

Colour bar on those oh so 'free' buses

One of the buses being run by the People's League for the Defence of Freedom stopped at the No. 2 bus stop in Brixton Market on its way to Norwood last Saturday.

Of the three people at the stop, one was a coloured woman, with a small child. She was prevented from getting on the bus by the 'conductor', who told her that 'no coloured people are allowed on these buses'.

This incident is reported in the latest issue of the Stockwell strikers' bulletin.

BUSMEN CALL: 'EXTEND IT'

From Battersea strike committee

Workers never sacrifice their weekly wage packets and support a call to strike action unless they are convinced they are fighting for a just cause.

The 100 per cent. solidarity of the London busmen after six weeks of existing on £3 a week indicates the conviction and determination in the ranks.

Macleod tells us that he is looking for 'a chink of light'. We busmen are fighting for 'a chink of money' and we intend winning our demand of 10s. 6d. all round.

DRIVING DOWN STANDARDS

The London Transport Executive and their masters the Tory Government can 'get tough' if they like, but we central London busmen are not prepared to see 14,000 of our comrades ignored at a time when the Government is pursuing a policy of rising prices, increased rents and generally driving down the living standards of the working class.

The arbitration award was a deliberate attempt to split one section from another and smash the union under the old master

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GREATEST FIGHT SINCE '26 STRIKE

And We Can Win It!

BY HARRY CONSTABLE (member of the national executive, docks section, National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers)

CLOSE on 100,000 workers are now on strike in London. This tremendous struggle is recognized by the employers, by their Tory Government, by trade union leaders and by rank-and-file trade unionists to be the most critical industrial battle since the General Strike of 1926.

The Smithfield men are solid. The Port of London is shut down. The busmen are standing as firm as the day they came out. And in all three strikes the issues involved are fundamental questions of trade union principle.

At Smithfield they are defending the right to full employment. In Dockland we are defending our conditions of labour against the importation of non-dockers, and at the same time are defending our right not to handle goods that a strike of other workers has placed beyond the pale. At the bus garages they are fighting against an attempt to buy off one lot of workers at the expense of 14,000 others.

The portworkers are solid, despite the attempts of the employers and of certain trade union officials to force a return to work on disastrous terms.

