

Your Public NME

We deeply regret the non-appearance of the last six issues of the NME.

This was the result of a dispute between the International Publishing Corporation (IPC), which owns *NME*, and the National Union Of Journalists (NUJ), to which almost all of the company's journalists belong.

NME was one of several dozen titles hit by the dispute, ranging from *Woman's Own* and *Honey to Wizzer* *And Chips* and *Horse And Hound*.

The dispute arose out of a pay claim for 32% by the NUJ, who declared their intention to work to rule in pursuance of the claim after pay negotiations had broken down. IPC claimed that in so doing NUJ members as a body were in breach of contract and had "dismissed themselves".

Pay was stopped and for several weeks while negotiations to end the dispute were in progress journalists undertook an unpaid work-in. No

titles appeared, other than those prepared several weeks in advance.

The talks that brought a re-instatement were not directly concerned with the pay rise but with back pay, which will be resolved in conjunction with ACAS, the government's arbitration and conciliation service.

During our absence a new rock weekly called *New Music News* appeared. We would like to take this opportunity to make clear that despite the similarity of its name *New Music News* is in no way connected with *NME*.

Another indirect result of the dispute was a shake-up at *Melody Maker* (also owned by IPC), which has resulted in two former *MM* writers joining the *NME* team.

We apologise again for the loss of sound and vision. We know there is no real substitute for the world's biggest selling rock weekly, and *NME* will continue to try and bring our readers the very best in rock and cultural reading for the modern age.