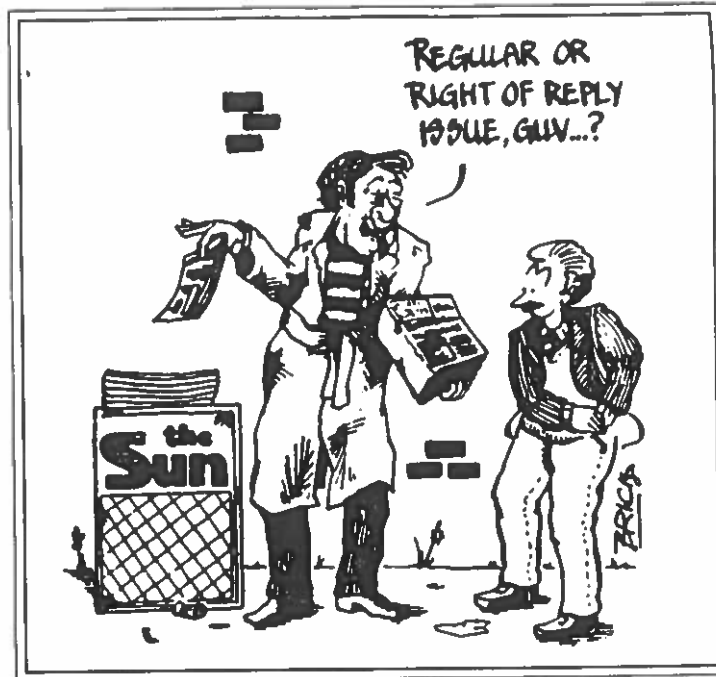


FREE PRESS

JOURNAL OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR PRESS
AND BROADCASTING FREEDOM
No.70 Price 40p July/August 1992



Autumn campaigns for everyone

*A chance for
CPBF members
to change the face
of the media*

Two Private Members Bills on key CPBF issues are to be launched this Autumn.

Clive Soley's Freedom and Responsibility of the Press Bill defends press freedom and offers people the right of reply, and Mark Fisher's Right to Know Bill is the most comprehensive freedom of information measure ever placed before Parliament.

Both will receive their Second Readings in the New Year, and both MPs are planning Autumn campaigns to promote their bills - assisted by the CPBF.

Members are urged to make the Bills a focus for local activity in the coming months.

Full details of the Bills appear inside. Copies and campaign leaflets should be available soon.

In the meantime, CPBF members are urged to contact the MPs and ask them to support both measures by turning up for the Second Reading debates and voting them through to the Committee Stage.

AUTUMN CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

1. Ask your local MP to support both Bills and attend the Second Reading debates to vote for them
Press Freedom & Responsibility Bill - Fri 29 January 1993
Right to Know Bill - Fri 19 February 1993
2. Write to John Major, Kenneth Clarke, and David Mellor calling for Government support for both measures
3. Raise the issues by writing to local and national newspapers
4. Organise Public Meetings in your area - given sufficient notice the CPBF will provide speakers, including sympathetic MPs
5. Order copies of campaign leaflets for both Bills for distribution in your area.
5. Send donations and raise funds to assist the CPBF with printing, travel and other costs
6. **URGENT** Clive Soley needs documented cases of inaccurate local and national news reporting for Parliamentary Hearings this Autumn.
Send examples to him at House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Foot-in-mouth Greavsie embarrasses the ITC

The Independent Television Commission has responded indignantly to comments from the CPBF about its handling of a complaint against TV presenter and ex-soccer star Jimmy Greaves for an anti-Gay remark.

A member of the ITC's London Viewers' Consultative Council phoned in a complain after Greaves suggested on his prime-time LWT sports slot that colourful new strips for soccer referees could give rise to cries from the terraces of "Who's the poofster in the purple?"

In a written reply that begged more questions than it answered, Ann Nethercott from Programme Administration said: "Jimmy Greaves was trying to make a joke... I'm afraid (he) seems to be one of those people whose attempts at humour have an embarrassingly high failure rate, although he does undoubtedly have a fairly strong following..."

