

President's round-up

NUJ PRESIDENT and LFB member Tim Dawson's column "President's Platform" is online at www.londonfreelance.org/president. His views are entirely his own – though he has been elected President of the organisation, so they hold a little weight. Recent articles include:

- **Care about press freedom? Act now!** We believe the opportunity to influence the Investigatory Powers Bill has passed, but there's still time to influence two more pieces of legislation "in many respects more deadly, and certainly more insidious than bully-boy secret policemen and arbitrary edicts shutting down newspapers". These are clauses of the Police and Crime Bill and the Digital Economy Bill.
- **Local news photography is important** – on the need for the "photographic databases of community life" to continue, with photos that remain properly captioned and "properly titled and archived".
- **Exposed photographers resist gloom** – Tim notes NUJ photogra-

phers – nearly 2000 of them – have not taken the "cull of photojournalists' jobs" sitting down. On 11 February 2017 they will come together at a conference in London to consider industrial strategies to combat the assault on pictorial journalism and share effective new routes to making a living with a camera: see page 6.

- **Self-exposure key to broadcast storytelling** – journalists get to grips with the "narcissist's wand," aka the selfie stick, as a tool for broadcast journalism, at the Dublin Freelance Branch Autumn Freelance Forum.

- **Newsquest desk jockeys revolt** – Tim's report from the picket lines at Newsquest South London in Sutton, where

local newspaper journalists are on strike over massive staff cuts. As a result of these, "no longer will they attend court hearings, local government meetings or speak with members of the public."

- **Creative Commons warning!** How a cartoonist supplying illustrations to a campaigning charity under a Creative Commons Licence left him powerless when his work ended up on a fascist leaflet.



Newsquest strikers in Sutton, earlier

Photo ©Tim Dawson

Corporate boost to freelance bank balance

It's tough making a living from freelance journalism, but it often provides you with expertise, insights and informed opinions which, in many spheres, can yield fees beyond the dreams of your average newspaper or webzine. The Freelance chatted with Freelance X on how she regularly alchemises what she learns writing for specialist industry and science journals into reports for corporates and law firms. "Sometimes they come to me because they've seen my byline" or from "networking at conferences... They maybe ask me to write a report or a memorandum... from your point of view – give them expert insights... you don't get your name on these reports... but then they do pay well". For a 100-page report you might work on over the course of several months, £20,000 to £60,000, for a memorandum, five or six pages, £5000 to £6000. There's more detail at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1611corp.html.

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Newsquest South London striker speaks

AN NUJ member on strike at Newsquest's South London offices in Sutton over staff cuts spoke to LFB in November. Since she started work with Newsquest in August 2015, "so much talent and experience" has gone from the South London hub.

Newsquest's Sutton hub is supposed to cover a huge swathe of South London, from Richmond and Kingston to Bexley. Management wants cuts at 12 newspapers. After a March recruitment freeze, a team of 8 editors and 22 reporters was reduced to 6 editors and 16 reporters.

In August members overwhelmingly voted for a strike, two days lat-

er all but two editorial staff were declared "redundant" or under threat of redundancy. By the time she spoke to LFB, "we are now on nine reporters and one editor for South London" with no photographers.

Newsquest staff have "tried to speak to" management, calling off their strike for talks via the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service. These lasted 20 minutes.

The estimated spend on producing a page of a Newsquest local newspaper, excluding rent, was £109 in August. Now it's down to £58, with fewer pages in each newspaper, so less advertising. She feels the

business sense behind these cuts is as flawed as the journalism behind it.

Staff – now back in on a work-to-rule – could stay out on strike for so long because "we got twice as many donations as we hoped for." Much staff time is now spent taking complaints from readers "about how bad the newspaper is." For updates, see www.nuj.org.uk/news

Any support from NUJ members "is really welcome." LFB's already voted £500 to Newsquest Sutton staff strike fund, and will put motions to donate the maximum amount it can at each Branch meeting until donations are no longer needed.

PRESS REGULATION from page 1

IPSO (the Independent Press Standards Organisation) and it started hearing complaints. Trevor Kavanagh, assistant editor of the *Sun*, sits on its board. *Daily Mail* editor Paul Dacre chairs the Editors' Code Committee, alongside non-editor members.

Dacre had sat on the old Press Complaints Commission, which then ceased operation. Like the PCC, IPSO is funded by publishers.

In November 2014 the Press Recognition Panel (PRP) was formed to recognise press regulation bodies under the Charter procedure. IPSO did not apply to the PRP.

In January 2016 Impress (The Independent Monitor of the Press) was launched. As of 30 October

2016 the most prominent publications it regulated were the *Waltham Forest Echo* and *New Internationalist*. Its website does not report it having ruled on any complaints.

Impress is largely funded by a charitable trust founded by Max Moseley, who in 2008 won damages from *NotW* for invasion of privacy.

The *Guardian*, *Financial Times* and *Independent* have not signed up to either Impress or IPSO; nor have many magazine publishers. They run their own complaints systems.

An 11 October House of Lords amendment to the Investigatory Powers Bill extended the rule on paying both sides' costs to publishers accused of phone-hacking, but was overturned by the Commons.

On 25 October 2016, the Press Recognition Panel agreed to recognise Impress.

Impress having become an "approved regulator" it is open to the government to bring Section 40 of the 2013 Act into force. The government announced on 1 November a further 10-week consultation on Section 40. And it is consulting on the promised Part 2 of the Leveson Inquiry, looking at claims about phone hacking and relations between publishers and the police...

Campaign group Hacked Off is saying "just get on with it": the NUJ is working on a response.

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- Much more detail: www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1611regu.html

Whistleblowers need protection

The European Federation of Journalists is campaigning in favor of European protection for whistleblowers. The Federation is now part of a coalition of NGOs, trade unions and MEPs which recently launched a petition calling on the European Union to initiate legislation. The EFJ is encouraging all journalists in Europe to sign the petition and to spread the word. As sources for investigative journalists, whistleblowers must be equally protected in every EU country. The petition's at www.whistleblowerprotection.eu – go there now!