

JANE NORTH'S NEWS DIARY

A new expression has entered the lexicon of SOUTH AFRICAN OBSCENITIES "THE UPINGTON 14" were found guilty of MURDER having been deemed to share "COMMON PURPOSE" in the murder of a black municipal POLICEMAN....killer of a pregnant woman days before his death...having shot and badly wounded a small boy minutes before his own murder....it was not even established by the court that an elderly couple included in the 14 CONDEMNED, had been at the SCENE OF THE MURDERBRITISH JURIES have also BOOBED whilst WEIGHING the SCALES OF JUSTICE in the Libel action successfully brought by SONIA SUTCLIFFE....Both VICTIM'S FAMILIES and FREE SPEECH go down the PLUGHOLE in the British Courts who are more concerned with somebody's GOOD NAME!.....we certainly get our priorities right here.....



At the ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION they voted overwhelmingly to call on the Government to cut IMPORTS OF TOXIC WASTE....Fay Wilson GP from BRUM and Karl Fotes-Mayer a surgeon from WALSALL were sure there was a LINK between PATIENTS COMPLAINTS and LOCAL TOXIC

WASTE DUMPS....Other MIDLANDS GPs expressed concern that Britain was becoming "THE DUSTBIN OF THE WORLD"...As British Political Parties SCRABBLE to jump on the GREEN BANDWAGON they increasingly resemble TRAFFIC LIGHTS...

The DTI attempted to cut a SWATHE through bureaucracy by producing a BOOKLET to make themselves EASIER TO CONTACT called A Guide to Business.....Perhaps the DHSS could do the same.....I have always been FLUMMOXED by the British Public's reactions to the SEX LIVES of FOOTBALL MANAGERS AND PHYSIOTHERAPISTS....latest victim of the MORAL OUTRAGE is the allegedly adulterous BRIAN ROBSON, Manager of the English Football Team.....the TABLOIDS had a field day with tales of OFF-PITCH WIFE SWAPPING....Britain likes its SPORTING HEROES to be strictly MONOGAMOUS....its those VICTORIAN VALUES cropping up again.....

I N T R A Y

Puttnam vs Thatcher

Film director and CAMPAIGN FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL ENGLAND President David Puttnam has voiced environmentalists' major concern about Mrs Thatcher's green flirtations - that it could be "hype without commitment". CPRE's reputation as not just another Tory National Trust-type group is confirmed in another statement taken from its campaign magazine. Pointing to the fatal flaw in the EEC's environment policy, it calls for an EEC Habitats Directive that would aim to protect not only "special sites to be seen by the lucky few" but "the wider countryside" currently ravaged by EEC industry and agriculture policies. CPRE: 01-235 9481

Strong Medicine

The troubled state of the NHS is not simply the result of government hostility, argues Steven Iliffe in his new book, "Strong Medicine", but the result of serious flaws in the basic philosophy of the service. The author recommends, among other things, a shift in emphasis from institutional to community care, and from the cure of illnesses to their prevention, with greater accountability of the NHS to its users.

Publisher: Lawrence and Wishart. Price £5.95

Advocates

The CITIZEN'S ADVOCACY SERVICE (sic) has produced a new handbook for people running schemes to help those whose rights and wishes are being ignored, such as disabled people fighting for the right not to be institutionalised.

It is available from National Citizen Advocacy, 2 St Paul's St, London N1 2QR. Price: £6

I.L.O. Condemns U.K. Govn.

* SCEPTICISM ABROAD AS THATCHER GOVN. WITHDRAWS FROM CONVENTION

The government's threats during the rail strikes to introduce legislation to further curtail public sector employees' rights to strike will increase international scepticism over its attitude towards human rights.

The UK is a signatory to the International Labour Organisation's many conventions on human and employment rights. The ILO is an internationally recognised body which was set up along with the League of Nations under the Versailles Treaty in 1919. Like the League of Nations (now the UN) the ILO has no real power and its conventions do not have the force of law, but its membership of some 150 nations means that a government can flaunt the conventions only at the risk of losing international respectability.

At the end of April the ILO issued a statement claiming that the UK government had breached international employment conventions on no less than eight different counts. One of the most serious and flagrant violations relates to the government's treatment of workers at GCHQ.

In another case, the Teacher's Pay and Conditions Act - which abolished negotiating machinery for determining teachers' pay, was declared to be a breach of Convention 151 on labour relations in public services. In a

curious turn of phrase the government describes "negotiating" and decision-making as now being "unilateral".

The government's favorite means of avoiding trouble from the ILO is to make use of a loophole in the machinery of the conventions. If its deliberate flaunting of labour rights becomes too extreme it simply withdraws from the relevant convention. Thus, since GCHQ, it is no longer signatory to certain right to strike conventions. A government spokesman replying to the ILO's accusations concerning the Teacher's Pay Act said, in June last year, "... the government has full confidence in the impartiality and integrity of the ILO, but they are wrong in this particular case." He added that "... discussions with the Civil Service Unions would serve no useful purpose".

The 1988 Employment Act was found to be in breach of the requirements of Convention 87 as regards freedom of association. Most of this act came into force on July 26th last year.

Other attacks on workers' and trade unionists' rights have been presented as moves to give power back to grass roots trade unionists, or even as improvements in training opportunities. The Employment Training scheme, originally a low-paid training programme has been transformed by social security regulations into an American-style work-for-dole programme.

Deregulation has reduced employees' statutory rights, particularly for women, part-time workers and workers in small firms. According to one estimate the extension in the qualifying periods for unfair dismissal relating to small businesses has resulted in 300,000 women losing their employment rights under existing law.

Alex Barren

Cheap labour brings down the unemployment figures