"Our overall conclusion is that the joke about the 'poof' did not work particularly well and it would probably be better if he had thought of something else: however the term is fairly innocuous these days, and we do not regard it as sufficiently serious to take any action with LWT."

Responding with heavy irony, the CPBF asked whom the ITC had consulted before reaching this conclusion, and challenged them to publish a list of 'fairly innocuous' derogatory

terms (as opposed to the truly offensive), to save those who might be offended from wasting their time with complaints.

Robin Duval, ITC Deputy Director of Programmes, wrote back saying Ms Nethercott's letter was "a friendly exchange between people on first name terms".

He claimed that the complainant was "not dissatisfied" with her reply, and stressed that ITC guidelines emphasise sensitivity about "humour involving minorities", but that context determines how "innocuous or otherwise" a remark might be.

"In this case, the context was not one likely to cause particular offence," he said.

"The ITC seems to have missed the point," the complainant told CPBF.

"Whether or not I am satisfied with the reply is irrelevant. It is part of my function to alert the ITC to things which might cause offence. I have Gay friends, and they certainly didn't see it the way the ITC did."

He hoped that CPBF would take it up with more appropriate authorities. We have passed the file to the Gay Press.



My reasons for promoting the Freedom and Responsibility of the Press Bill stem from growing concern during the 1980s at a number of disturbing developments in the Press which I know the CPBF shares.

We have seen an increasingly monopolistic tendency in ownership patterns within the Press, extending into multi-media cross ownership driven by transnational corporations.

At the same time we have witnessed an increased tendency to marginalise, trivialise and demonise dissent - whether in coverage of Tony Benn and other spokespeople of the left in national and local politics and the trades union movement, or in the representation of social groupings like Gays and Lesbians, or those who have dared to challenge the inadequacies of the legal system.

It has been particularly worrying to see how campaigners for the Winchester 3, the Guildford 4, the Birmingham 6 and the Broadwater Farm defendants were presented as mad or bad by the Press. Their subsequent vindication puts the Press in the dock.

We have seen similar techniques employed to present views as news, with information doctored to encourage discrimination against the homeless and unemployed as feckless wasters.

In each General Election campaign we have seen the *Sun*, *Mail*, *Express* and the *London Evening Standard* using their influence to determine the outcome. Earlier this year inaccurate and false stories on race, immigration and health issues were used to

BBC CHARTER

The BBC Charter comes up for renewal in 1996 but it is unlikely that the present government will be consulting with the public in the manner of say, the Annan Committee.

The real fear is that by the time the Charter comes up for renewal the BBC will have already been changed beyond recognition and there will be little left to debate about.

Initiatives like Producer Choice and the on-going staff redundancies - implemented without any consultation whatsoever - have pre-empted any public debate about the future of the BBC.

All the more important, therefore, that concerns about the BBC are aired now.

The Voice of the Listener and Viewer has already started a series of debates on the future of the BBC. These will run through the autumn under the title of 'The BBC Charter: Letting the Audience Speak'. Full details will not be completely finalised until the return of Parliament.

Kathy Darby

For further details contact:
Voice of the Listener and Viewer,
101 King's Drive, Gravesend,
Kent DA12 5BQ. Tel: 0474 352 835.

No Press Freedom without Responsibility

Clive Soley's Private Member's Bill will offer important reforms of the Press for both public and journalists.

The Bill, drafted by the CPBF, has two main aims.

It will establish a statutory right to correct factual inaccuracies in newspapers. This is the only statutory obligation on newspapers put forward in the bill. An Independent Press Authority (IPA) will have powers to enforce this right.

inflare base instincts against Labour.

The display of tabloid front pages in the last issue of *Free Press* brought home to me, once again, just how virulent and unfair these papers were.

Obviously it concerns me that they were being unfair to the Labour Party - but more importantly they were being unfair to the electorate, by distorting information and clouding political issues with falsehood.

That shows little respect for their readers, or for the principles of British democracy that they so often champion when criticising undemocratic regimes abroad.

I believe passionately in democracy and freedom of the Press. But both require responsible use of power.