NOT BEEN FOOLED

The men have not been fooled by the

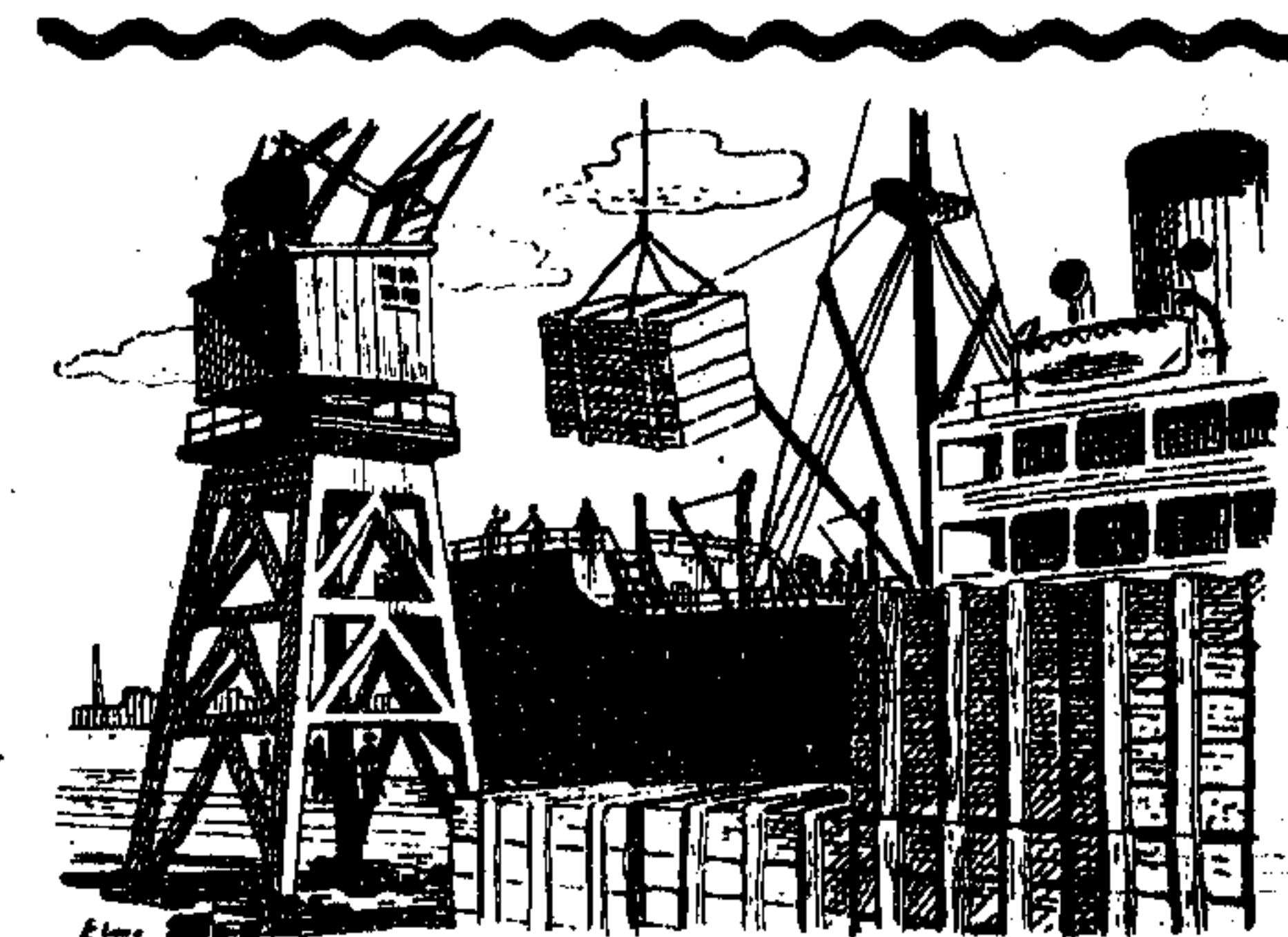
support on Monday we say: 'Thanks. If the working class stand together we shall see a speedy and just settlement of our case.'

We must make up our minds to win this strike quickly. This can be achieved by immediate extension. We are convinced the masses of our membership agree with us on this point, and we hope the decision of the delegate conference will be reversed in the very near future.

E. A. DAVID (chairman), H. SINGFIELD (representative), C. FEGENT (secretary)

BOSSSES ARE LINKED UP

'There are two conditions on which a resumption of work can be obtained,



Brother Harry Constable, says the Tory Daily Telegraph, 'has been to the fore in many docks disputes'. He was in fact one of the seven strike leaders charged with 'conspiracy' in 1951, and has played an active part in every struggle since the 1948 strike.

In other words we are fighting for the working class as a whole. Therefore the working class as a whole has a responsibility to ensure our success.

We are as convinced now as we have been from the beginning that victory can be guaranteed only if others are involved in solidarity action.

Whatever his motives may have been, we believe Bro. Cousins was incorrect to oppose extension to other sections of the TGWU, and we believe the delegate conference should have supported the resolution of the Central Strike Committee.

To the tube men who gave us unofficial

the sympathy and support of our brothers in Southampton and the Northern ports. Bro. Francis, thirty-six years a member of the Dulwich Labour Party, is a checker in the Tooley Street sector.

The employers, he says, are linked up and therefore have a sharp interest in defeating the strike in all sectors.

'Union Cartage, who have a considerable part of the men involved in the original road transport dispute, are tied up with the Vestey Corporation, who employed the 600 men sacked at Smithfield.

'When the dispute spread to the cold stores the first to be affected were the nine belonging to Union Cold Stores, also part of the Vestey Corporation.

