

Mr Gorbachev, it stated, "has the advantage that SS-20s withdrawn behind the Soviet borders can be rapidly redeployed in time of tension while American missile launchers cannot."

This is false. Commenting on the recent Soviet offer, General Nikolai Chervov told West German defence experts on West Berlin television:

"We do not propose to move these SS-20 missiles somewhere else. They will be destroyed under painstaking and reliable national and international control, including inspections on site and on the spot."

I wrote to the Daily Telegraph pointing this out. The letter was not printed.

Frank Allaun,
 President, Labour Action for Peace
 Manchester 21

Censorship

In response to R. Sydenham's reply to my comments on censorship (FP33), I wonder if he has considered the fact that the most insidious form of censorship is that

which already exists: the almost universal refusal of the media to tell the truth about women, black people, lesbians and gay men, people with disabilities and other minorities, and to cover issues of relevance to them (except of course for that powerful minority group: white, upper/middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied men).

Instead the media generally prefers to disseminate malicious lies about such people, which do have harmful effects on their lives. The lie for example that women are stupid, vain, only fit for servicing men at work and at home — and that they are constantly available sexual objects, even when they say no. Pornography is the greatest slander of all.

I would be less bothered by this slander if women and black, gay and disabled people had a significant share in the control of the media, so that the media reflected their lives accurately, and in proportion to their numbers. Readers and viewers would then be in a better position to see the lies for what they are.

How long must we wait for that situation to eventuate? And how much must we suffer in the meantime?

Maybe if all other attempts to eliminate media sexism continue to fail, legislation could be the answer. However I do recognise that there

are enormous problems here, which are at present being pondered by the women's group.

Julienne Dickey
 West London

Wapping Ode

ON BEARING RUPERT

As long as English boys are sent to unjust wars in foreign climes while Thunderer bleats some lament I know that I shan't miss the Times.

As long as love's reality is rounder than some stranger's bum and I can hold her close to me I know that I shan't miss the Sun.

As long as England reimports her villains from Vandiemensland and sells them slaves and calls them sports and says, "You're right, we're over-manned!" as long as we must air our views by picketing with flags unfurled I know that I shan't miss the News of England or, indeed, the World.

Rick Gwillt
 TGWU 6/171 Branch
 Preston

British myth

Janet Swinney in (Letters FP 33) is quite right to take up the media's attitude to nationality (though with their known bias against every other oppressed group in the UK, it's hardly surprising that they're no different when it comes to national minorities).

Two parts to the problem: — what 'nation' are they talking about? Of course, as Janet points out, when the media talk about "British" or "national" they are inevitably talking about "England" (except in the sort of instance where Scottish football teams become "British" when they win something!).

The invented "British nationality" is something used to oppress and assimilate national minorities in England.

— Secondly, what about things actually taking place in the minority nations? Not only are we excluded by being "British" out of existence, but anything happening autonomously in Wales or Scotland is either ignored or treated with contempt or hostility (the left are, if anything, even more guilty than the right on this).

Witness, for example, the coverage given to the campaign by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (the Welsh Language Society) for better legal and educational status for Welsh. Or rather, the lack of it.

Witness the sort of treatment meted out by Fleet Street and the BBC to the campaign against holiday homes.

I fully support any moves to campaign around these issues.

Fred Clegg
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 Glas
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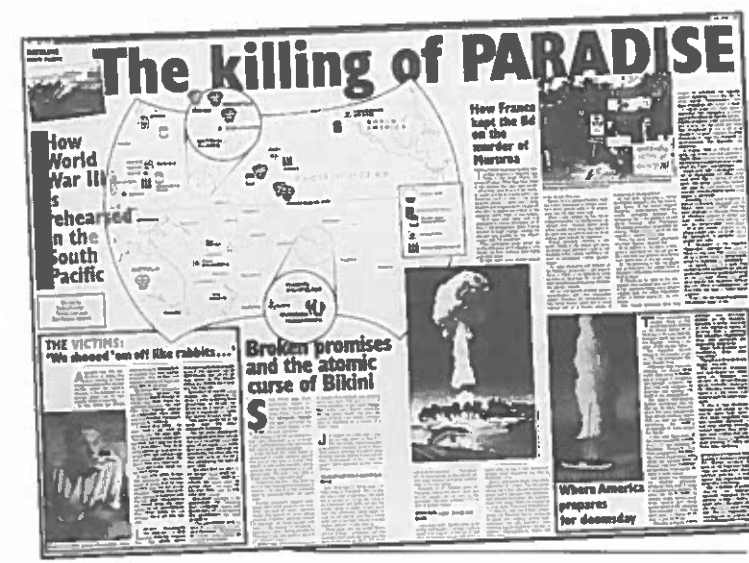
The following GLC book is also available at £2 per copy:

- ☐ **The State of the Art or the Art of the State**
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Centre spread from the NOS dummy. Strong on image, excellent colour and clear on its politics. The most ambitious challenge yet to the right-wing media.

News On Sunday is up and running

It will cost £7 million to launch a left of centre Sunday newspaper, but when News On Sunday does hit the streets it looks certain to be bought by at least 1 million people a week.

This confident result of a year-long £80,000 feasibility study means that the NOS project, which is backed by the CPBF, has cracked the scepticism of both trades union leaders and the City.

The speed with which the money is raised will determine whether the paper is launched

this autumn or early in 1987. Unions are expected to put £3 million into the project, and merchant bankers Guinness Mahon have agreed to raise share capital under the Business Expansion Scheme, which offers generous tax relief to individual investors. Pension funds are another likely source of finance.

The company formed to run the project will be chaired by Quaker Nicholas Horsley of the £1 billion Northern Foods. A member of CND since it was founded, he has a reputation for backing radical causes as well as recognised business acumen.

Bill Keys, former General Secretary of SOGAT, will represent trades union interests and others on the Board include Joan Bohanna a convenor at Glaxo in Liverpool, and New Statesman distribution manager Liz Cooper. Award-winning journalist John Pilger is acting as Editorial consultant during the pre-launch period, along with investigative reporter Sylvia Collier.

Five of the 11 person management team are women, and appointment to the staff of almost 200 will be made under equal opportunities criteria to ensure representative levels of black and women workers.

To retain its independence the CPBF withdrew from the

NOS Executive when the feasibility study was complete, but the Campaign will continue to monitor the project. Loretta Loach and Mike Power have become founder members in their personal capacity.

Design and editorial fine-tuning on the Dummy will be completed in time for the launch of the share prospectus later this month. The paper will use the latest technology, and offer colour on both news and features sections.

Based in Manchester with a London and probably several regional offices in the main centres of its largely working class readership, NOS expects to have a high number of younger readers.

