

FREE ^{40p} PRESS

JOURNAL OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR
PRESS AND BROADCASTING FREEDOM
No. 59 July/August 1990

CPBF on the move

As from 16 July the Campaign will be operating from a *NEW ADDRESS* - The Unity Club, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8 1NG. There is also a new telephone number (24 hours) 071 923 3671. The move has been occasioned by the closure of 9 Poland Street for refurbishment.

CPBF is now having to pay rent, where previously we had rent-free accommodation. This will place an extra strain on the finances.

In particular the Campaign needs contributions to the wages appeal account to secure the future of our full-time workers. A regular contribution to this account is of especial value and CPBF members who have not yet made out standing orders are urged to do so. (Standing order form on page 5).

Calcutt asks wrong questions

by Mick Gosling

The Calcutt Committee into Privacy and Related Matters which reported in June, has achieved exactly what the government intended it should do. It has defused calls for concrete change to improve press standards and press freedom — in particular for a statutory right of reply and legal aid for libel cases — while supporting the continuation of a system of self-regulation which has been tried and has failed.

At the same time it has come up with a pig's ear of proposals on intrusion into privacy, court reporting and possible future statutory regulation which threaten pre-publication censorship, a legal minefield for genuine investigative reporting and a state appointed Press Tribunal which will increase government interference.

The rich and the powerful may benefit from these proposals as may a government which has systematically

attacked the genuine freedom of the press and broadcasting — tightening the Official Secrets Act, introducing the Broadcasting Ban and creating unique legal procedures for police seizure of film and photographs.

At the same time it has rubbished critical editors and programme makers, put its place-men and women onto the boards of the BBC and IBA, created quangos for taste and decency like the Broadcasting Standards Council and allowed the concentration of ownership — and opinion — within the press to proceed apace. We have also seen judges willfully misinterpreting legislation such as the 1981 Contempt of Court Act to restrict investigative reporting.

If press freedom is abused in the hands of its present owners and controllers the last place it is safe is in the hands of the courts and the government.

Calcutt has come up with the wrong answers to the wrong questions. The root cause of the excesses of the tabloids lies in the concentration of ownership of the press and the feverish struggle for market

share for which any depths will be plumbed.

So long as financial muscle power is the only determinant for running a newspaper and no system for editorial independence exists this will not change. Despite submissions made by the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom and others, the Calcutt Committee did not consider this question.

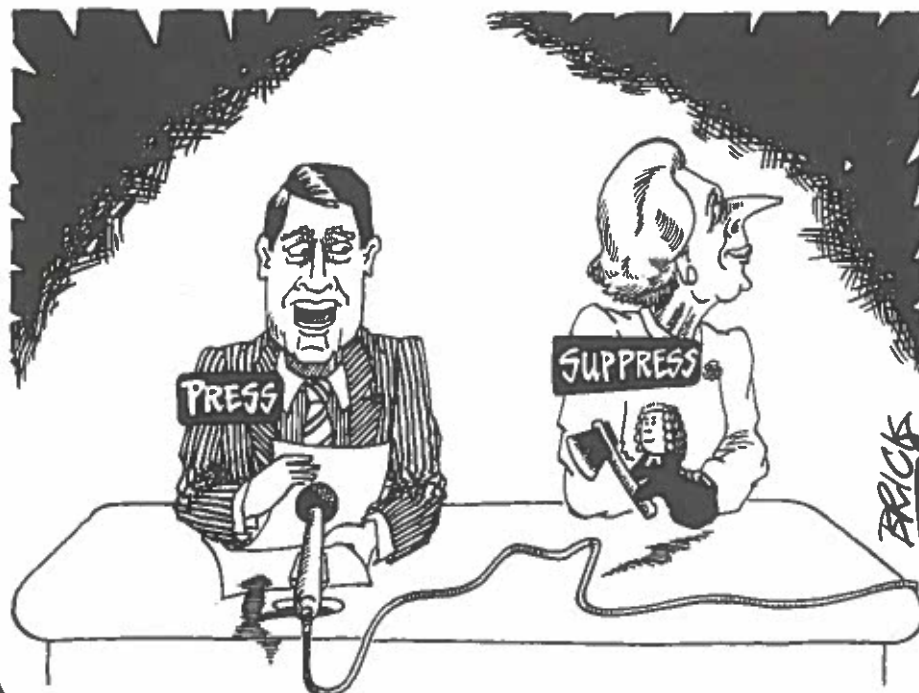
Secondly, why are the present editors and Calcutt equally hostile to a statutory right of reply? Allegedly it is to keep the press out of the courts, yet Calcutt proposes three new criminal offences related to privacy, one of which involves pre-publication censorship, and all of which bring the courts into play.

The CPBF's Right of Reply Bills which were forwarded by MPs Ann Clywd and Tony Worthington in 1988 and 1989 proposed an open, quick, cheap, publicly accountable mechanism whereby members of the public could seek correction of lies and misrepresentation in the press.

The Bills sought to establish a consumers' watchdog — independent of the press and government — with statutory powers to insist newspapers print a prompt reply to factual inaccuracies. But these would only have been used if voluntary agreement had failed and an order made for publication, at which point the paper involved could have challenged the order in court.

