

# Nudge Nudge

Daily Express, Sunday Express, Daily Star chapel bulletin

National Union of Journalists

May 2002

## Wait for casual pay deal

Despite three meetings with the management, the chapel's call for a quick settlement of the casuals' pay claim has still not met with success.

Chapel officials, with help from NUJ general secretary Jeremy Dear and freelance organiser John Toner, have put forward various options for the management to consider.

But the management is worried about agreeing a deal without carefully considering the financial effect on the company which has become more reliant on casuals to get the papers out, following the sharp reduction in staffing levels.

On 23 April, NUJ representatives were informed at a meeting with management that no progress had been made on an acceptable minimum wage structure for casuals.

The management said this was because of the complex financial nature of payments to casuals. Management said they would continue working on their figures and will present their proposals to us before our next scheduled meeting with them on 9 May.

Chapel representatives expressed considerable disappointment at the delay.

Casuals at Ludgate House are looking for stability and security as

well as a fair rate for the job they do. It was expected that the management would have proposals to put forward which could be referred to a chapel meeting in the middle of April.

However, until there is some progress from the management side there is little for chapel officials to report.

After the meeting with the management on 9 May we hope to have something to tell the chapel. A meeting is planned for Wednesday 15 May.

### Sunday Star

The management has told us that plans for a Sunday Star have been delayed, probably until September but we have been given little other information about the project.

According to The Times on 26 April, however, Peter Hill will be editor in chief with Hugh Whittow editing the Sunday paper. Between 12 and 20 full-time journalists will be hired but there will be a "substantial team" brought in on Saturdays. It will be a seven-day operation.

### Other issues

Other outstanding issues include starter contracts, and health and safety issues in the office. There

have been disturbing reports about some of the findings of recent work station assessments. One person was told he is working in conditions which would breach European law.

### Long hours

A 2000 European Union directive has the potential to improve conditions for British workers particularly if the Government chooses to implement it quickly.

Article 3 provides for a daily rest period of 11 consecutive hours per 24-hour period. We already have an agreement with the company which means you should have at least 13 hours between shifts.

Article 4 says that people have to have breaks after six hours work.

Article 8 says that night workers should not work more than eight hours in any 24-hour period.

The British government must act to bring in the directive by 1 August next year.

### Independent day

An Express chapel committee representative talked to NUJ members at The Independent this week. They are working out a strategy for dealing with their pay offer – 0%.

## Readers lose trust in UK papers

British newspapers are trusted far less by readers than elsewhere in Europe.

Only 20% of people in Britain trust newspapers according to a public opinion survey conducted by Eurobarometer, the polling arm of the European Commission. The European average was 46%.

The best result for newspapers was in Belgium where 60% of people trust what they read in their newspa-

pers. The percentage of people reading a newspaper in Britain every day (48%) is however, higher than the European average. But we are way behind Sweden where 72% read a paper every day. In Britain more people now trust radio (71%) and TV (65%).

All NUJ members have a responsibility to abide by the NUJ code of conduct which is pasted up at various points around the building.