Research Services Great Britain, the leading agency that carried out market research on the Dummy, predicts a lowest-circulation figure of 800,000, enough to put NOS into profit after two years.

A promotional video is available for those interested in putting money into the project. Copies of the Dummy, regional contact lists, and further information are available from:

News On Sunday, Caxton House, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1 0AL. Tel: 01 928 4898/4902 or NOS, 2-4 Oxford Road, Manchester, M1 5QA. Tel: 061 228 1570

JANET WHYATT tests the new tabloid and finds it lacking in more than just the print unions.

NOT TODAY MR SHAH!

Eddy Shah's new daily newspaper Today proves the point: new technology does not mean new ideas. Colour is no substitute for style.

Mr Shah claims he is producing a politically neutral product, aiming at what he calls 'middle England'. Yet its pages are filled with attacks on the print unions.

Coal Board hatchet-man Ian Macgregor is profiled. And a large advert for private medical insurance says 'To Eddy Shah his most valuable asset is his staff'.

What a gross insult to the NGA and NUJ members he ruthlessly sacked at the Stockport Messenger!

The advert is followed by an attack on the National Health Service, and elsewhere in the paper a story blames the teachers' dispute for a fatal road accident.

Today's advertising slogan 'Break the Mould' was borrowed from the Social Democratic Party, and the newspaper shares the party's obsession with the media. Whole pages are devoted to reporting new advertising gimmicks and glorifying modern printing methods.

The product itself makes these look rather sick. Technical faults have bugged the production; the colour pictures look flat and the print quality is grey.

Eddy Shah claims his staff are younger and represent a better race and gender balance than other papers. This may be true, but it certainly does not



Centre spread from the second issue of Today. Weak on colour, dull in content, with watered-down design elements from the News On Sunday dummy.

result in better representation of women, black people or gays.

The women's page is stacked with sexist gossip and a snide attack on local authority anti-racism campaigns. Black people are not mentioned except on the pop page.

One disgraceful headline on day 2, 'AIDS disaster by Tatchell' turns a review of Peter Tatchell's new book into a scurrilous homophobic attack on Tatchell, the Labour Party and the whole gay community.

This is not political neutrality but a cowardly method of

disguising Shah's true colours.

Editorially this first 'exclusive' turns out to be an old Sunday Times scoop. He held the front page for a photo of the Queen in Australia which could have been the Queen anywhere and was eclipsed by a bigger, brighter, photo-feature of the royal tour in the Daily Express.

Altogether, Today is a tame, dull-looking product. Distribution difficulties have given it a rarity value. I for one will not be desperately seeking a copy. Even my horoscope was wrong!

PALESTINE: YUSEF ALAN of the Palestine Trade Union Federation explains how journalists work

Under Occupation

Israel is rarely considered to be a police-state, yet its behaviour towards Palestinian journalism reveals it to be precisely that. Censorship in the 1967-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip takes three forms — repression of journalists; censorship of written material; and control of distribution.

The International Symposium of Journalists (IST) in 1985 heard that 48 Palestinian journalists were under town arrest, without charge or trial, last October. Since then more extreme sanctions have been applied.

Abd al Halim of *Al Fajr* had rocked the Israeli establishment daily with his revelations about land fraud in the West Bank. He disappeared on October 3 last year. His headless corpse was found on December 20, near an Israeli army camp.

Hassan Farajeh was deported on Jan 31 1986, without charge or trial, and without having been permitted to hear the 'evidence' offered against him.

Every staffer on *Al Fajr* has been in gaol and Adnan Sabbah of Jenin Writers' Union is currently interned without charge.

The accreditation of journalists who are able to move relatively freely is not recognised by the Israeli Military Governors who rule the Occupied Territories. Research is not permitted without military permit, nor may institutions possess telex machines.

The Arab Journalists Association (AJA) stated in 1982,

"All papers, magazines, books and printed matter in the Arab Occupied Territories undergo strict military censorship through a special military department which derives its powers from the Emergency Defence Laws issued by the British Mandate in Palestine in 1945.

"These rules grant the censors extensive authority to omit, without question, any material, with no possibility of legal appeal. . . Accordingly, no paper is permitted to publish any news item, essay, advertisement, photo, cartoon, or word without submitting it to censorship. . ."

Such censorship often extends to bans on reprinting items from the Israeli press.

Palestinian newspapers are forbidden to

leave blank spaces or insert statements that an item has been rejected by the censor. A recent Military Order obliges the Palestinian press to publish, in full and without payment, any Military Order which might be specified.

Within the West Bank and Gaza Strip no publication may issue more than one edition without a military permit. Newspapers may be closed by merely withdrawing such permits. Last November a temporary suspension of licence was imposed on all Palestinian newspapers; *al Manar* was closed down for six months and *ad Darb* permanently.

Repression of the Arab press is completed through Israeli control of distribution, which must be licensed by the army. At *Talia* has been banned from distribution in the West Bank and Gaza since it was established in 1978. *Al Fajr* — English is also banned from there. The magazine *Al Bayader as Siyassi* was banned for a fortnight in Oct 1985.

This control is enforced by military roadblocks which search vehicles and travellers for banned literature, including news publications, a literally unnumbered list of school-books and novels, and reference works such as atlases.

Palestinians in the AJA have succeeded in drawing the attention of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the ISJ to their plight and that of their would-be readers in Palestine.

They have also won the support of courageous Israeli reporters, like Amnon Kapeliuk, but they need more help if a Palestinian press is to survive. Messages of support and requests for more information should be sent to the AJA, PO Box 19563, Jerusalem.

The IFJ report is available from the NUJ; and the Palestinian submission to the IFJ from Palestine Trade Union Federation, c/o 52 Green St., London W1.



● Yusef Alan addressing the CPBF AGM.

Australian alternative

Australian workers are planning their own Labour daily newspaper, and hope to get it off the ground by 1988.

Australia has the most restricted press and media ownership of any country in the Western world. Four groups — Consolidated Press (Packer), News Corporation (Murdoch), John Fairfax, and the Herald & Weekly Times — control virtually all media outlets. The labour movement in Australia has no voice of its own.

"It has been the experience of all countries in which Labour papers have been established that their power and influence have been a distinct advantage to labour organizations and their principles.

"A people's paper pledged to advance and uphold democratic aspirations and ideals is urgently needed in Victoria, and the requisite capital and co-operation should be readily obtained by a united effort on the part of organized trades.

"The near approach of the General Election makes it important that the assistance necessary to establish the paper should be given at once."

That was the trades union call in July 1897! CPBF members with Australian links might like to help answer the call, ninety years on. Write to John Mathews, PO Box 174, Abbotsford, Victoria 3067, Australia.