At the same time Calcutt rejects legal aid for libel cases ruling out that form of redress for the overwhelming majority.

While the rich and the powerful are offered protection and genuine investigative reporting threatened, Calcutt's proposals will do nothing for the ordinary men and women — be they trade unionists, black people, Irish, lesbians or gays — who are most frequently misrepresented and denigrated in the press. And after a further failed year of self-regulation and sliding standards we are faced with the dismal prospect of more overt state interference in the media.



BFI support for women's film distributors ends

by Sarah Bratby

The future of over 600 internationally acclaimed films and videos produced by women hangs in the balance as the British Film Institute puts the UK's only two specialist distributors on a Kafkaesque trial.

Circles and Cinema of Women emerged in the 70s in response to a very real need for the organised distribution of material produced by women. While both organisations fulfil similar functions, Circles has specialised in shorts, theatrical features and documentary inspired videos have been the Cinema of Women's main area of interest.

The steady growth of these unique organisations has brought international recognition. Both groups are seen as role models by organisations world-wide, and while maintaining close working relationships with their funders, the BFI funding and development division, both have emerged as major competitors to the BFI's own commercial distribution division.

Having been aware that come 1991 the funding position might change, both groups have been increasing their self-generated income by healthy annual

percentages and developing strategies to ensure financial security post 1991. Despite a drop in grant aid over the last two years, Circles has increased its income by 51%.

But following the BFI reshuffle earlier this year, Circles and COW were horrified to discover they had been made clients of the distribution division they are in direct competition with.

Circles' and COW's comments that there may be a conflict of interest were strongly rejected by the BFI. Our worst fears were confirmed in May. The BFI suddenly announced it would be instituting cuts of 68% to Circles and 38% to COW, back-dated to April, with no right of appeal.

The BFI's explanations for the cuts have varied according to who was asking the question. Some are told it is due to the lack of money from central government, others are informed it is because of the inefficiency of the groups involved and that they are of minority interest.

To date nobody in the BFI will admit responsibility for having made the decision to cut funding and to the dismay of other BFI client groups, no statement outlining a change in funding policy has been issued.

In mid June, the BFI announced it would fund one merged distribution group if Circles and COW could come up with an acceptable business plan. This very idea was investigated by the two organisations almost two years ago and rejected. Nevertheless, Circles and COW realised that they may have no other option and reconsidered.

However, when they reapproached the BFI they were told that the BFI is not a funding body and has no plans to see them merge.

If growing suspicions prove correct we may soon see the BFI gallantly rescue the most popular sections of Circles and COW's catalogues to modestly place them in the sure and safe hands of its own commercial distribution division. We may even see the recruitment of a women's film officer within the BFI to compensate for the loss of Circles and COW.

It would be scandalous if the BFI should consider itself exonerated in this way. If nothing else, it should be asked how it can justify holding out its left hand to the government for more money for film production whilst using its right to deliberately demolish vital parts of the framework for women's film promotion and distribution.

Magazine to fight libel gag

by Mick Gosling

For six years *International Labour Reports*, the respected magazine for international labour movement news, has reported on the struggles of workers at the Intercontinental Garments Manufacturing Corporation in the Philippines. In September 1989 the parent company, William Baird of London, closed the factory throwing 1000 young women out of work. The factory has been picketed ever since.

In its March-April 1990 issue, ILR alleged Baird's reason for the closure was a new law providing for a national across-the-board daily wage increase of 25 pesos (71 pence). It also alleged that Baird Textiles, which has 20 factories in Britain, has been on an asset stripping spree, having bought up and closed a dozen or more factories in the North West in the past decade.

William Baird PLC is now suing for damages over these allegations and seeking an injunction to stop the

circulation and publication of the same or similar material in the future. In words which have a depressingly familiar ring, Baird's Chairman, Donald Parr, told the company's annual meeting in Glasgow that the factory had been closed because of disruption led by 'a small group of politically motivated militants seeking to change the government' (*The Scotsman* 25.5.90).

What is intriguing about Baird's action is the newspapers and journals it is not suing. The story appeared in *The Guardian* last December and on the front page of the *Sunday Express* on 7 January. It has also been covered by the *Daily Mirror* and the Scottish dailies and a number of trade union journals. No action is being taken against these papers.

The firm has also employed Westminster Strategy, a London based PR firm, which carried out a covert operation against the Philippines Support Group. One of the firm's workers, Andrew Chevis, posed as a freelance journalist to obtain information about the organisation

and the movements of Lucy Salao, president of the Intercontinental Garment Manufacturing Company Workers Union, when she was in Britain as a guest of the Transport and General Workers Union. He also travelled to Liverpool to attend a TGWU meeting addressed by its Deputy General Secretary, Bill Morris, and Lucy Salao, after which he spoke to both of them.

The employment by Baird of a PR firm to monitor a pressure group seeking a retail customers boycott of its products and its selective libel action against ILR has led to suggestions by the company's opponents that the move is really designed to silence the company's critics and stop them organising. Despite a number of phone calls no spokesperson was available at Baird's London office.

ILR have launched an appeal to fight the libel action and messages of support and contributions made payable to ILR Defence Appeal should be sent to ILR, P.O. Box 45, Stainborough, Barnsley, Yorkshire S75 3EA.