My Bill is designed to strengthen the freedom of the Press, and to provide a permanent forum, through annual reports to Parliament by the Independent Press Authority, for discussion about how to protect the Press from undue interference.

However, it also emphasises that if the Press are to be accorded the status they believe they deserve, they must earn it by respecting the right of their readers to be able to trust what they read.

My Bill will not stop newspapers from publishing biased editorials, or any other expression of free speech. It merely demands that when facts are presented to the public by the Press, they must be able to demonstrate that they are verifiable.

If they get wrong they must be willing to put right the false impression they have created. This should enhance the status of the Press, which has fallen along with journalistic standards. Or haven't they noticed?

At the same time the IPA will be given non-statutory duties to monitor newspapers and issue guidance on both press conduct and press freedom issues.

The Bill will not attempt to tackle issues of impartiality in newspaper reporting, or concerns about privacy.

How will the right to a correction work? Any member of the public who is affected by a factual inaccuracy in any newspaper will automatically be entitled to the right to have the inaccuracy corrected.

This is the same principle as the Right of Reply in the last two Private Members' Bills supported by the CPBF, but the term has been dropped this time because it has been wilfully misinterpreted by the Press to mean a charter for anyone to have a say about anything they want.

Under the terms of the Bill, a correction should be given similar prominence to the original story, and must be printed in the next possible edition of the newspaper.

It should be long enough just to correct the incorrect material in the original. The principles will apply to all editorial material, including headlines.

In practice there would be three stages to enforcing the right to a correction.

Firstly, an aggrieved reader would approach a newspaper direct and request a correction. Since most editors profess to support a policy of prompt corrections already, it is hoped the bulk of complaints can be dealt with at this first stage.

The reader could seek advice and support from a Press Complaints Advisor employed by the IPA.

If this conciliation route fails, the next stage is a formal complaint to the IPA. The Authority will hear evidence from both the complainant and the newspaper and come

Inaccuracy and unfairness remain the targets of the new right of reply bill, says CLIVE SOLEY MP (left) and below WENDY MOORE describes the Bill in more detail

to a decision over the accuracy of the article concerned.

If the IPA agrees that there has been an inaccuracy published, it will order a correction to be printed and will have statutory powers to make such an order.

However, if a newspaper still refuses or fails to publish a correction ordered by the IPA, the Authority may enforce its demand by going to the High Court.

Failure then to print the correction would render the newspaper guilty of contempt of court. The precise formulation of this legal remedy is still under discussion.

The IPA's non-statutory duties will include investigating concerns about press freedom and advising Parliament on measures to protect such freedom.

At the same time it will have a duty to investigate and monitor ethical standards of newspapers and will produce a recommended Code of Conduct for journalists.

It will be able to issue advice and guidance on professional practice.

It will also look into ownership and control of the media, access to information, restrictions on reporting, distribution of newspapers and the training and education of journalists.

The IPA will be an independent body, funded from the public purse rather than the newspaper industry - one of the major weaknesses of both the Press Council and the Press Complaints Commission.

Its members will be expected to reflect and represent the diversity of society. The precise means by which its members should be appointed is still under discussion. The Campaign is pressing that it should be as democratic and accountable as possible.

Any suggestions, particularly examples of systems that have worked successfully in other public bodies, are welcomed.

The CPBF has a special working party dealing with the Bill, which is represented on the Steering Group established by Clive Soley to advise him on campaigning priorities and the content of the Bill.

A process of elimination

Mike Jempson explains what got left out of the Soley Bill, and why

Nobody is sure who will buy the next round in the Last Chance Saloon.

Fun-loving David Mellor has so far brazened out his extra-ministerial activities, and the hacks have justified their interest in his bedroom farce by claiming it was interfering with his ability to promote the Arts (and tether the media).

Sherriff Major may have backed down from his whispered threat to back a Privacy Law, but with Marshall Calcutt girding his loins in the backroom, and Mellor licking his wounds in the boudoir, the Press pack have begun muttering into their beer about who to go for next if they are to stay at liberty.

They may have Clive Soley in their sights because he has dreamed up a Press Freedom and Responsibility Bill, backed by the CPBF gang.