Prisoners of Conscience in South Korea



Song Jin-sup & Lee Sang-don

Song Jin-sup and Lee Sang-don are staff members of the Urban-Rural Mission in Yongdungpo, an area in south western Seoul. In mid-December they were arrested and interrogated about an article which appeared in the Workers' Newspaper published by the Mission.

The article was about unemployment in a capitalist society. They were subsequently charged under the National Security Law and are awaiting trial.

This is Song Jun-sup's third arrest in five months in connection with the Workers' Newspaper.

On 24 August 1985 and again on 14 November, he was arrested and charged with spreading false information, under the Minor Offences Punishment Act. In both instances, a court sentenced him to a short term of detention in police custody: to five days in the first instance, and to 15 days in the second.

The Mission is part of the Korea National

Council of Churches. For more than a decade it has used peaceful means to try and effect change by providing legal and labour rights advice to workers, as well as free medical care, a day-care nursery and bible study sessions.

The government and media have portrayed it as a group infiltrated by communists, and as such its staff have been harassed and arrested.

Amnesty International believes that Song Jin-sup and Lee Sang-don have been arrested for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, and is calling for their unconditional and immediate release.

CPBF members are urged to appeal on their behalf to:

His Excellency President Chun Doo-hwan
The Blue House
1 Sejong-no
Chongno-gu
Seoul, Republic of Korea

A BARON FOR TODAY

By MIKE POWER

Eddy Shah is a self-made businessman and fourth cousin to the Aga Khan. He belongs to one of the oldest and richest royal families, and his financial and ideological backers come from the ranks of Thatcherism.

Shah spent two and a half years applying Thatcher's laws to deunionize his Warrington-based Messenger Group Newspapers, and his object lesson in deviousness was not lost on Rupert Murdoch.

He quickened the pace of Fleet Street's introduction of cost-cutting new technology for which the press barons are also grateful. They have spent twice as much on bingo promotion Shah raised to launch Today, and journalistic standards have declined in the process.

When not flattering him, Goodhart and Wintour present useful background to recent developments. They point out the failure of anti-monopoly law, and question assumptions about cost savings through new technology.

Newsprint now accounts for 30% of newspaper production costs. Production workers wages make up about 25% of total costs, less than half this sum going on compositor's wages — the area where most savings are to be made if journalists go in for direct in-put.

But the authors are still insistent that new technology guarantees a more diverse press, and suggest that more specialist papers aimed

at affluent segments of the potential market will generate high advertising revenue yield.

But true diversity comes through changes in the ownership and control of the press. Shah is simply joining the other press barons who plan to tighten their grip on news management by and advertising revenue by converting their hot metal monopolies to high tech monopolies.

The authors rubbish unions and the Left for demanding legislation to establish public printing facilities, a fair distribution system, and an advertising levy to finance new, more diverse publications.

They ignore the Right of Reply campaign and the importance of its industrial base.

To win a politically plural press in Britain is a profoundly political question.

As Shah and his peers are showing, new technology is no more politically neutral than was the old technology.

Eddie Shah and the Newspaper Revolution
by David Goodhart & Patrick Wintour
Coronet Books £2.95

PSYCHOLOGICAL TERRORISM REVISITED

Remember Red Stockings? Early seventies Radical Feminist group in the USA? The famous article in their journal, where they laid it on the line in the debate on the tyranny of structurelessness? And the real meaning of the personal is political?

That was the moment when I discovered that it wasn't me who was off my pram, but that the rubbish I had had to deal with from my parents, my teachers, my bosses, my political allies, my lovers, my friends . . . was all because they were using the wrong model!

All those feelings came sailing back on stream as I read through 'What a Way to Run a Railroad.'

The authors may be a bit short on facts from time to time, and a bit cursory in their judgments occasionally; but their analysis of our collective failure, in the seventies, in terms of the reification of the wrong model is well worth a read.

If you were there, or are curious, buy it. It would be a tragedy if we were to make the same mistakes again.

Liz Cooper

What a Way to Run a Railroad; Comedia: £2.50.

Quick quotes

"As I leave you I want you to know — just think how much you're going to be missing. You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore, because, gentlemen (sic) this is my last press conference."

Tricky Dicky himself, on 7 Nov 1962. Yes 1962. One of only three mentions of the media in Penguin's disappointing Dictionary of Political Quotations, compiled by Robert Stewart.

Penguin £3.95

News management

Hugh Whitcomb, Managing Editor of ITN, has replied to the queries raised by a West Kent CFE student (Clapping in the wrong place, FP33) about edited applause during news coverage of a Kinnock speech last October.

He offers a waffling explanation which answers nothing, and ends "I am sorry to note that your letter starts from the premise that this was a piece of news management. In our view the report was a perfectly fair reflection of the event given the totality of the news of the day."

The student's course, you will recall, was "TV as a construct."

Who is behind our TV screens?

Does watching 'Dallas' change our moral values? Are US computer systems really taking over the world? Does it matter?

The answer to these and other burning questions of the day is an emphatic Yes from this collection of essays.

It deals not only with television in transition as a medium, but also with the threat to public service and the issue of free information.

The book should prove invaluable to media students.

Others — like me — will enjoy reading it with a dictionary handy, for a frightening and fascinating glimpse of the future . . .

"Homogenised North American cultural slop will drench the population, though some 'high culture' will be available for the privileged stratum of professionals and managers in the new information society."

That is the informed prediction of Herbert I. Schiller, who seems to be calling for a worldwide CPBF to resist this change.

A challenging, quality read for anyone with an interest in tomorrow's media.

J.W.

Television in Transition
Edited by Phillip Drummond and Richard Paterson
British Film Institute

Beaving away

The Year of the Beaver is 1978. It has nothing to do with Chinese astrology but a lot to do with Japanese technology.

The (Labour) government is urging workers to accept pay curbs, new technology and job cuts in order to keep British goods competitive on world markets. The TUC is co-operating. It is union leader Jack Jones who coins the phrase "Year of the Beaver", promising that his members will work like beavers to boost productivity.

Meanwhile the members are fighting for their rights on the mass pickets of Grunwicks.

This film presents for the first time many contemporary interviews with pickets. They contrast starkly with the television news bulletins showing only management, strike-breakers and right-wing politicians.

Their views echo down the years: Keith Joseph saying the maximum number of pickets should be six; Margaret Thatcher condemning violence; the Home Secretary (Labour's Merlyn Rees) returning from a spell in the Six Counties to offer government support for an increasingly militarised high-tech police force.

This is not an easy film to watch. Shot entirely in black and white it seems longer than its 77-minutes. But superb music adds dramatic atmosphere and the message is compelling for any media watcher or trades union member.

