



# BRITISH TELECOM

## — The Benevolent Employer

AVID readers of Telecom Today will have seen the picture on the left and report on the front page of the May edition. What the report does not show is the true face of BT Management. Delegates to this year's P & T Group Conference will already be aware of the hypocrisy that exists within BT as an employer. What Telecom Today has not reported WAS reported in an article in the Guardian of 15th April.

### Telecom to stop paying Ulster 'danger money'

By John Ardill,  
Labour Correspondent

British Telecom is to stop the annual payment it has made to Northern Ireland employees in recent years because of the dangers of working in the province. A similar decision is expected from the Post Office, from which BT was recently separated.

The six unions involved were not consulted in advance.

The move came to light when the BT union negotiators made a routine claim for the allowance to be renewed and updated. BT managers said they did not think that the allowance was justified any more, and that they did not want to discuss it further.

The decision has not yet been reported to rank and

file members but unless the corporation has a change of heart, it is bound to be raised at union conferences in the next couple of months.

The unions involved are the Communications Workers, Post Office Engineers, Post Office Executives, Communication Managers, and two Civil Service unions the CPSA and SCPS.

Communication workers value the recognition that they face occasional danger and constant security restrictions. The money is regarded as less important than the principle.

The allowance is an annual flat rate payment to everyone from the regional chairman to the lower paid cleaners. For the past two years it has been £60 costing BT about £125,000.

*continuing support for all CPSA members in BT / PO / National Girobank and condemns the BT Board for the total indifference and disrespect portrayed for all CPSA members and demands that this petty penny-pinching decision is reversed. Conference further challenges the respective Chairmen of BT / PO / National Girobank to make personal statements to all BT / PO / National Girobank employees regarding this issue confirming that the respective Boards do in reality have a high regard and respect for the ability of all BT employees and concern for their welfare.*

Conference delegates will no doubt remember listening to Gerry Forsythe, Branch Secretary, Belfast GMO seconding that Motion by detailing to us the realities that exist for all BT Employees living and working in Northern Ireland today. Delegates will remember most of all holding back their tears as Gerry spoke quietly, unassumedly, without notes. Conference then replied with a standing ovation as a sign of our concern and care for



The shattered Telecom van stands in Crocus Street, Belfast, after the IRA attack. Picture by ALLAN McCULLOUGH.

**TWO Telecom engineers escaped slaughter on a busy Belfast street on the day three young soldiers died.**

The engineers' battle was with West Belfast's waiting list for phones. But technicians Frankie Campbell and Gerry McDonnell came within inches of death in the Provisional IRA's war on patrolling troops.

As an armour-plated Land Rover turned into Crocus Street, an M60 machine gun, flanked by two masked riflemen, was poked through curtains 80 yards from the technicians' yellow van.

### Engineers survive IRA machine gun attack

Armour plate was no defence against the 600-rounds-a-minute M60. Inside the Land Rover three soldiers died and a fourth was wounded in the hail of bullets.

At the wheel of the Telecom van Frankie Campbell bent over his spare line records to make the most important entry in his life. A bullet smashed a hole in the bulkhead inches above his

head. "The windscreen exploded, pebble-dashing my face with bits of glass. I was sure I had been shot," he said.

In the back of the van Gerry McDonnell threw himself to the floor and saw his bloodstained mate crawl across the passenger seat and fall into the street. Over his own head he saw a greasegun shatter and another bullet rip through the tail light



The hole caused by the bullet which passed inches from Frankie Campbell's head.

mounting. Both were treated for shock and Frankie will carry pieces of glass in his face and hands for the rest of his life.

During more than 12 years in Ulster seven telecoms staff have been killed on duty and 41 injured. More than £3 million damage has been inflicted on buildings and plant.

### STOP PRESS

#### PRODUCTIVITY AGREEMENT

has been reached with BT on a further 1% productivity bonus payment to be paid to all CPSA represented grades, including HCO and consequentially EO. This payment is made under the terms of the 1981 Pay Settlement and is based on the productivity improvements recorded over the financial year 1981/82.

This 1% payment, combined with the 1% bonus already awarded in November 1981, means a total bonus payment of 2% for the year 1981/82.

The 1% is due to be paid out in the end of July pay packets and members should receive 1% of their position on the pay scale as at 1 July 1982. Part-time staff will receive a payment pro-rata to hours actually worked.

As the productivity bonus relates to productivity improvements recorded during the period 1 April 1981 - 31 March 1982, members who joined BT after 1 April 1981 will receive a payment pro-rata to their length of service during that period.

Arrangements are being made to implement the same payment in July to members in both Posts and National Girobank.

#### PAY

THE CPSA P & T Group Executive Committee have submitted pay claims to BT, National Girobank and Posts on behalf of all the members concerned. Negotiations are well under way but no settlement has been reached.

BT have made an offer which approximates to a 4.3% increase in pay rates and National Giro have offered an across the board increase of 5%. Neither of these offers forms an acceptable basis for settlement and negotiations continue.

Emergency Motion 8 was moved at Conference — the details of which will be reported in the Conference Edition of LINK shortly, but I reproduce here the terms of that Motion.

*This Conference declares its amazement and disgust at the pettiness of BT in recently announcing its intention to withdraw the £60 Annual Payment of "danger money" made to all BT employees working in Northern Ireland. It views this as further condemnation of a management whose attitude towards the welfare of its employees is abysmal and callous and as further proof that BT management consider exchange equipment and property of more value than human life.*

*Conference disassociates itself with the contempt and disregard BT has shown for its employees in Northern Ireland in making this decision and expresses its concern and appreciation of the difficulties that face all BT Workers every day in discharging their responsibilities as BT employees in Northern Ireland.*

Conference confirms its

(For a detailed report on the incident referred to above, see inside).

all our colleagues in Northern Ireland. It must also be said that Gerry captured all our hearts and emotions in those few moments.

No doubt Telecom Today, being a Journal of the Employer would never be allowed to print the "True Story" of a Management too concerned with profit to remember its staff and too thankless to recognise that British Telecom is in its very essence what you and I and the Gerry Forsythes of this world make it.

It would be very interesting to see if Sir George Jefferson, after spending a number of weeks working in Belfast GMO, could remove the somewhat paltry payment of £1.15 per week and then look Gerry Forsythe and his colleagues in the face.

### 'MISSING LINK'

THE "Missing Link" has been found!

Delegates at 1982 P & T Conference will recall Jeff Dunn, ETB HQ describing your Journal this way, informing the membership of the ills that have beset this paper over the last twelve months.

Now, from nowhere the "Link" has been discovered!

However you, the P & T Group membership, are needed in order to sustain the life of our Journal. A good life-giving diet should consist of letters, articles, pictures, comments as diverse as possible. Your contributions, of any kind, are therefore extremely important. Please note that the GEC alone cannot sustain the existence of "Link."

All contributions should be sent to the Editor.