Standing up for the truth

Until recently **John Harrison** was a reporter on the *Chatham News* in Kent. Now he is unemployed. He protested when another reporter and a friend faked pictures of a Channel Tunnel worker apparently sleeping on the job — then sold them to *The Sun* for £2,000. He then found himself treated as the villain of the piece by his colleagues and felt compelled to resign. His story is a sorry tale of plummeting press standards and journalistic ethics.

Newspapers sometimes push the truth, sometimes bend the truth, sometimes just make a stab at the truth, but when people moan 'they just make it all up' you know they are exaggerating. Don't you?

On 17 February *The Sun* carried a front page picture of a Channel Tunnel worker, seemingly fast asleep.

A story inside had more pictures of an extremely well-paid, snoozing digger and quotes from a 'worker' saying they all took naps. Why not? It was easier than working. The implication was that the reason the French side of the tunnel was progressing faster than ours was that our diggers were lazy.

A good story? A fine piece of 'getting in where it hurts and getting the 'scoop' journalism? Actually no, it was all a complete fake.

I was a reporter on the *Chatham News* in Kent when I first heard about the deception. Peter Leidig, the boyfriend of Samantha Smith, one of my newsroom colleagues, phoned *News* editor, Gerald Hinks, to ask how much he could get for a picture on the front page of *The Sun*. Hinks replied 'thousands'.

Sam Smith told us that Peter, a planning assistant with Trans Manche Link had either gone, or was going into, the tunnel to take phoney pictures.

When these were published, I challenged her and asked if they were definitely fake. She said they were. She said they were actually of Peter and thought it quite funny that his bum was facing millions of people over their breakfast tables.

I asked her if she didn't think that faking pictures negated everything she went into journalism for. She did not really have an answer. Sam was gleeful about the pictures and bragged about them quite openly.

Peter and Sam went up to *The Sun* office in London to negotiate their sale. They got £2,000, rather less than expected, and went on holiday together to the USA. Sam claimed subsequently than she paid for her part of the trip herself.

Eight men have been killed during the building of the Channel Tunnel. They did not die because they were asleep on the job, but that is what anyone picking up a copy of *The Sun* with that picture would be likely to think.

I thought this was deeply, deeply wrong, but the reaction of senior staff at the *Chatham News* was mainly amusement. Jokes about calling in the Fraud Squad were made, but no disciplinary action was taken.

Channel Four's *Hard News* programme got wind of the tale. They asked me to go on camera to expose what had happened. Another reporter on the paper had told them if anyone would talk, it would be me.

As first I was reluctant as Sam Smith is only 23 and had been a reporter for just 18 months, but eventually I agreed. What had

'I thought journalists stood against lies. In fact it was me who was villified.'

happened was all wrong. I went into journalism to tell the truth and as I heard how *Chatham News* were stonewalling *Hard News*, protecting the con artist, I felt sickened.

I told the editor of my intention to resign, did the TV interview, and went back and told the office. A newsroom meeting was held, the purpose of which I thought would be to get at the truth. Not so. It was overtly described as a 'damage limitation' exercise of the kind beloved of American Presidents who get caught out.

Sam Smith admitted in front of everyone that she had known the pictures were fake when she went up to *The Sun*. But it was agreed to issue a statement to *Hard News* which effectively said the *Chatham News* accepted Sam had not been involved professionally or benefitted

financially from the sale of the 'alleged' fake pictures. It talked of 'rumours' linking her to the photos.

Seeing she had just stood up and admitted the lot, I would call them pretty strong rumours.

I thought this statement was a load of rubbish, designed to obscure the truth and I was shocked at the newsroom for allowing it to be released. Only myself and a couple of photographers treated it with the contempt it deserved.

The *Chatham News* attempted to talk me out of my resignation, saying it was not necessary, but after the statement there was no way I could continue. I was also expected to go on working with Sam Smith which, seeing I had gone on national television to expose her, did not really seem an option.

I did not have a job to go to (although Gerald Hinks made the completely untrue suggestion I would get 'shifts' on *Hard News*) and I was not even eligible for benefit. As far as I know, Sam Smith is still at the *Chatham News*.

What shocked me most about what happened was the way the *Chatham News* rallied to the defence of Sam Smith, knowing full well her involvement. I thought journalists stood against lies. In fact it was me who was villified.

One reporter told me I was a 'grass' and should be in the 'thought police', another said I should be on the stage, not in 'this f***ing newsroom', the news editor said she was 'bloody furious' that I had told *Hard News* about the newsroom meeting.

What is going on when journalists are more concerned with a paper's 'reputation' than with the deception of millions?

The recently adopted national newspapers editor's code of conduct says mistakes will be corrected promptly and with appropriate prominence. Surely *The Sun* could do that now and make amends to its readers and, more importantly, the families of the men who have died digging the Channel Tunnel.

On 27 April 1990 Martina Shanahan, Finbar Cullen and John McCann had their convictions quashed at the Court of Appeal. They had been jailed for 25 years in October 1988 for conspiring with others unknown to murder Ulster Secretary Tom King and persons unknown.

The day after the defendants had decided not to testify at their trial, the same Tom King had announced the end of the right to silence in courts in the north of Ireland. In numerous TV and press interviews he and judicial luminaries built the equation 'terrorism = silence = guilt'. These statements and the attendant publicity given them were the Court of Appeal's reasons for quashing the convictions.