J.W.

The Year of the Beaver
by Steve Spring, Faction Films
VHS video 77 minutes
Distn by The Other Cinema

THE COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

The Communications Campaign has a new pamphlet on women and the electronic information industries. Available free. Also previous pamphlets on the need for publicly controlled telecoms services, and issues facing trade unionists in the "converging" industries of telecoms and computing.

Work is in progress on an analysis of "public information" needs in "the information society". Also, on spaces for community initiatives in cable TV.

Contact us for more information, or to join the working groups.

The Communications Campaign, c/o 125 Gossops Drive, Crawley, W. Sussex, RH11 8LF

Stop Press: a "communications fair" later in 1986.

NAME

Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom

OBJECTS

* To challenge the myths of 'impartiality' and 'balance' in broadcasting, and 'objectivity' in newspapers by campaigning for the genuine presentation of the diversity and plurality of society.

* To challenge the myth that only private ownership of the newspaper industry provides genuine freedom, diversity or access.

* To challenge the myth that the present forms of ownership and regulation of broadcasting guarantee editorial independence, democratic accountability or high programme standards.

* To carry out research and generate debate on alternative forms of ownership and control of newspapers and broadcasting in order to guarantee freedom from either state control or domination by business conglomerates, and encourage the creation of alternative media including those sympathetic to the labour movement.

* To work for press and broadcasting that are free of material detrimental to any individual or group on the grounds of gender, race, class, religion, sexual preference, age or physical or mental ability; and to seek equality of opportunity and achievement in the media for disadvantaged groups.

* To encourage the development of industrial democracy in the newspaper and broadcasting industries.

* To encourage debate on the implications of technology advances in the media to ensure that the public interest is safe-guarded and that commercial interests do not override public accountability.

* To campaign on the general principles in the Minority Report of the 1977 Royal Commission on the Press, including proposals for a National Printing Corporation to provide a competitive public sector in the industry and a launch fund to assist new publications.

CAMPAIGN RULES

The AGM voted a number of important changes to Campaign Aims and structure which are highlighted in bold below.

The changes include incorporation of special interest groups into electoral categories, and the conversion of the National Committee into a National Council which will be better able to concentrate on policy and strategy for the campaign.

* To campaign for a reconstituted Press Council to promote basic standards of fairness and access to the press on behalf of the public. The Right of Reply is fundamental to redressing the imbalance in press bias.

* To campaign for a reduction in legal restrictions on freedom of publication and increased access to information through a Freedom of Information Bill and reform of the Official Secrets Act and similar restrictive legislation.

* To campaign for the legal right of access for publications to the distribution system, and a guaranteed right of display.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all individuals and organisations that support the objects of the campaign, upon payment of an annual subscription or affiliation free to be determined by the annual general meeting. The campaign's sponsors shall be individual honorary members with full voting rights.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

An annual general meeting shall be held on a date to be determined by the National Council. Representation at the AGM shall be as follows:

(i) *individuals* — all individual members of the campaign to be eligible to attend and to vote;
(ii) *organisations* — all organisations affiliated to the campaign to be invited to send delegates, as shown below, in accordance with the number of members on which they are affiliated.

Number of Members	Number of Delegates to AGM
Below 1,000	1
1,000-10,000	2
10,000-50,000	3
50,000-100,000	5
100,000 and over	10

All delegates attending shall be entitled to one vote.

(iii) *Supporting organisations* —

any organisation which has carried a motion of support for the campaign and which has also provided practical and financial support may be admitted at the discretion of the National Council to a separate category of supporting organisation and shall be entitled to representation and voting rights at the AGM.

MOTIONS TO AGM

All members and organisations shall be invited to submit motions for debate at AGM. Notices of AGM shall be sent out not less than 13 weeks before the AGM. The last date for the receipt of motions shall be 6 weeks before the date of AGM. The last date for receipt of amendments to motions shall be 2 weeks before the date of AGM.

Ordinary motions shall be declared carried on receiving a simple majority of votes cast. Motions to change these rules shall require a two-thirds majority of votes cast.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

A National Council shall be elected at the AGM. The Council shall be elected in sections. Delegates may be nominated in only one section but may vote in all sections.

- Individual members: 6 seats
- Members of the NUJ: 4 seats
- Workers in the printing and allied trades: 4 seats
- Workers in broadcasting: 4 seats
- Other trade unions: 4 seats
- Other organisations: 4 seats
- Regional groups: 1 seat per recognised group
- Special constituencies:
 - a) Black Group: 2 seats
 - b) Women's Group: 2 seats
 - c) Gay & Lesbian Group: 2 seats

Groups may be set up by the National Council under this section subject to ratification by the AGM.

Those standing for election in this section must be individual member of the Campaign.

No member or delegate may

stand for election in more than one section.

Invitations to nominate shall be invited not less than 12 weeks before the AGM.

Nominations may be taken at the AGM from within any group in which 2 weeks before the AGM insufficient nominations have been received.

The National Council is the body responsible for carrying out the policy of the CPBF between AGMs. The National Council, will meet 9 times a year in January, February, April, May, June, July, September, October and November. At least one of these meetings will be held outside London and will discuss the problems and development of the Campaign's regional groups.

The National Council shall be responsible for the immediate and longer term planning of policy and strategy of the Campaign.

The National Council shall elect from its number a Finance and General Purposes Committee which will meet regularly as determined by the National Council to undertake such work as the National Council requires. Decisions of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be subject to endorsement by the National Council.

The National Council shall have power to delegate responsibilities to sub-committees of the National Council. Decisions of such sub-committees will be subject to endorsement by the National Council.

The National Council shall have power to co-opt individual members of the Campaign.

The National Council shall have the power to call Special Meetings of all or any sections of the CPBF membership where it is deemed necessary for the Campaign's work.

REGIONAL COMMITTEES

The National Council shall be empowered to set up regional or local committees. Individuals and organisations supporting these committees shall pay membership subscriptions direct to the National Council which shall be empowered to make grants to support the work of the campaign in the regions.

FREE PRESS

BI-MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR PRESS AND BROADCASTING FREEDOM
Circulation 11,500
Price 30p
SPREAD THE WORD

Special offer to CPBF members, on bulk orders to give, or sell, to your friends.
Five for £1
A year's supply (five each of 6 issues) £5.

ORDER YOURS NOW FROM:
CPBF Office 9 Poland St., London W1

REPORT BACK:

Campaign AGM
15 March 1986

The unacceptable face of the media monopolies

A National Committee resolution condemning the recent activities of Rupert Murdoch and Robert Maxwell received overwhelming support at the Campaign AGM.