He will be no easy target. He has been quick to quash rumours that a Privacy gag could be added to the Bill, and has come out against an Impartiality clause.

CPBF is working closely with him, preparing briefing papers to explain why both privacy and impartiality, among other tempting regulatory measures, should be kept off the statute book.

False reproaches about invasion of privacy were levelled at the Press for their prurient interest in the marital problems of the Royals, but most stories were based upon *the publication of a book*.

Whatever your feelings about the book or its author, this was legitimate basis for press comment.

When politicians got up in arms about the revelation that Virginia Bottomley had briefly been a teenage unmarried mother (shock, horror) they were out of order to claim invasion of privacy.

While promulgating her own proposals to deal with unmarried teenage mothers, the least she could have done was declare her own experience of the predicament.

The problem with privacy laws is that they will inevitably be employed by those

best able financially to defend themselves. And the powerful already have a panoply of defence mechanisms (including libel laws and the use of gagging writs) to cover their embarrassments.

This Bill is especially concerned with empowering those who don't have money and status to protect them from abuse by the Press.

Like privacy, impartiality is often a matter of opinion, and the Bill concerns itself with *factual* inaccuracies, where there is less room for debate.

The term is most often used by those who dislike the analysis applied to information that concerns them. In short, they have no problem when the media is biased in their favour, but object when it is not.

The overwhelming emphasis of such demands for impartiality is that the *status quo* should be upheld against alternative versions of reality.

An impartiality clause in the Bill would be unworkable and inappropriate, not least because at present the private ownership of the Press is the only means by which freedom of expression is acknowledged in Britain.

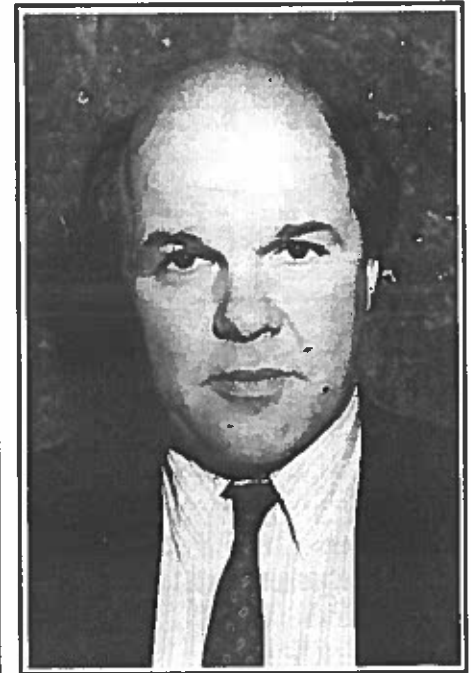
The problem of course is that few people can afford to own a newspaper, and those that do tend to reflect a comfortable, inadequate and monolithic view of the society they serve. An impartiality clause would not guarantee the diversity of expression the Press so sadly lacks.

The Soley Bill aims to improve genuine journalistic standards by defending press freedom, and simply requires the Press to shoulder their responsibility to inform readers by relying on verifiable facts when formulating their opinions.

If the facts are wrong we can trust neither their analysis nor ours.

Significantly press comment on the Bill so far has concentrated on fear that it is about both privacy and impartiality.

If the Press Gang decide to have a show-down over this one, they could end up shooting themselves in the foot.



Ought we to know about breaches of safety on board ships following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster? Or the results of British Rail fire inspections following Kings Cross? Or how new car models perform in health and safety tests?

At the moment we don't know any of these things, and that lack leaves us without power, as consumers or as a society.

My Right to Know Bill is based on the belief that we need to cut away both government and corporate secrecy to become a more open, just and efficient society.

Access to information is essential if we are to make good decisions.

I welcome the Prime Minister's remarks about blowing away the cobwebs of secrecy, but the government's recently acquired interest in this issue is at odds with its record, and that of many previous governments.

Most MPs are all too familiar with the reply to written Parliamentary Questions which begins either "this information is no longer collected centrally" or "is too expensive to collect".

Cost cutting and privatisation mean this ministerial practice is on the increase.

The government seems to be reducing the amount of public information available.