Campaigners found it fitting that the media should be responsible for freeing the Winchester Three, as it had helped convict them before they were even charged!

On 30 August 1987, Martina and Finbar were picked up by the police while sitting on a wall by a public footpath on Tom King's estate, about 3/4 of a mile from his home. John McCann was arrested miles away at a campsite at Wookey Hole the same afternoon. No guns or bombs were ever found. None of the three were charged until 4.30 that afternoon. Yet that night the arrests were on the TV news. Indeed John McCann's arrest, at around 6pm, was filmed.

Job Vacancy

Information/administrative worker

The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom is looking for a paid part-time worker to assist in all areas of our work. The main responsibilities of the post are maintaining membership records, handling all aspects of literature sales and providing information to the public. You will assist the full-time worker in expanding the membership and funding the campaign.

We are looking for someone with organisational and campaigning abilities and proven administrative and keyboard skills. Commitment to equal opportunities is essential.

Application for the post is by CV. Write to us with details of your age, gender, educational background and experience. Relevant aptitudes and skills may have been gained in paid employment or trade union, community or voluntary work so include any experience you consider relevant. Please nominate two people as referees.

Further information from CPBF, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8 1NG.

Salary: £100 per 15-hour week (under review)

Closing date: 17 August 1990

Trial by media: the case of the Winchester Three

WENDY PEARMAN argues that not only were the convictions of the Winchester Three unsafe and unsatisfactory, so was their treatment by the media.

The following day was a Bank Holiday Monday, so the press barely covered the story, but they made up for that on 1 September.

Under the headlines 'IRA try to kill King' 'Police Trap 3', *Today* stated: 'Two IRA assassins who tried to bomb the home of Ulster Secretary Tom King were under arrest last night'. It reported 'A young woman and two children are now on the run' and that 'A timebomb aimed at killing the Secretary of State would have exploded in several days time'. A further *Today* headline claimed 'Assassins use two children to pose as campers'.

The *Daily Mirror* headlined 'IRA bomb drama at top Tory's home' 'Three held in gun swoop'.

Assassins with no guns? A timebomb that didn't exist? Where did these stories come from? The minds of journalists seeking a 'scoop', or the mouths of the Wiltshire police?

What of the two children? There were several children on that campsite in Somerset during Bank Holiday weekend. But two had the misfortune to stay in a tent next to the three and, more importantly, they had an Irish name.

'It is easy to target the tabloids but the quality journals were just as much at fault...'

Mrs Docherty, and Tara, 11 and Jane, 9, moved on during the morning of 30 August. Had they been called Smith or Jones it is unlikely these stories would have appeared. Mrs Docherty later gave evidence for the prosecution.

It is easy to target the tabloids but the quality journals were as much at fault in their initial coverage of the case. *The Times* referred to an SAS tip-off in an article about the arrests, implying a link. All the quality press gave prominence to the story which could only have come from the police.

The three were detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act until 5

September. The press used that period to ensure that any potential jurors would have no doubts of their guilt — whatever they were to be charged with.

The broadsheets ran daily stories about police searches of farms, lakes and campsites, while the tabloids did their own thing. *Today* (2.9.87) under the headline 'Ray guns to guard Queen' spoke of 'the weekend's abortive attempt to bomb Ulster Secretary Tom King's home'. The *Daily Mirror* (3.9.87) headlined 'Newhunt for IRA killers' followed by 'IRA squad out to kill Thatcher' (5.9.87).

After the three were charged on 5 September the scene was set by more general IRA scare stories. The *Daily Mail* (9.9.87) headlined 'Royals in security scare at Balmoral' because two Irish holidaymakers had 'strolled freely besides the Queen's highland estate. Yet they could just as easily have been terrorists....'. Amidst this orgy of speculation deriving from unnamed police and 'security sources', went TV pictures of police searches, divers in lakes and the three's car being subjected to a controlled explosion.

The pattern was to be repeated through the course of the committal proceedings and trial a year later.

Martina Shanahan had fortnightly visits from her sister Deirdre Whelan between September 87 and March 88. She was committed to trial on the Tom King charge on 3 March 1988 following a four day hearing at Lambeth Magistrate's Court. Deirdre had attended throughout and been subjected to police searches.

But on 4 March, as she prepared to return to Dublin, Deirdre, her brother, a friend of Martina and later four other people were arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. On 8 March, Deirdre was excluded as part of a 'murder squad'. Most daily papers used almost identical wording to describe 'Deirdre Whelan, sister of Martina Shanahan, awaiting trial for conspiracy to murder Tom King'. The simple question of why such an allegedly dangerous person had been allowed in and out of the country for the previous six months was not asked.

The trial itself coincided with the return of the Tory Party Conference to Brighton in October 1988. The judge had twice rejected requests from defence lawyers

that the trial be postponed to avoid prejudicial reporting, instead the jury was twice advised about it. But predictably the two, including Tom King's speech, were reported side by side as the prosecution presented its case. The latter was duly reported as gospel.