Speaking for the Nat Cttee, Kate Holman debunked some of the myths which have flourished since the arrival of new technology in the print.

The cost of launching a national daily remain prohibitive, she said. Even the labour movement would be hard pressed to find the £20-30 million it cost Shah to start Today. What chance those whose voice is never heard?

Existing media monopolies have "the capital, the contacts, the distribution and the dirty tricks to maintain their hold," she went on.

Tory laws favour those who already control the media, and have been applied with venom to support the News International move to Wapping.

"Cable and satellite television were to have revolutionised the media," said Kate. "Yet who has bought them up — Maxwell and Murdoch."

"In Holland where new technology has been in use for over ten years, not a single new title has emerged to offer a more diverse view."

"And as for improving the lot of women and black workers — it is no advance to be tied to a VDU in Wapping, with no break, no health and safety procedures, and without the protection of union agreements."

She spoke of "severe censorship" of journalists' copy in Fortress Wapping, and the cavalier sackings that have come to represent Robert Maxwell's style of media management in London, Manchester and Glasgow.

Mike Griffiths (NGA) said the Wapping dispute was clearly not about new

technology but about "the basic exploitation of labour in the service of capital — gaining a cheap and docile workforce to fuel additional profits through Murdoch's US media interests."

"Nor is it a right-wing ideological stand. It is using political contacts in pursuit of financial gain."

"All the Fleet Street proprietors have the same objective," he said, "They only differ in their methods."

He called for active campaigning on the right to strike, and the importance of a merger between the print unions.

Both John Foster and Charles Tremayne of the NUJ urged the Campaign to extend its remit, since new technology has implications for broadcasting, the arts and telecommunications.

They reminded the AGM that within days of lunching with Murdoch behind razor wire SDP leader David Owen had called for a similar assault on broadcasting unions, and demanded that commercial franchises should simply go to the highest bidder.

"We are talking about freedom to communicate," said John. "Not the freedom of the market place, but the freedom guaranteed by media run on the concept of public service."

Individual member Pam Bradbury admitted she had been fooled by promises that new technology would bring diversity. Now she knew better.

Of those working direct input for Murdoch she had this to say: "I refuse to waste crocodile tears on the journalists behind the wires at Wapping. They were awful before they went in, and they are still awful now."



• Printworkers get it in the neck from mounted police, outside Stalag Wapping.

MEDIA MANIFESTO

The Campaign is to launch its own manifesto for legislative changes to improve the quality, diversity and accountability of the communications industry.

A 'shopping' list motion from James Curran, outlining some of the demands the CPBF will be making was remitted to the new National Council for reworking.

In the run up to the next General Election the Campaign should promote its ideas among all sections of the labour movement, political parties and other pressure groups, argued Mike Jempson.

A draft Manifesto will be produced soon, highlighting the need for a Right of Reply, the Right to Report, the need to extend freedom of information, prohibit media monopolies, and to establish a national fund and facilities to ensure greater access to the media.

The Manifesto will also tackle the issue of bias, and the need for statutory enforcement of constraints upon media proprietors.

Later this year Pluto Press are to publish an extended version of the Campaign's aims, entitled "Bending Reality" and the debate on the Manifesto will be opened up at a special conference.

Members are encouraged to submit their ideas, and to take the debate into their own organisations so that as broad a spread of views can be encompassed.

There has never been a greater need to make the role of the media and the impact of new communications technologies a central issue in a General Election campaign.



• Defiance in the face of adversity — a sacked printworker displays the poster that says it all — the workers who earned Murdoch his millions are sacked just to increase his profit margins.

KEEP OR PHOTOCOPY THIS PAGE
FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Staff Appeal
£10,000 urgently needed
Only £18,000 of the original £20,000 Staff Appeal has been raised so far. Another £10,000 is urgently needed if we are to keep our staffing levels up to strength.
With £1,500 promised through monthly direct debits this would bring the total to £29,500, the amount needed to pay staff, and cover office costs.
Donate generously, through direct debit, and encourage union branches and other groups to make donations.
For more information contact the Campaign Treasurer, CPBF, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG.

Alex Addo "take action on racism"

1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 26



recruitment, and colonialism.

00000000000000000000000000000000

Biggest single extra cost was on publications. With more pages and increased circulation FREE production costs rose to £11,000 but well within its revised budget. The advent of advertising, and more bulk orders, brought in over £7,000.



● Campaign worker Julienné Dickey speaks out.

Keeping up the pressure

Over the past few years the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) has built up an excellent reputation for organising lobbying campaigns against impending legislation which they see as having a direct impact on the lives of lesbians and gays.

CHE achieved some success in effecting the removal of clauses in what is now the Police & Criminal Evidence Act.

Currently CHE is very concerned about Winston Churchill's Obscene Publications (Protection of Children) Bill, which extends the Obscene Publications Act to broadcasting, and applies a special test of "obscenity" to anything put out where under-18s might come across it.

Material on radio or TV, or available in bookshops, public libraries or information centres, would be judged not by whether it was likely to "deprave or corrupt" the average person, but by whether it might "corrupt" a child.

CHE warns that the Bill, if passed, would mean prosecutions, for example, of feminist health-care and childbirth books; of "know your own body" sex education books; of anything which represents lesbian or gay male sex as fun; or anything which explains safe-sex techniques.

It will mean that "adult-only" sex shops will become the only source of explicit information — good, indifferent, or foul.

And of course — page 3 titillation, sexist advertising, dehumanised images of women and gay men won't be affected.

CHE has produced a leaflet on the Bill which has been sent to 90 women's groups around the country and other relevant organisations. CHE is also advising its own Campaign members on which points in the Bill to raise specifically with their MPs.

CAMPAIGN MONITORS GAY COVERAGE

Defend Gays The Word!

In April 1984, HM Customs & Excise raided Gay's the Word, London's lesbian and gay community bookshop, and seized 142 titles.

On 6th October 1986 the nine bookshop directors will appear at the Old Bailey on charges of conspiring to import "indecent and obscene" material.

The charges relate to works by such established writers as Gore Vidal, Tennessee Williams, Edmund White, Jean Genet and others — in many cases books which are freely available elsewhere.

This extraordinary attack by HM Customs not only affects the lesbian and gay community — it threatens the basic right of every man, woman and child to read what they choose.

The Defend Gay's the Word Campaign has set up an office at the bookshop and has appointed a campaign co-ordinator to organise work in the areas of research, publicity, fundraising, sponsorship, lobbying, international liaison and information.

Volunteers with interest and enthusiasm are eagerly sought to help the Campaign. Contact: David Northmore, Campaign Office, Gay's the Word, 66 Marchmont Street, London WC1N 1AB. Tel: 01-837 9456.