And the method the government is employing to widen access to what information is available, is flawed.

William Waldegrave has embarked on a cumbersome and bureaucratic process of identifying all existing restrictions on infor-

With a Cabinet Minister promising a White Paper on disclosure, and ministers saying information will be made public unless there are "pressing public interest reasons for secrecy", do we still need a Freedom of Information Act?
Mark Fisher MP (left) thinks we do, & below **Maurice Frankel** of the Campaign for Freedom of Information outlines the purpose of a new Bill to eradicate "the British disease" of secrecy

Our Right to Know

Mr Waldegrave, the Citizens' Charter Minister says that his approach will do "at least as well and perhaps better" than a Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.

We may indeed see more openness, but the shortcomings of the new voluntary approach only underlines the case for FOI.

An FOI Act would be *enforceable*, with the grounds for withholding information specified. Anyone refused information un-

mation and trying to dismantle them one by one. It is doomed to failure.

It accepts the existence of government limitations on information unless specifically eliminated.

By contrast, my Right to Know Bill starts from an assumption in favour of disclosure and imposes limits only where it is essential to enforce the law, protect individual privacy or ensure national security.

It has its origins in various pieces of legislation presented over the past 15 years by Clement Freud, Jeff Rooker, and more recently Archie Kirkwood and Robin Corbett.

Unlike their bills it proposes amendments of the Companies Act to bring the private sector within the remit of legislation - widening the flow of information should not be a concern solely of government.

I am convinced that the Bill will receive support from all over the UK, particularly from organisations and individuals who value information and who are concerned about limitations on access to public information and the increase in personal information on public files.

I hope it will also be supported from all sides of the House, and even from an administration supposedly committed to reducing government secrecy.

Having worked closely with the CPBF over the years, I value the support it is giving to my Bill.

Leaflets giving details will be available this autumn, but CPBF members could start the ball rolling by asking their MPs to attend the Second Reading on Friday 19 February 1993 and vote for the Right to Know.

reasonably could appeal to an independent Commissioner and Tribunal with powers to compel disclosure.

Under the Government's proposals ministers would still be free to withhold information whenever it suits them, free from challenge. Will much be revealed about mistakes, injustices, policies that aren't working, or arbitrary use of power?

FOI would provide a *right* to all official information, unless government can prove that it is exempt. But ministers are saying that they will disclose only "useful", "usable", and "well-prepared" information. They will decide what is fit for release.

FOI legislation would be *comprehensive*, reaching parts of government that resist a voluntary approach, and removing the need for an endless and exhausting series of separate investigations into the pros and cons of disclosure with each new request.

And it would be *permanent*. A voluntary policy can lapse if government priorities change, a policy proves unpopular in Whitehall, or if ministers most committed to it move on.

The 1977 Croham Directive illustrates this. Introduced by the former head of the Civil Service, it promised the release of background papers to policy decisions but was effectively abandoned within a couple of years. Lord Croham has since announced that he favours an FOI Act!

MPs get the chance to vote for FOI next February, when The Right To Know Bill, introduced by Mark Fisher, will be debated.

Supported by CFOI, CPBF, Charter 88, Article 19 and Liberty (NCCL), the Bill has four main parts.

The first provides a right to information held by government and public authorities. Information could be withheld only if disclosure would cause 'significant' dam-

age to specified interests such as defence, international relations, the lawful activities of the security services, law enforcement, privacy and genuine trade secrets.

Even exempt information could be disclosed if there had been an abuse of power, negligence, or danger to public safety, and if the public interest in openness outweighed any harm that could be done by disclosure.

To avoid the cost and delay of the courts the Bill would be enforced by a Commissioner and Tribunal - as under the Data Protection Act - with full power to order disclosure.

It will also repeal the 1989 Official Secrets Act. Out would go 'absolute' offences, which make some disclosures automatic offences without any proof that they did harm. In come two new defences - that information had previously been published or that disclosure was in the public interest.

The private sector is also caught. Employees would have the right to see their employment records - including those of 'blacklisting' organisations like the Economic League.