Remember, no guns, no bombs were ever found. The 'assassins kit' — still written about after the three's release — was full of TCP, Vaseline, bin bags, woolly hats and gloves. The 'snipers magazine', widely referred to, is available at W H Smith's. The 'flattened areas' overlooking Tom King's house were two of many, five yards from a public footpath extensively used by local people.

The prosecution did not seriously try to link the defendants to these areas. They did not need to. It was simply a device to place a 'sniping expert' on the stand to impress the jury. The Irish press fully covered these points in its reports of the trial, for the British press it was a case of no questions asked.

'The Three had been tried and convicted by the media and the tabloids at least were determined to maintain their guilt'

Following their conviction, the media duly used 'security sources' to link the three to anything the IRA was believed to have done in Britain. Tern Hill, Mill Hill, Semtex finds and the Clapham bomb factory were all tied to them. Yet the IRA had taken the very rare step of denying all knowledge of them in October 1987. One TV news item in February 1989 even linked one of the three with Patrick Sheehy on a trip to Libya.

Even the three's recent release was reported as if they were still guilty. 'Tom King bungle frees IRA 3 jailed for plot to kill him' (*The Sun* 28.4.90). 'King size blunder' 'Minister's big mouth frees terror case 3' (*Daily Mirror* 28.4.90). 'The IRA are laughing at British justice' 'Keep terror gangs in jail' (*The Star* 1.5.90). 'What if Tom King had been killed?' (*Evening Standard* 30.4.90).

The three had been tried and convicted by the media and the tabloids at least were determined to maintain their guilt.

When its activities arouse public concern and politicians threaten controls, the press is quick to cast itself in the role of the Fourth Estate with a duty to examine, criticise and scrutinise the establishment. If these virtues had been applied to the case of the Winchester 3, most of the copy which did appear would not have done so. As it is, through its biased and sensationalist reporting the British media stands convicted of having helped steal two and a half years of these young people's lives.

SOGAT and NGA to ballot on merger

by Myra Benson

Delegates to the Biennial Delegate Conferences of SOGAT and of the NGA took momentous decisions recently, to move forward to a ballot of the membership on amalgamation of the two unions.

Merger mania abounds in the trade union movement at the moment. It's difficult to think of a union which isn't talking to another, be it just in whispers or nearing a ballot.

A few years ago, every political and industrial analyst was telling us that there would only be around a dozen unions by the year 2000. I don't believe that will be the case. There will be fewer unions, but amalgamations which take place will only succeed if they are made for good industrial and political reasons.

SOGAT and the NGA have been openly talking about the possibility of an amalgamation for some ten years. Neither union is a stranger to amalgamation, indeed both are the product of just such mergers, SOGAT's numbering 42.

There are now, both union conferences agreed, good reasons for us to amalgamate. We have thrashed out a package which will give members a stronger union for this decade and beyond.

Our industries have changed in recent years almost beyond recognition. They have changed faster than virtually any other. Old demarcations lines have been broken down; new technology has changed much of the work and even the pattern of work.

Together, our unions can create a new union with more than 300,000 members which will be neither SOGAT nor the NGA but a new union based on where we are in 1990. The creation of the new union, the Graphical, Paper and Media union (GPM) is an exciting concept. I believe we would be creating a new union which respects the proud traditions of both unions and gives

numerous benefits.

A carefully constructed new union would provide a stronger and more efficient organisation at all levels. We would be in a stronger position to represent our members and to offer them enhanced services. A single union would make the best possible use of resources, ending duplication of effort and securing a stronger financial base from which to operate.

Tough negotiations have taken place between the two unions to arrive at a package which offers the best deal to all members. The result of the ballot which is to take place in the Autumn, will be known on 20 December, with a vesting date for the GPM of 1 July, 1991.

Both unions have a similar chapel (workplace) and branch structure and it is anticipated that they would continue as they are until such time in the future when they may decide to merge. We have agreed that the Biennial Delegate Conference of the GPM would be the final arbiter on all these decisions, safeguarding chapel and branch positions.

One union for our industries has been a long held dream. The creation of the GPM would be a solid foundation from which to build one media and communications union in the years ahead.

THE CPBF NEEDS £15,000 IN 1990

Our income from membership subscriptions covers most of our running expenses, but not our workers wages. We need to raise £15,000 in 1990 to survive. Above all we need a guaranteed regular income. So please fill out the Standing Order form below and/or make a one off contribution. If we can get 600 supporters individuals or organisations paying £2 per month each into our account that would make a substantial contribution to our staffing costs. Your generosity is the campaign's future.

STANDING ORDER/DONATION FORM

To the Manager Bank (yours)

Address of Bank

.....

Your Account Name

.....

Your Account Number

.....

Your Address

.....

Please pay the Co-operative Bank plc, 1 Islington High Street, London N1 9TR (Code 08-90-33) for the account of The Campaign For Press and Broadcasting Freedom Appeal Deposit Account (A/c No 50508701) the sum of £

..... (amount in figures)

..... (amount in words)

on the day of each month, from (date) (month) 19 (year), until

countermanded by me

Signed Date

Race report misses the point

by Simon Hinds

Elaine Sihera, the Managing Editor of an education magazine called *Impact*, came to prominence over a year ago when her arguments about black people and broadcasting were used to initiate a studio debate on the BBC. The BBC have now allowed her to follow this up with a content analysis of 30 weeks of peak time television. The result is a report that contains points that are good and that many black people would support. Its basic thrust, however, is both backward and dangerous.