And of course all donations will be welcome!

During the first two weeks of November last year the CPBF monitored the nation's printed media, for their coverage of homosexuality.

All national newspapers (except the Star) and 200 local and regional newspapers, as well as about 30 magazines, were monitored, and a report is currently being drawn up by members of the CPBF Lesbian and Gay Group.

Although nothing dramatic happened that fortnight (Rock Hudson was already dead and the Cyprus spy scandal erupted the previous week), it produced a wealth of material, almost all of it negative.

By a sad misfortune the Star has escaped us. If anyone knows how we can get to view that paper's November issues, please let us know! The British Library are five years behind in filing their papers).

We hope to have completed our report by the end of April, and a fuller account will appear in the next issue of FREE PRESS.

Changing soaps

Consistent lobbying by lesbian and gay soap fans for gay characters in soap operas (after all we live in these communities too) appears at last to be paying dividends.

It has been revealed that the social worker in the East Enders is living in a lesbian relationship — as are the two screen printers in Brookside. One of the latter so far appears to be the stereotypically "man-hating feminist" who behaves in a fairly insisterly way to "executive women" — but indications are that both soaps will treat the issue sympathetically.

This should give Mary Whitehouse even more cause for concern about East Enders!

MEDIA STUDIES
get a going over
in the next
FREE PRESS
SUPPLEMENT

HOW
DARE YOU
PRESUME I'M
HETEROSEXUAL



Thousands of lesbians and gay men may pass through Fleet Street — yet the event goes completely unreported. The media refuse to acknowledge the social and political importance of the lesbian and gay liberation movement.

Lifting the lid on homophobia

Whether in hope or grim determination, around 60 lesbians and gay men attended the inaugural meeting of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom Lesbian and Gay Group in February.

BY SUE SHARPLES

They heard speakers explain how they are fighting heterosexism from within the media and from outside.

The so-called 'liberal/quality' press don't cover lesbian and gay issues any better than the rest, said Nicholas de Jongh from *The Guardian*. "If things are hard on *The Guardian*, where liberal, specialist attitudes are supposed to be welcome, what hope is there elsewhere?" he asked.

Nicholas' welcome for the new group was endorsed by Margaret Mitchell from the NUJ, who, while recounting the significant achievements of the NUJ's Lesbian and gay Group (they have brought out two sets of guidelines, one on coverage of lesbian and gay issues and the other on how to report more accurately and sensibly on AIDS) recognised that they would have greater impact if they joined with others. She urged the new group to "keep agitating for change. Having had 200 years of homophobia there is change and we have to take up that challenge".

Bob Crossman, deputy mayor of Islington was the next speaker, and a recipient of much media attention. He had a wodge of photocopied press cuttings, with headlines such as 'Mayor and Gentleman Mayoress'.

He gave an amusing and very encouraging account of how he had fought back — by issuing his own press releases which included items on lesbians and gay men, and by having himself photographed alongside children.

He fights back in other ways too — by talking to trainee journalists, ostensibly about local government, but other subjects soon get raised.

He encouraged us to take on the local press, to demand franchises for community radio, to get on the air-

ways, to use LBC, and not to see ourselves as victims.

Philip Adams from the London Media Project briefly outlined the results of the Gays in Broadcasting survey that had been presented to lesbians, gay men and the broadcasting hierarchy just a fortnight before.

"What it revealed bore out our complaints even more than we thought it would. Lesbian coverage is one-twentieth of 1% and needs to be multiplied by 100 to be representative.

"Gay men are stereotyped as 'queens' and criminals and there is wholesale breaching of NUJ and IBA codes as well as the Broadcasting Act itself", he said.

The last speaker, Melanie Chait, of the ACTT (union of technicians in film and tv) and a lesbian film maker said: "We missed the boat with Channel 4, which was supposed to be catering for minorities, but they reneged".

She urged us to lobby the broadcasting channels, to demand a tv magazine slot, a right to reply, and to complain by 'phone.

In addition to those from Melanie and Bob's list, other suggestions included: a conference, setting up heterosexism awareness training; processing complaints to relevant bodies; encouraging trade unions who are supportive; supporting lesbians and gay men who are under media attack; meeting editors of eg *The Guardian*; and finally — finding a way of instant response to media homophobia and heterosexism.

For details of future meetings contact Julianne at the CPBF office.

DEFINING OUR TERMS

Heterosexism is the name given to the oppression of lesbians and gay men. It incorporates an assumption that heterosexuality is the only normal, natural and morally decent way of relating to other human beings.

Within the media there operators an assumption that everyone is heterosexual unless the contrary is stated (amidst general disapprobation, sensationalism and mockery), and that all readers and viewers will share this negative view of homosexuality.

Heterosexism ensures that unbiased information about activities of concern to lesbians and gay men is not disseminated, thus denying us our right to control over and access to information.

Heterosexism is the assumption that deciding to relate sexually to your own gender is the single most important fact about you as a human being, and puts you in the category of "other".

Homophobia is the fear and hatred of homosexuality and homosexuals — arising out of the fear of being close to people of one's own gender, instilled from an early age through systematic exposure to heterosexism.

The expression of homophobia can take the most extreme forms, including physical assault and murder; media homophobia can be seen as an incitement to this. The mere threat of being labelled lesbian or gay keeps men and women within traditionally-defined roles.

Like all other oppressions, heterosexism is designed to keep people apart and has an economic basis.

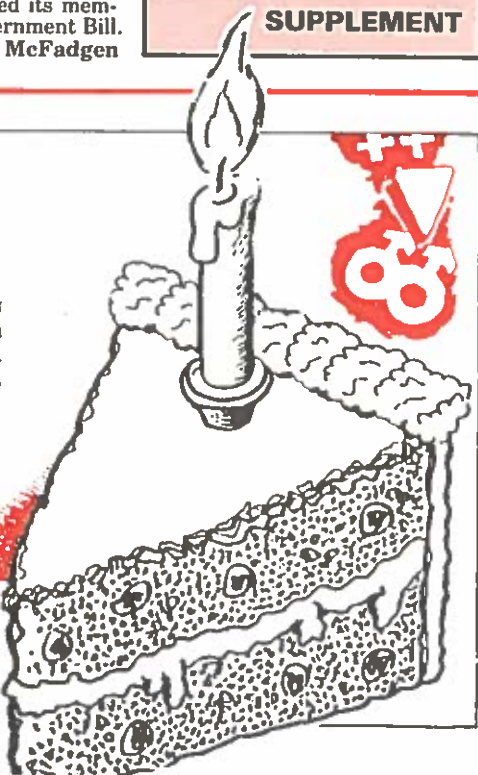
Lesbian and gay liberation is in the interests of everybody — it is an essential part of world liberation.