And the Companies Act would be amended to require companies to publish much more in their annual reports, including details of enforcement action taken against them under laws on safety, the environment, consumer protection, discrimination and employee rights.

A FOI Act would be a powerful tool for change, making it more difficult for those in power to conceal their mistakes. It would help expose complacency and injustice and empower individuals in their dealings with bureaucracy.

We would not longer have to take it on trust that our interests were being looked after - we could check the facts ourselves.

Citizens in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France, Sweden and the USA already have the right to know what their governments are doing. Its time we had that right too.

Day of programmes by women planned
BROADCASTING CAMPAIGN
 International Women's Day 1993

Women in the independent sector of broadcasting: producer's, writers, directors, film and video technicians and trainers are developing a series of programming proposals to the BBC, Channel 4 and the ITV network to celebrate International Women's Day.

The Women's Broadcasting Committee aims to have the day devoted to broadcasting a range of programmes made by, and for women.

This direct action is designed to redress the imbalance of women's representation both in front of and behind the camera.

At present women make up only 5% of technicians in camera grades, 27% of producers, producer/directors and directors. On the other hand, 74% of wardrobe, 79% of make-up and 89% of production assistants are women.

The results of a survey conducted by the WBC during the summer of 1992 which looked at women's participation in programme making, and monitored a full week of television, will be presented in the autumn at a series of press conferences at the party political conferences and the House of Commons.

The WBC hope that women in the industry, members of broadcasting institutions, women's organisations, trade unions and political groups will become involved and lend their support to the initiative.

If you would like more information and leaflets on the campaign contact: Women's Broadcasting Committee, London Women's Centre, 4 Wild Court, London WC2B 5AU.

WHAT A SHIT !

MAXWELL: The Outsider
 by Tom Bower
 Mandarin pb 1992 £5.99

Tom Bower's complete and unexpurgated life of Maxwell has a chilling introduction that catalogues Cap'n Bob's efforts to keep the book off the bookstalls. They betray the mean mind of a paranoid, with more power and money than is good for him - or anyone else.

By the end Maxwell's power and money, like his mental state, were essentially illusory. A crook about to be found out, a blusterer lost for words, a magnate without friends - he would be a pathetic character if his grasping ambition had not blighted so many lives, before and after his death.

A literally monstrous figure, Maxwell symbolises the corruption of the money markets. He only made it to the big time because his corrupt cronies in the City allowed him to. His bankers and business partners were either too craven or too greedy to call his bluff.

In the eyes of his peers his real crime was his indiscretion - by wearing his greed and his ego on his sleeve, Maxwell put them all at risk of being found out.

It is too simple to say that Maxwell's real fault lay in his personality. It may explain his unpopularity among the smoother operators, but it didn't prevent him amassing immense wealth for his family by lying and cheating, with little thought for his workers. He was just one more pig at the trough.

A bargain at £5.99, this hefty volume offers an intriguing glimpse of the workings of Big Business - and how accountants massage

figures to tell whatever story their paymasters require.

It is not so much a lesson in the need for more scrupulous regulation of the City, more a plea for its abolition.

Having ploughed through the incredible detail that Bower has assembled, you are left with an overwhelming sense that simple old slogans about the evils of capitalism deserve a new lease of life. Delving into the cesspit may have scientific value, but it still looks and smells like shit.

Few of Maxwell's associates emerge with much credit - lawyers, bankers, accountants, journalists, and the Labour Party.

The lesson of Bower's biography of Maxwell is that the bully and the braggart must be challenged at every turn. That means taking risks - as the Pergamon strikers have so bravely demonstrated.

His book is evidence of the value of investigative journalism, and a reminder that we shall always need an awkward squad ferreting away for the answers the powerful wish to hide - not least about how they are managing your pension fund.

Mike Jempson

European media give refugees a raw deal

Analysis of media coverage of the Gulf War has tended to emphasis the media's seduction by the technology of death, and their manipulation by the Generals.

But a conference in Bonn to which the CPBF contributed earlier this year, organised by volunteers working with refugees throughout Europe, highlighted another aspect which has far-reaching implications for Fortress Europe.