Joint Pickets Next Week

Busmen see last Monday's token stoppage on the tubes as the genuine voice of the rank-and-file railwaymen and an answer to Greene. To help the militant tube men make next Monday's strike more effective, a number of garage strike committees are planning to send pickets to stand with the tube men's pickets at the depots.

Black cargo can't be whitewashed

AN appeal by the Smithfield joint strike committee to London portworkers points out that a return to work on the withdrawal of scab labour, recommended by the docks divisional conference, 'completely ignores the fact that a return to work does not resolve the question of "black" cargo'.

'Meat transport drivers,' the appeal declares, 'are in dispute over a rejected pay claim, in consequence of which 600 inside workers at Smithfield were dismissed without prior consultation with their union.'

'Cold store workers on Thames-side and Smithfield immediately declared all meat to be "black". The public wharfingers thereupon introduced "black" labour to clear cold stores.

OUR TWO QUESTIONS

'We ask: (1) Can the portworkers return and still declare meat "black"? (2) Will the cold store workers be asked to return and accept the position that meat is no longer "black"?'

The docks group secretary asks that the meat transport workers return to work and allow their officials to negotiate with the employers.

'We would ask this official whether he thinks that the drivers' committee should

recommend as trade unionists that men should return on the following terms: no discussion on wages; redundancy; discussion on the employers' suggestion of when and where they are prepared to accept a return to work; employers' terms on whom they are prepared to accept back.

'We therefore ask you to remain solid behind your committee who have on your behalf refused to accept the impertinent terms dictated by the employers, which completely ignore the issues which we struck over.

'We shall continue to attempt to force a meeting to discuss our just and reasonable demands.'

Sutton's Loss

Sutton strike committee regrets to announce the death of Bro. Bracey-Wright, a member of the garage and a committee man for many years.

'He was greatly respected and we are very sorry to lose him,' a committee spokesman told the Strike Bulletin.

the sympathy and support of our brothers in Southampton and the Northern ports.

There are two extremely important things about these strikes and the workers' strategy in them, and in my opinion these things have got to be grasped by every worker, whether he is a docker, a busman, a marketman or anything else:

1) The strikes are taking place before unemployment has developed to the point where it is a serious weapon in the hands of the employers.

2) If the employers win this fight the trade unions will be weakened by the victimization of militants on a scale such as our movement has never seen before.

MAKE NO MISTAKE

Make no mistake about it. When Sir John Elliot says 'My attitude is a tough one. This show is going to be fought out' he is not speaking just for a section of the employers, he is speaking for the employing class as a whole.

This is a big fight. Some of us have seen it coming for a long time. Can the workers win? Yes, they can, because though they face powerful employers they themselves are the most powerful force of all.

The workers can win—provided they are determined to fight on until the vital principles are secured and victory is achieved.

The workers can win—and this is proved by the really magnificent struggle of the Smithfield marketmen. These fellows have been out since April 19 with virtually no subsistence money for themselves or their families.

SOAKED IN TRADITION

Most of them come from the East End of London—the same area that the dockers come from, an area soaked in the best traditions of trade unionism. They are led by trade union officials who have not forgotten their militancy. They are determined that they are going to win the day.

Let the employers take note. There can be no settlement on the docks without a settlement at Smithfield.

We are not going back to the bad old days.

That is why we have built our liaison committee, our so-called 'unofficial' movement.

There has been a lot in the Press in recent days about 'unofficial movements'. The Times says we are waging a struggle for power. Well, in one sense that is true enough.

Of course, portworkers don't see themselves as the next Parliament of this country! But they do see themselves as men with high trade union principles, with a duty to fellow-workers, with a duty to themselves not to let the bosses trample on them.

As far back as August 24 last year, in an article in The Newsletter (later reprinted as a pamphlet), Bro. Constable wrote about the employers' offensive:

'There is no mistaking the concerted, deliberate nature of their drive.

'They are rehearsing for a powerful, all-out attempt to alter decisively the balance of forces between the classes, to beat back the workers, quench their militancy, thrash them, exhaust them and weaken them by every means . . .'