Were One Year Old!

London Lesbian & Gay Centre

The Centre celebrates one year of combatting homophobia and helping to build the capital's lesbian and gay community on Wednesday April 9th. with a session of special events from Friday 4th-Sunday 13th April.

FOR FULL DETAILS OF ALL EVENTS INCLUDING OUR SENSATIONAL GRAND BIRTHDAY PARTY ON THE 9th, PICK UP YOUR SOUVENIR BROCHURE AT THE CENTRE FROM APRIL 1st.



ARE WE BEING SERVED?

The bigotry of broadcasters was firmly established at London's County Hall on Friday 14 February when *Are We Being Served?*, a report on their treatment of lesbians and gays (the result of detailed monitoring of a week's radio and television, August 12-18, 1985) was presented to and largely accepted by the representatives of television and radio present.

The report covers *Actuality* (news and current affairs) and *Entertainment*. MARK LILLY takes us through them.

The *Entertainment* study stresses exclusion policy: broadcasters still insist that all the fictional characters in *The Archers* and *Coronation Street*, for example, must be heterosexual.

Fame (BBC1) is meant to be set in a typical drama school, but all the men are straight. *The Streets of San Francisco* (ITV) makes no reference to the fact that it is set in the gay capital of the world.

The old arguments of the broadcasters — that we are offensive and/or evil — have given way to even more preposterous ones. Thus, Tony Warren, speaking at the 1985 Edinburgh Television Festival, said that black people and gays could not be portrayed on *Coronation Street* because the characters would be bigoted and ITV couldn't risk broadcasting their prejudiced comments!

The assumption is that the characters are real people, rather than the creation of a band of writers putting across their highly subjective view of a particular community. In any case, we have already seen that the problem is easily overcome. Where black people are now represented in soaps, racist comments are either simply omitted or, (as in *Grange Hill*) the racist is made very unsympathetic.

Representations of lesbians and gays are overwhelmingly negative and often contemptuous. In the monitored tv coverage there were 22 pejorative references, compared to 3 perceived as positive, and 9 as neutral.

The negative images were based on two stereotypes: the ridiculous/pathetic, and the evil/perverted, with the first category far more common. *Man About the House* (C4) used both verbal cues ('hello sweetie... they've all been gossiping down the ballet school') and physical mannerisms (a hip-waving effeminate barman) to generate ridicule. In the drama series *Invaders* (BBC2) the clichés of the gay antique dealer (hand on hip, limply holding a cigarette) once again appeared.

The habit of derisive laughter is so ingrained that humour can be generated merely by random words and phrases linked to society's travesty-view of gays. The mere mention of men wearing earrings (*Wogan*, BBC1) caused audience mirth, as did phrases like 'Hello sailor' (*The Two Ronnies*, BBC2) and 'fairy fingers' (*Hogan*, C4), irrespective of content, timing or relevance. They are some-

thing to do with homosexuality, therefore they are funny.

Salem's Lot (BBC1) had a mother talking with alarm about 'one of those'. *Victim* (C4) characterised gay men as conspiratorial, effete and pathetic.

In *The Boy in the Bush* (C4) a gay school teacher is described as having 'a secret sin... rotting his soul away.'

Many of these features were also found in radio. Capital Radio's *Fish Fryer's Hall* is especially offensive.

Woman's Hour (R4), one of the most heterosexists of all programmes, had a daily series (*Bilgewater*) which managed to ridicule both a potential lesbian relationship and a gay relative (called Puffy).

The second part of the report (*Actuality*) deals with news, current affairs and discussion programmes. Lesbians and gays, are still barred from *Any Questions* and *Question Time*, unless they agree to remain in their closets, to prevent what the previous BBC Chairman, George Howard, called 'any misunderstanding'.

All news on gay issues is negative. Positive stories about the gay community — our arts, festivals, publications, demos, legal battles — are never included.

But the right of the public to know is always invoked if another MP gets caught in a public lavatory.

Broadcasters always claim that they merely reflect reality. They act as objective mirrors careful not to offer personal bias or slanted views. The exclusions mentioned above give the lie to that.

So does the behaviour of presenters when homosexuality is being discussed. In the monitoring week, a telling example of institutionalised heterosexism occurred in *20 Years On*, chaired by David Frost. He referred to gays as 'promiscuous'; asked the audience how many would be unhappy to have their children taught by homosexuals, and was clearly disagreeably surprised when only a few hands went up. He said that we are not 'ordinary people' (violently refuted by Claire Raynor) and spoke of a woman as a 'self-confessed lesbian'.

The Conference

The one-day conference was designed to take account of the report and discover what lessons could be learnt for the future.

Professor Stuart Hall's opening exposition was remarkable,

combining academic perception with a personal commitment, evident in his anger, which was powerful and moving to all those of us who shared that anger. "How could broadcasters bear to be so insulated from social realities, so content to play over endlessly the tired lies behind patriarchy and heterosexism?" he asked.

They expend massive effort 'mystifying themselves', developing a cult which panders to their self-importance. They defer to the consensus. They are autonomous until the phone rings — either in their office or in their heads. The immense kaleidoscope of human sexual experiences is reduced to one norm: heterosexual male-dominated monogamy.

Lesbians and gays are characterised as also of only one variety — 'the other' — and the differences between us are denied.

This monolithic view — that there are only two human types, gay and straight — not only does violence to the truth, but is the broadcasters' method of enforcing social control.

For Hall, heterosexism is so deeply institutionalised ('armour-plated', he called it) that it manages to block out all mainstream critiques and new approaches to social questions developed over the last 20 years.

In this climate, AIDS was a godsend; for the media it had been chosen 'as a general signifier for the end of the world'. Everything nasty and threatening — urban violence, earthquakes, a failing economy — was somehow ultimately symbolised in this disease. Bigots who had been harping for decades on the idea of homosexuality-as-disease could not believe their luck to find this 'gay plague'.

The fact that, as a Dr Harris pointed out during the monitoring week (Brian Hayes Phone-In, BBC) "AIDS is a heterosexual disease which was, by chance, moved into the homosexual community" has had no effect. Myth is always stronger than fact.

Paul Bonner, C4's controller of programming, braved an appearance and, unsurprisingly, attracted howls of derision at frequent intervals.

He was unable to explain why C4 had reneged both on its promises and its legal obligation, to provide programmes for the largest minority group.

Why was there no regular gay programme similar to *Eastern Eye*? Bonner had no answers, and made no promises.