Reporting of the Gulf War, with its crude attempts to demonise those aspects of Islam

deemed unacceptable by the West, has put even further at risk the well-being of thousands of non-European refugees who already live by 'grace and favour' as second class citizens, in France and Germany especially.

The rise in racist attacks, protests against the building of mosques, and restrictions on the

movement of refugees were all seen as a direct consequence of the Gulf War and post-Soviet Union realignment.

The conference revealed the extent of our ignorance about the worsening position of refugees in Europe (east and west), and their ignorance of the very different structures that exist in this corner of the EC.

Our contribution opened a few eyes to the way censorship rules operated, and the duplicity of the politicians involved.

Perhaps more usefully, we were able to explain how to make the most of the media -

something few migrant workers' and refugee groups seemed to have considered.

The Asylum Bill, delayed by the General Election, but scheduled to return in the next session of Parliament, is Britain's first step backwards towards the rest of Europe.

Empowering refugees with techniques to gain access to the media may be one way of countering the prejudice that populist politicians and the media are stirring up against them.

Mike Jempson & Pat Healy

Republican Prisoners Speak Out

To those who don't know us, Irish republican prisoners may well be regarded in the light the media chooses to cast upon us - violent men and women who are a danger to 'society'.

Most of those who do know us - and I include friends and enemies - will testify to the contrary. To those interested in finding out for themselves I recommend *The Captive Voice*.

An Glor Gafa was established in 1989 as an outlet for the creative talents of the political prisoners. A quarterly magazine of articles, art, and poetry from prisoners in Ireland, England, the Continent and America, it is edited here in Long Kesh.

Its contents express views and feelings which have developed in individuals and in the republican prison community throughout a long period of struggle. Topics vary from environmental issues to human relationships, with a fair amount of satire thrown in.

Poetry and prose had never really been a public aspect of the republican prisoner's life, perhaps with the exception of Bobby Sands' writings.

It can take a lot of courage for a person to throw open his or her thoughts and personality to public scrutiny, and it was discovered a number of years ago that the cells of Long Kesh were full of closet poets too shy to come out into the open.

That realisation gave us the impetus to set up poetry groups, which led in turn to more openness and the development of creative writing. *The Captive Voice* grew out of that creativity and has proved an ideal conduit for our ideas and opinions.

A browse through *The Captive Voice* may not convince everyone of our genuine concern for the future, of the legitimacy of our ideals, of our humanity, but it might cause people to stop and think before blindly accepting the propaganda of media stereotyping and political bigotry, which censors the hopes and aspirations of all republican people.

Terry Boyle

For more information about *The Captive Voice* contact Brian Campbell (160),
H Blocks, Long Kesh, Co. Antrim

Mix reactions to first use of PTA against the media

PTA ruling against C4 a 'victory for journalists'

The recent High Court decision to impose a one-off £75,000 fine against C4 and Box Productions for refusing to identify the source of allegations about collusion between police, security services and Unionist paramilitaries has been hailed as a victory for journalists.

Speaking after the hearing, Sean McPhilemy, producer of 'The Committee' broadcast by C4 last year, said "The important thing is we've never named our source and in that sense its a victory."

The case was brought under Section 7 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the first time it has been used in this way, with the prosecution demanding sequestration of C4's assets for failure to name their source.

Lord Justice Woolf saw little point however, acknowledging that he could punish the offenders but not force them to comply.

The NUJ commented that the law had "come up against something stronger than

itself - the good journalist's duty to protect confidential sources".

Putting so positive a gloss on a court ruling that found against the broadcasters, and implied a link between investigative journalism and sedition, suggests renewed confidence among journalists.

The acid test will be whether C4, C3 and the BBC now commission more investigative current affairs programmes about the north of Ireland, but their compliance with the broadcasting ban offers little hope.

The UDA ban signifies a new toughness in Britain's approach to security, and the C4 decision is more likely to be read as a warning to journalists to keep out.

Renewed calls for lifting of Irish censorship rules

RTE ban on SF union official 'unconstitutional'

Wesley Boyd, Director of Broadcasting with Ireland's state broadcasting service RTE, has joined NUJ and CPBF calls for the scrapping of Section 31 of the Irish Broadcasting Act following a recent court case.