The advantage of such a report is that it does provide evidence gathered on a systematic rather than impressionistic basis. Elaine Sihera literally counted up what she regarded as 'positive' and 'negative' images of black people on television between the hours of 6pm and 11pm.

She describes as negative, images of black people that show them as 'having difficulties of one sort or another within society'; dependent on others for help; not contributing to society; and lacking credible opinions.

Her report shows that on average 92% of the BBC's output did not feature any black people while for ITV, with Channel 4, it was 94%. Of the BBC's 8% which portrayed black people only 3.5% was positive compared to ITV's 4.5%.

There were no black people in

education, politics or finance who were serious commentators, even when the programme was about racism.

While there were a significant number of current affairs programmes on the BBC that dealt with racism whilst the research was being done, Elaine Sihera says: 'Examined closely, while they all purport to be portraying positive images of Black viewers, they actually end up presenting their subjects as problems.'

The lack of 'authoritative' black commentators is a major criticism Ms Sihera has of the BBC and she highlights *Question Time* as an example. She goes on to attack as 'colonial' the use of white people to talk about black issues without any involvement of black people.

She sees the most important solution as having more black programme makers and decision makers. All shades of opinions should be given an airing on programmes and not just white middle class ones. There should be awareness training for senior staff and monitoring. A variety of black authority figures should be found and screened.

But despite these radical sounding attacks on the BBC the report is basically a black, neo-conservative one. Its real agenda is to promote a black elite that is acceptable to white people in power because they assimilate into white, bourgeois culture. They can then achieve the material and social success they want

as individuals and pass it off as success for the black community.

Ms Sihera claims that black people should be treated as people. She praises Wogan when he interviewed Frank Bruno and family when they were 'not treated as a black family...but as a family who had something to say which had little to do with colour...' This really means she was happy when they were treated as if they were white.

This elite, she believes, should become a role model for the black majority but will actually be used to 'prove' racism does not exist. And she does not want 'negative' programmes that highlight the racism faced by the majority because that would mess up her positive images and myths about black acceptability.

Black thinkers do have criticisms of 'victimology', the depiction of black people as helpless victims of the racist system. But unlike Ms Sihera their positive images involve black people who led struggles against the racist system such as Angela Davis, Malcolm X, William DuBois, Kwame Ture and all of Jamaica's national heroes. This tradition is totally ignored by the report. Yet, it is this tradition which forces white people in power to create a black elite.

Undoubtedly, the BBC will prefer a neo-conservative criticism of them that purports to represent general, black criticism.

Book reviews

In Defence Of The Realm? — The Case for Accountable Security Services by Richard Norton-Taylor, Civil Liberties Trust, price £4.50.

Richard Norton-Taylor's new book details the way in which the security services have failed to operate within the letter of any law; what he calls '...the sleeping engines of authoritarianism.' The book paints a broad picture of the functions of the security services, and offers better ways to regulate their activities.

He is excellent in teasing out the incestuous relationships between the various bodies of the state. His overall breakdown of the way in which MI5, MI6 and the Special Branch operate will bring many a security official out in a cold sweat.

Norton-Taylor assumes enough of his audience not to cover completely, familiar debacles like *Spycatcher*. He uses these as obvious examples of the way in which the security services are not accountable to the public, to parliament or even to the executive.

In contrast to their inability to spot moles in their midst the security services seem to see them everywhere else. The long list of organisations and individuals who have been put under surveillance simply for expressing left of centre views

is unsurprising. It is amazing that MI5 keeps files on such well known subversives as Robert Maxwell.

Here Norton-Taylor does well to tear apart even the notional definition of 'subversive'. As Harold Salisbury, former Yorkshire Chief Constable, said '(subversion is)...a whole gamut of things...pecking away at the foundation of our society.' The new Official Secrets Act, the lifelong duty of silence, the ineffectual regulatory bodies are all given short shrift.

The second part of the book is based on how other countries regulate their security services. The author gives the examples of Canada, West Germany, the US and Australia which have roughly similar political systems to Britain but seemingly manage to ride the line between necessary secrecy and basic openness. Norton-Taylor shows how scandals in each country raised fundamental questions over what kind of security services the public wanted. In the UK the various scandals have made governments simply try and make it harder for people to know what's really going on.

Norton-Taylor puts his faith in Parliament. He suggests a select committee, an Inspector General appointed by all parties, the repeal of the

Official Secrets Act and amendments to the Data Protection and Interception of Communication Acts. He also recommends a Freedom of Information Act. Nothing really new here. However, there is perhaps too much faith put in our MPs.

Certainly there are several honourable members who have consistently questioned the activities of MI5 etc, but the majority are too bound up in the system they are supposed to regulate. The strictures which Norton-Taylor suggests would allow the Special Branch to carry on as they do in any industrial dispute, political rally, meeting etc.

Phil Chamberlain

In April, *Race & Class* published *Why Beggars must be choosers* - Bill Branche's hard-hitting analysis of 'One World 90', the week long TV blitz on environmental crisis and Third World poverty. Branche's critique focuses on the week's centrepiece, the major drama, 'The March', which features African refugees and victims of drought trekking to Europe in their thousands under the slogan 'Watch us die in your streets'.

