

The action coincides with the university's degree awarding ceremonies, which also takes place on

workers union, today began a lightning stoppage. Catering staff refused to cross picket lines which meant the university's

# Channel plane in drugs riddle

By Nigel Heath

A LINK between drug smuggling and the riddle of a vanishing aircraft in the Bristol Channel was being considered today.

A major air and sea search was launched yesterday when a light aircraft fired flares over Bristol and Clevedon before vanishing.

Rescue boats from Portishead, Barry and Chepstow, and a Sea King helicopter, made an extensive search of the Bristol Channel but no wreckage was found and no aircraft reported missing.

Bristol Airport assistant manager, Mr Gareth Evans said it was a complete mystery and the possibility that the aircraft was involved in some illegal activity, possibly drugs, was being considered.

## Controllers

Mr Evans said: "About 5 am yesterday we began to think there was some illegal activity going on, possibly connected with drug smuggling.

"It's most unusual for a light aircraft to fire flares."

Bristol's air traffic controllers received police reports of a light aircraft firing flares over the Knowle and Feeder Road areas of the city.

A senior spokesman for the Customs service in Bristol said they would be making inquiries today.