He described Sec 31, introduced by Conor Cruise O'Brien when Minister of Communications to keep Sinn Fein off the airwaves, as "a blunt instrument which made it difficult to give a true picture of events".

Boyd was speaking after the Dublin High Court ruled that RTE's decision not to broadcast interviews about an industrial dispute with Bakers' Union official Larry O'Toole, a Sinn Fein member, was "bad in law, erroneous, based on a misconstruction of the law and null and void."

RTE immediately announced that they would appeal, and refused to carry radio and TV interviews with O'Toole about his successful legal challenge.

He is now demanding to know why they are continuing to discriminate against him.

Two years ago Larry O'Toole was banned from speaking on air about a major dispute involving workers at the Gateaux cake and bread factory in Dublin, who subsequently lost their jobs.

He challenged the legality of the ban as he was speaking as a union official not representing Sinn Fein.

Justice O'Hanlon found that RTE had breached Irish constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, and failed in its obligation to be fair and impartial. He said that RTE should not continue to operate self-censorship by misinterpreting Sec 31.

Sinn Fein welcomed the ruling as a victory for free speech and "an indictment of RTE's extension of Section 31 political censorship for 20 years."

8. NOTICES

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NATIONAL COUNCIL
1992-1993**

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NUJ -
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Vi Scotter, Mike Tucker
WOMENS SECTION -
Helen Kuttner
INDIVIDUALS -
Jeremy Gardner, Jon Hardy,
Martin Hughes, Ann Pointon,
Christian Wolmar

TUC Fringe Meetings

Monday 7 Sept 1 - 2 pm
Edward Suite, Claremont Hotel, Blackpool In association with Liberty
NO TV - NO COMMENT?
The media and the marginalisation of the trade union movement.
Speakers: Andrew Puddephat (Liberty) Mary Rossor (Morning Star)
Linda Quinn (CPBF) Chair: Tony Lennon (Chair, CPBF)

Tuesday 8 Sept 1 - 2 pm
Crescent Room, Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Supported by CFI, Article 19, Charter 88 & Liberty
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
TUC launch for Mark Fisher's Right to Know Bill.
Speakers: Mark Fisher MP Chair: Linda Quinn (CPBF)
Jake Ecclestone (NUJ)

Labour Party Conference Fringe Meetings

Tuesday 29 Sept 1 - 2 pm
Crescent Room, Claremont Hotel, Blackpool Supported by CFI, Article 19, Charter 88 & Liberty
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - WHO DECIDES?
Speakers: Mark Fisher MP Maurice Frankel (Campaign for Freedom of Information)
Francesca Klug (Liberty)

Tuesday 29 Sept 7.30 pm
Crescent Room, Claremont Hotel, Blackpool
ABSENT FACES, ABSENT VOICES
- the equal opportunities agenda and the media.
Speakers: Diane Abbott MP Dawn Primarolo MP
Isabel Appio (Editor, The Weekly Journal) Jane Paul (Equality Officer, BECTU)

Wednesday 30 Sept 7.30 pm
Edward Suite, Claremont Hotel, Blackpool In association with Liberty
CLEANING UP AFTER THE MEDIA
- Are the tabloids a danger to democracy? Plus how to get a right of reply.
Speakers: David Hill (Labour Party Director of Campaigns & Communications)
Clive Soley MP Andrew Puddephat (Liberty)
Wendy Moore (NUJ) Chair: Granville Williams (CPBF)

APPEAL FOR DONATIONS

In the coming months it is vital that the CPBF organises strong campaigns around the two Private Members Bills discussed in this issue and builds awareness and support for the Bills amongst our members.
We will also be raising the issue of the renewal of the BBC Charter and responding to the latest Calcutt inquiry as well as monitoring the equal opportunities provisions of the new ITV franchise holders.
In order to build strong support for these measures we need to raise at least £10,000 to cover campaigning costs. We hope that you will be able to help by making a donation, however small. Please send any donations to the CPBF at the address below.

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If we want to join the CPBF and enclose a cheque/PO for £ FP70 E P

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