Copies of the magazine are available from: the Institute of Race Relations, 2/6 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HS, UK; price: £2.50.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I am not surprised that there has been a reaction to CPBF's support for Dawn Primarolo's bill on the Location of Pornography. I hope this will not stop you supporting efforts to curtail this form of sexual harassment.

Ian Vine's letter was particularly silly — there is no such thing as absolute freedom: my freedom to play my stereo full-blast all night impinges on your freedom to sleep — and offensive: no-one is proposing that 'publishing or receiving information' be made illegal, only that it be done in restricted places.

'Feminists against Censorship' are quite illogical to quote lesbian erotica as being affected: this is censored now by W H Smith etc! Nor is it 'semantic juggling' to differentiate between banning material

completely and banning its sale in certain places.

If it leads to 'self-censorship' by pornographers (highly unlikely, I would have thought) would that be a tragedy?

There are several important points which need to be borne in mind:

- (1) most women find the current blatant displays of pornography offensive;
- (2) pornography is used as sexual harassment, e.g. to keep women out of "men only" clubs, factories, etc;
- (3) no other group than women is told legislation is impossible because of the reactionary nature of judges etc.

No-one suggests we pass a law and then all our problems are solved. But for our opponents to say no solution is possible is not acceptable. Women have put up for a long time

with having demands marginalised. One day, men will realise that women's right to freedom for sexual harassment is as important as (say) men's right to join a trade union. But I'm not holding my breath. In the meantime, since threats seem to be the order of the day, my continuing membership of CPBF depends on it going on supporting efforts to create a safer environment for women.

Everyone supports some censorship: e.g. of material likely to incite racial hatred, or child porn, or porn involving mutilation and torture. So let's not have any more nonsense about the 'freedom' to read such things.

Yours sincerely
Dorothy Macedo

Dear Editor

As any Rape Crisis Centre can confirm, so many sexual crimes go unreported that research studies can never give an accurate or whole picture about the relationship between por-

nography and violence. But this does not stop people using them.

For every study people like Feminists Against Censorship and Ian Vine (*Free Press* No 58) can cite in support of their stance against anti-pornography legislation the anti-pornographers can cite another to verify their own point of view.

In the absence of any 'proof' that ALL sides can agree on, our ordinary citizens can only rely on the personal testimonies of people (when they are prepared to go public) who have been sexually molested by someone who was a user of pornography, to help us decide whether or not to support anti-pornography legislation.

This kind of 'subjective' experience is far more 'true' to me than a thousand 'objective' studies producing a 'null correlation' between pornography and sexual violence.

Yours sincerely
M Saunders (Mrs)

Sub-group relaunch

On Tuesday 5 June the CPBF organised a meeting under the title 'Changing Media for Lesbians and Gay Men', co-sponsored by the *Pink Paper*. It was designed not only to discuss the press and gay issues but to re-launch the CPBF lesbian and gay sub-group. In both respects the meeting was a success. About 40 people turned up and a quarter of those expressed definite interest in the sub-group.

James Baaden, Aids officer for Hammersmith and Fulham, kicked off the meeting by talking about the disturbing trends in reporting Aids. Firstly, by continuing to report it simply as a homosexual/drug takers disease contrary to medical fact. Secondly, by villifying those who have recently died of Aids.

Femi Otitoju, chair of the Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, then spoke about her personal experiences of media distortion with the GLC and Haringay L&G unit. She remembered how her friends were

continually having to translate news items to discover what she was up to. 'Houses for Gays Only' translated as 'someone once mentioned housing at a meeting somewhere'.

Terry Sanderson, media correspondent for *Gay Times* then spoke. He recently had a complaint against *The Sun* upheld by the Press Council over the use of the word 'poof' and 'poofers'. He showed the value of persistence in challenging abusive and inflammatory articles in the press and on TV.

After the speeches Alison Dilly, chairing, threw it open to the floor. In the next hour we touched on right of reply, to legislate or not to legislate, the law of libel, the Press Council, the gay press, effective complaints, provoking responses and damning the consequences.

There is obviously a need for a CPBF sub-group. If members wish to be involved then please contact the CPBF main office.

Phil Chamberlain



"I can't tell you what a relief it is to finally get a magazine that is about and for REAL women!"

"Finding you on my door mat each month never fails to cheer me up."

"I'd like to thank you for a magazine which is open, critical, honest and enjoyable to read."

EVERYWOMAN:
£1.20 monthly in good newsagents and bookshops. You can place your order in any newsagent.

NEWS • COMMENT • EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
ENVIRONMENT • JOBS • TRAINING • HEALTH
THE ARTS • NEW BOOKS • SHORT STORY
RELATIONSHIPS • FOOD • HUMOUR

THE current affairs magazine FOR women BY women

Subscribe: organisations £22, individuals £14 for one year (plus one extra issue free). £8 for 6-month gift/trial subscription.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

.....