They see something else too. More and more, as the campaign of intimidation and scabbing is built up, the portworkers see how the Tory Government stands behind the employers—not merely approving of the offensive against working-class wages, jobs, rights and conditions, but actively organizing it.

What's the answer?

There can only be one answer. This Government has got to be removed with the utmost speed, and replaced by a Labour government pledged to treat the workers properly.

THE BEST DEFENCE

Some people claim that 'unofficial' movements challenge the trade union movement, or that they are some kind of 'break-away'. This is absolute nonsense.

Far from being a challenge to trade unionism, a powerful rank-and-file movement in no matter what industry is the best defence of trade union organization and trade union principles.

The rank-and-file movement of the London portworkers stands four-square behind the officials in so far as the officials struggle for trade unionism.

It has been mainly responsible for the high degree of trade union organization and trade union awareness in the Port of London over a very long period.

Our 'unofficial' movement stands for the fullest unity of the workers to win their fights. It sets its face against 'breakaways' and denounces as slanderers those who try to divide and mislead the workers by suggesting otherwise.

UNDER THE BED

There has been quite a bit in the Press recently, too, about 'ruthless communists'. Those Reds are under the bed again!

This is the yarn the employers always spin when the workers won't knuckle under.

The most ruthless men in London are the dock employers. They have built massive fortunes out of the exploitation and maiming of dockers toiling in all sorts of conditions.

Now these rich and unscrupulous bosses
(Continued overleaf)

BULLETIN SHOWS THEM

'A good many people have the idea that we are lazy-bones who just sit at home doing nothing,' he said. 'The Strike Bulletin shows them what really goes on'.

While I was there Bro. Earl, a Southern Region signalman at Clapham, called to tell the busmen that porters at some stations—he mentioned Clapham, East Brixton and Wandsworth Road—were working overtime helping to collect tickets.

In some cases they were staying on duty all night. The NUR were stopping this practice when it came to their notice.

Bro. Earl told me that he felt that by accepting the award Greene had let down both the railwaymen and the busmen.

'WE CAN WIN!' SAYS HARRY CONSTABLE

(Continued from front page)

are trying to ditch the Dock Labour Scheme—not because the Scheme gives the docker a heaven on earth, but because it has laid down a few important principles that must be defended at all costs.

The employers who are aiming to wreck the Scheme are the real agitators and instigators of the strike, not the militant trade unionists of Dockland.

A BOSSES' GOVERNMENT

And behind these employers stands the Government. Not once, to my knowledge, during the whole time the Scheme has been in operation, has disciplinary action been taken against any employers for a major breach of it.

Small wonder that portworkers, marketmen, busmen and road haulage workers have come to see this Government for what it is—a bosses' Government, determined that the bosses shall get their own way, determined to take the kind of revenge on the workers that they took in the Trade Disputes Act of 1927.

THOUGHTS GO OUT

In the eyes of the ordinary London docker his present struggle is not directly linked with that of the London busman.

But there is not a meeting on the London waterfront where the thoughts of dockers do not go out to their brothers on the buses.

Not only are the busmen members of the same union as us—they are resisting the same offensive.

The refusal to grant the busmen's wage

'An additional halfpenny a mile will be payable for each official passenger carried in a private car, tricar or motor cycle combination.'

THE MAXIMUM EXTENT

After dealing with insurance the circular goes on:

'Staff using their vehicles are urged to arrange to take official passengers to the maximum extent.'

'Arrangements will be made for additional parking facilities at County Hall.'

'Only those who have no other reasonable means of getting to County Hall will be expected to use cars, motor cycles, etc.'—W. O. Hart, Clerk to the Council:

demand was aimed at the dockers too. We knew that at the time—and sure enough our own demand was refused.

If we don't defend trade union principles today, then we have no chance of wage increases tomorrow. We of the docks fraternity have nothing but admiration for the way the busmen are fighting on behalf of a minority among them.

That's the real trade union spirit.

More and more our two sections that are struggling must join hands, exchange experiences, learn from each other, see our sectional fights as part of one common struggle.

USE THIS POWER

We can learn from each other. And the TGWU leaders can learn from both of us! They can learn, for instance, that you don't win a strike by standing still.