Clare Mulholland, the IBA's deputy director of television, made an extraordinarily important disclosure. By law the IBA is required to maintain 'standards of decency and taste'. The meanings of these two terms is established entirely by reference to the remarks of those who make representations to the IBA. She conceded that is sufficient people complained about programmes like *Blind Date* (a game show restricted to heterosexuals) on the basis that such blatant heterosexism was indecent and tasteless, then the IBA would have to act.



Lesbian & Gay NUJ

The NUJs' Lesbian and Gay Group is alive and well and continues to fight in 1986 against biased reporting and media homophobia, by MARGARET MITCHIE.

In January this year, along with the list of conference resolutions dumped by most people, the NUJ released its leaflet *Reporting AIDS for Journalists*. The leaflet is aimed directly at working journalists urging them to THINK before they write, print or broadcast any material on AIDS.

With this leaflet the NUJ Lesbian and Gay Group has consolidated its campaign around the growing public concern over AIDS reporting — reporting which has both sensationalised and trivialised the subject through headlines: ('Kiss of Death'; 'I'm an AIDS carrier'; 'AIDS baby nightmare'); and such copy referring to homosexuals as 'sick, evil and inferior' and to AIDS as the 'homosexual "plague"'. .

This has alienated still further the gay community and has increased popular scepticism about the ability of the press to report accurately and fairly on sensitive issues such as homosexuality.

The five points outlined in this leaflet encourage journalists to *be accurate*: ensure that information given is free from distortion, misrepresentation and falsification; *be relevant*: sexual orientation should only be mentioned if it is strictly relevant to the story; *respect privacy*: do nothing that entails intrusion into private grief and distress; *avoid sensationalism*: resist the temptation to sensationalise issues which could have harmful effects; and *make it positive*: seek to achieve wider, better and more balanced coverage of AIDS.

At the NUJ Annual Delegate Meeting in 1985, the Equality Council passed an emergency motion on which these guidelines are based.

At ADM this year there is a comprehensive motion on AIDS from the Equality Council, once again via the NUJ LGG. It calls for, among other things, support for a national trade union campaign on AIDS; protection in employment for people who are HTLV III positive; equal opportunities in house agreements to include the rights of gay workers; and acknowledgement at all times that AIDS is a health issue and not a matter for moral condemnation.

This year the NUJ is fighting for its life against the dictatorship of Rupert Murdoch and his ilk. If more journalists take the bait, sign "no strike agreements" and collude in other ways with managements, then we lose the fight and what little strength and credibility we have built over the years. In such a situation defending gay rights is low on the list of priorities. What we can work for is a concerted defence of trade unionism.

But that means more gay journalists coming out in their own defence, and that of others.

Gays on the rates scandal

Scapegoating of various groups as an explanation for society's ills is historically commonplace.

Lesbians and gay men have been used in this way for centuries. As tradition would have it, they were responsible for the downfall of the Roman Empire (to say nothing of Sodom and Gomorrah).

Today the right-wing press use lesbians and gay men as an excuse to attack the left.

Any show of support by a Labour-controlled council for gay people is immediately heralded as good reason to discredit it; frequently the story appears as an attack by a Tory spokesperson, with seldom any right of reply being granted.

Of an Equal Opportunities post on Notts Council: "Conservative leader Bill Bradbury: "This is going barmy in a big way — it is beyond belief." (Bradford Telegraph & Argus, 10/4/85).

Of a service for local lesbians: "... a rotten use of taxpayers money," Cllr Eric Sunderland said, 'It is totally wrong to encourage abnormalities... it's bloody nuts.'" (Daily Mail 15/6/85).

"County Hall seems to have a bottomless purse for every fringe group that wants money, whether it is to help lesbians and gays or buy dominoes for West Indians" (Birmingham Evening Mail 19/3/85).

Deliberate trivialising and distortion of the purpose of a grant is common. Linking one scapegoated group with another is also common.

The election of a gay man, Bob Crossman as Deputy Mayor of Islington, provided a golden opportunity for the media to have a go at Islington Council.

"Angry Tory MP's last night hit out at the election of a gay rights campaigner as a council's mayor. Said MP Ivor Stanbrook 'It's ludicrous and it affronts common sense... This takes the gay rights nonsense much further than it was ever intended when minority rights first became an issue.'

Fellow Tory Ivan Lawrence said 'After this nothing surprises me about the Socialist Republic of Islington.'" (Daily Express 16/5/85).

"Have you noticed how nobody takes the antics of the Loony Left seriously? How their activities seem to belong to the world of entertainment rather than the real world of bread and butter issues? ... at the end of last week there was another example of the Left's compulsion for political comedy when an Islington Labour councillor disclosed that he would be the borough's first homosexual mayor — with his live-in boyfriend as mayoress." (Auberon Waugh in the Daily Mail 20/5/85).

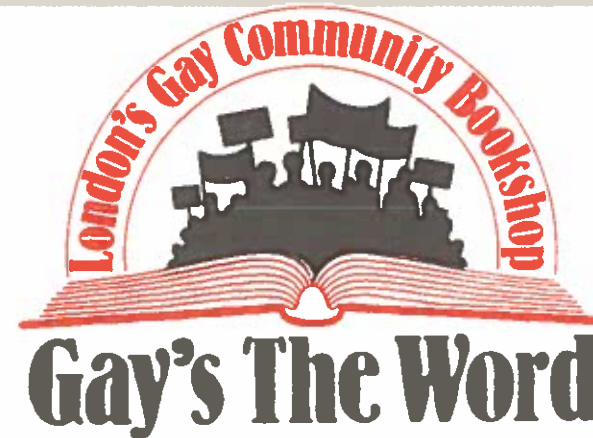
These "gays-on-the-rates" stories consistently ignore the fact that lesbians and gay men also pay rates, from which they tend to benefit less than heterosexual people, since the majority are financially independent and without children. Far from complaining about this state of affairs, lesbians and gay men are often at the forefront of fighting for better conditions for all.

It is not only the left who are attacked by using lesbians and gay men — it is also the peace and women's movements.

Dismissing the Greenham protest as "a bunch of woolly-headed lesbians" serves as an excuse for refusing to deal thoughtfully with the issues of nuclear weapons and peace.

Castigating all feminists as lesbians and therefore not to be taken seriously is not only inaccurate, it also devalues the important contribution of lesbians to that movement.

This kind of media treatment of lesbians and gay men is deeply offensive — but all on the left must be concerned about such tactics being used to divide and discredit it.



"On 6th October the literary trial of the 80's will start at the Old Bailey. There is a great deal of work to do over the next eight months. If you can help please contact David Northmore at the Campaign Office, Gay's The Word, 66 Marchmont Street, London, WC1N 1AB. Tel: 01-837 9456."