..... Postcode

(Cheque/PO with order, payable to Everywoman)
Return to Everywoman, FREEPOST, London N1 8BR

CF

CAMPAIGN FOR PRESS & BROADCASTING FREEDOM

incorporating the Campaign Against Racism in the Media & the Television Users Group

Office Tel: 071 923 3671 (24 hours)
Fax: 071 923 3672

NATIONAL COMMITTEE 1990/91

- CHAIR - TONY LENNON
- DEPUTY - KATHY DARBY
- SECRETARY - TOM O'MALLEY
- TREASURER - JOHN BECK
- M'SHIP STY - STEVEN GRAY
- EDITOR F.P. - SIMON COLLINGS
- YOSSI BAL, CAROLE BEAMANT, GAIL CHESTER, OWEN GEURIN, BRUCE HANLIN, JON HARDY, MIKE HICKS, PAT INGRAM, MIKE JEMPSOM, SUE JOHNSTONE, HELEN KUTTNER, T. MCDAID, LIONEL MORRISON, WENDY MOORE, GILES OAKLEY, ALF PARISH, JULIAN PETLEY, ANN POINTON, LINDA QUINN, EVELYN REID, TERESA STRATFORD, GRANVILLE WILLIAMS, HUGH STANNERS

The CPBF will be holding a number of public meetings at the TUC and party conferences this year. Together they are aimed at developing a programme of media reform for the 1990s. These meetings are open to everyone and you are warmly invited to attend.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

Time to Know: Censorship, Media Freedom and the Unions

Chair: Tony Lennon (National Chair CPBF)
Speakers include Harry Conroy (General Secretary National Union of Journalists), Tony Hearn (Gen. Sec. Broadcasting and Entertainment Trades Alliance) and producer Cahill McLaughlin who will screen 16 Dead - commissioned by Channel 4 but never screened, this is a harrowing account of innocent people who died after being hit by plastic bullets in the north of Ireland.
Tuesday 4 September 7.30p.m.

YOUR DAILY DOSE: RACISM AND THE SUN

By Chris Searle

The Sun's racism examined, analysed and exposed. Detailed indictment of the way concentration of ownership debases media standards
Published by CPBF, £5.00

Your daily dose: racism and THE SUN



Claremont Hotel, 270 North Promenade, Blackpool.

CPBF/SLD TRADE UNIONISTS

Civil Rights and Media Freedom
Chair: Janice Turner (Chair SLD TUs)
Speakers include Harry Conroy (Gen. Sec. NUJ), Tudor Gates (President Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians), Jim Wallace M.P. (SLD Employment spokesperson), Granville Williams (CPBF)
Sunday 16 September 6.15p.m.
Assembly Room, St. John's Church, Church Street, Blackpool.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Black and Blue: Black People, the Police and the Media

Chair: Tony Lennon (CPBF)
Speakers include: Nisa Ali (NUJ), Broadwater Farm Defence Committee, Bernie Grant M.P., Martha Osamor (Tottenham Law Centre), Marc Wadsworth (TV journalist/NUJ).
Sunday 30 September 3p.m.
New Clifton Hotel, Promenade/Talbot Square, Blackpool.

Changing the News: The Media in the Nineties

Chair: Tony Lennon (CPBF)
Speakers include: Branda Dean (Gen. Sec. Society of Graphical and Allied Trades), Alf Parrish (Nat. Sec. National Graphical Association), Mark Fisher M.P. (Labour Arts

spokesperson), Tony Benn M.P.
Thursday 4 October 12.45p.m.
New Clifton Hotel, Promenade/Talbot Square, Blackpool.

RECENT MEETINGS

The Campaign recently organised two successful meetings at the House of Commons, the first on TV Marti, the second on pornography.

The TV Marti meeting took place on 21 June. It was concerned with the US beaming hostile TV programmes into CUBA on airwaves already used by Cuban TV. Speakers included George Galloway, MP, Bill Bowering, Chair of Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers and Roberto de Armas, First Secretary of the Cuban Embassy.

The meeting on pornography took place on 10 July. It discussed the Bill of Location and the Off the Shelf Campaign. Speakers included Dawn Primarolo, MP, Barbara Rodgers, from Campaign Against Pornography and Catherine Itzin, from Campaign Against Pornography and Censorship.

Edited for the National Council by SIMON COLLINGS. Copy for Free Press 60 should arrive at the office not later than 24 August 1990.

<p>JOIN CPBF HERE</p>	<p>PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX</p>	<p>a) Individual Membership £10 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Affiliation by organisation</p>
	<p>b) Unwaged £5 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>f) Less than 500 members £15 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>c) Household (2 copies of FREE PRESS) £15 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>g) 500 to 1,000 members £20 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>d) Supporting membership (includes FREE CPBF publications) £20 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>h) 1,000 to 10,000 members £40 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>e) Institutional membership (includes 10 copies of FREE PRESS, plus FREE CPBF publications) £20 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>i) 10,000 to 50,000 members £95 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
	<p>j) 50,000 to 100,000 members £185 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
	<p>k) Over 100,000 members £375 p.a. <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
	<p><u>I/We want to join the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom and enclose a cheque/PO for £</u></p>		
	<p>Name/s:</p>		
	<p>Organisation (if applicable):</p>		
	<p>Secretary (if different from above):</p>		
	<p>Address:</p>		
	<p>Postcode: Tel:</p>		
	<p>Where did you obtain your copy of FREE PRESS?</p>		