They will make a big mistake if they fail to use the big power that lies in their hands. If used to the full, the power of the TGWU could decisively defeat this attempt to drive us back to the miserable conditions of the thirties.

* * *

As these strikes go on, and as determination to fight it out grows, the logic of the struggle points to one conclusion: we must get rid of the Tory Government.

This Government is nothing but a Joint Employers' Liaison Committee installed in Whitehall and Westminster. It wants to settle accounts with the workers, piecemeal if possible.

That the Trades Union Congress should

A. G. JONES (branch secretary),
L. SMITH (branch representative),
W. STRUDWICK (chairman)

Strike Notebook

ABOVE THE LAW?

A group of Battersea strikers was surprised to see a 'freedom' bus travelling across Albert Bridge. This is strictly against the law—but the policeman on duty took no notice.

TUC UNDER FIRE

Stapleford and Beeston (Notts.) Trades Council has passed a resolution criticizing the attitude of the TUC towards the bus strike.

Its resolution declares 'that this Trades Council, while giving 100 per cent. support to the TGWU for their efforts on behalf of the London busmen, feel that the TUC General Council's policy and direction relative to the dispute should take a more active line.'

'The Council feels that more effort and decisive action should be undertaken by the General Council, which would enable

refuse to recognize this, preferring to back-pedal on the ground that if we fight we might get hurt—this is the attitude of cowards. It was this kind of cowardice that made possible the defeat of 1926.

WE ARE PROUD

Retreat today would be disaster tomorrow. And the dockers have this to say to the TUC leaders:

The British trade union movement is one of the most powerful in the world. We are proud of this movement, of its traditions, its organization, its solidarity.

Nothing on earth is going to be allowed to smash this movement up. And if leaders who grovel in the muck and filth of knighthoods and honours lists are too scared to lead—let them get out and make room for men.

If the mis-leaders won't get out, it's our job to put them out.

BEAT THE OFFENSIVE

We say to those who want to crucify Frank Cousins or take him down a peg: 'Drop it. Or take the consequences.'

If the Labour and trade union movement leads, we can beat back the bosses' offensive, bring down the bosses' Government—and take a big step towards the day when we have a decent order of society in this country.

Newspaper in Liverpool who have arranged such a great publicity campaign on the busmen's behalf.

the dispute to reach a much speedier conclusion for the betterment of workers and general public at large.'

HELP FROM LEEDS

East Leeds constituency Labour Party has passed a resolution fully supporting the London busmen in their resistance to the Tory Government's attacks.

A collection of £2 5s. 3d. was taken and 34 copies of the Strike Bulletin were sold. An appeal is being sent to each ward party in the constituency to take similar action.

SUTTON PROPOSES LEVY

Sutton 1/340 branch of the TGWU has passed a resolution recommending the executive 'that in order to increase dispute pay now as per Bro. Cousins's statement we would pledge ourselves to pay a levy on resumption of work if necessary, such moneys to be used to cover the cost of any increase granted.'

This resolution was carried unanimously and is being circulated to all branches.

ELLIOT IS CONDEMNED

Battersea Trades Council unanimously passed a resolution demanding that the TUC 'reconsider their decision in relation to not extending the busmen's dispute'.

They went on to condemn the arrogant Press statement made by Sir John Elliot, and demanded, in view of the proposed future cuts in services, 'an immediate inquiry into the management of the LTE, as they are failing to carry out their responsibilities to provide adequate services as laid down in the Transport Act'.

BRASS FROM BLENHEIM

Blenheim (Leeds) ward Labour Party took a collection at its ward meeting in support of the busmen. Fifteen persons were present, and the collection totalled £2.

JUST A PRELUDE

Support continues to grow for the London busmen among Lancashire miners.

The Sandhole branch of the National Union of Mineworkers has adopted a resolution recognizing that the Tory-led attempts to smash the busmen are 'a prelude to driving down all workers' living standards'.

It has donated £10 and is calling on the Lancashire area of the NUM to send financial aid.